



In The Breeze



May 2010

Newsletter of the Bluebonnet MX-5 Miata Club

Still Free!

12 Hours of Sebring – Texas Style!

By Ann Alexander

I have never much liked anything that required I show up at 4:30 in the morning. I understand airport security, but when you arrive and the ticketing agents aren't even there yet, you are wondering exactly why you should take it seriously when they don't. However, if you want to meet a group of people that take something seriously, take the trip to Sebring, Florida in March!

Our trip started with the 6:30 a.m. flight. We arrived in Orlando around 12:30 via Atlanta. The only exasperating moment was picking up the car rental, but then that always seems to take the longest amount of time! We finally arrived

at our luxury accommodations, Highland Wheel Estates, a very clean, established RV park across the boulevard from Lake Sebring, around 4:00 in the afternoon. It was a blustery, chilly day. We were greeted by our white haired concierge, Sally, who we had to interrupt from her hostess duties at the St. Patrick's Day party. Did I mention that the Highland Wheel Estates is a senior citizens park? You can only imagine the amount of

interest that my son and I generated! We scooted into our lovely skirted trailer and out in less than 30 minutes after grabbing the assorted essentials; another layer of clothing (very brisk weather), camera, tickets, parking pass and putting the directions into the map on the old iPhone. Off to the races!

Day 1 for us was short and we decided to go because 1) that was the whole reason we were there and 2) we wanted to get our bearings. Once you park at the track the atmosphere is that of a giant Renaissance Festival. You don't have a seat on the general admittance tickets; you are there to wander and catch as many turns as you can. My son, Sean and I did however gain access to the grandstand through the kindness of one of the guards. We went up for a few minutes and Sean snapped his first few pictures of the qualifiers that night. Then we proceeded through the garage area. We were so

close to the cars and the team members that I thought we would be asked to move or be removed numerous times. I even bumped into Emanuele Pirro, a retired Audi driver who is taking the wheel for Drayson Racing a few times this season. Be still my heart! I never thought this venue (or any for that matter) would be so accessible to the fans. We caught the SVRA practice session and then retired to a wonderful dinner on the edge of Lake Sebring at the Sunset Grill.

Thursday was a full day of qualifying runs and practices; the Star Mazda Championship qualifying, practice for the ALMS,

GT3 Challenge race, SVRA qualifying, Corvette Parade, night practice, ALMS night race and so much more! I wore my pedometer which racked up 23,000 steps by the end of the day! Sean was snappy with his Canon and logged in over 800 pics that day alone. His work had only just begun as we all know the next step is much longer – editing the pictures, which he is still doing!

The weather was very bone chilling despite my 5 layers, but tolerable. We both were very wind burned by the end of the day. The high point to this day was seeing an RV with a note tacked onto it advertising a reserved parking spot on the fence at the end of turn one. Apparently their brother decided against bringing his RV and they were trying to sell the \$400 spot for \$250. We thought about it over dinner and decided it would be much better to have a "home base" and being at the end of turn one would be a definite plus! We went back with our cash in hand after a wonderful dinner and bargained the \$250 spot down to \$200. The only problem was the seller, Pete Olsen, thought it over afterwards and decided he couldn't possible take more than \$150 – really? OK!



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2010 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

Welcome New Members!

William and Martha Blanton
Gruene
'91 Classic Red

Ed and Melissa Lee
San Antonio
'08 Highland Green Touring

Melissa Sirianni and Vero DaSylva
Lakehills
'92 Brilliant Black

EZ does it..



Well, it wasn't easy does it in Phoenix for me this past weekend as I traveled to Arizona for the USTA Super Senior Tennis Nationals Championships.

Arriving to unusually cool weather on Thursday evening, I realized I didn't pack any thing to deal with the incredibly low temps in the evening. I only had shorts and short sleeve shirts. I wasn't too worried as higher temperatures were in store for the rest of the weekend.

As part of a six man, three teams of doubles team, my partner Ed Polansky and I had a 3 o'clock match against last years winners, the team from Puerto Rico. Since we had practically the entire first half of the day before we played, we thought we'd play one of the many local Frisbee Golf courses. The course was nice, but it was situated entirely within a huge drainage canal. Both sides of the course on slanted terrain, I hyper extended my left knee slightly and didn't realize it until we got on the court later to play our first match. It began to tighten up on me as we started our second set. The first set was pretty short as the champions from last year really put it on us. I couldn't really serve effectively but we grinded out a better second set before falling and losing the match.

Not having any more matches until the next day, Saturday, we cleaned up and hit a local Indian Food restaurant and thoroughly enjoyed a wonderful taste treat. I just love Indian food!

Saturday was a two-match day for us and we got up pretty early to get out to the Surprise Tennis and Racquet Club. Now, my knee was really sore and stiff. We took on the team from Pennsylvania and Ed and I lost a closer match than the day before. Stinging from that loss, Ed and I were eager to redeem ourselves against a team from Nebraska. After a really close first set, which we won, we beat them for the second set and the first win ever for me on a higher than local level.

Winning at Nationals, albeit one match, was exciting, indeed! I'll never forget it! I plan on recovering from my knee injury and getting back out on the court soon! But, not before I get in EZ for a hill country drive.



-Editor

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Marilyn's Day Off

By Dave Hamilton

On a beautiful, sunny weekday during Spring Break, Marilyn awoke early and suggested that we get up and go explore some new area of Texas. After consulting my Ride Texas maps we started up Highway 281 headed for Marble Falls where we explored the downtown and grabbed a bite to eat at the world famous Blue Bonnet Cafe. North of Marble Falls we put the top down and turned West on Park Road 4 toward Inks Lake and Lake Buchanan. Above Inks Lake there is a terrific overlook that provides a panoramic view of the lakes and the Colorado River below. Next we got on Highway 29 and traveled West to Llano which had an interesting downtown including a historic courthouse that was built in 1892. Next we headed up Highway 16 to Cherokee. From there we took Ranch Roads 501 and 580 toward Lampasas. Just off 580 we discovered the Alamosa Wine Cellars at Bend, Texas which is owned by Jim & Karen Johnson. Upon our arrival we were immediately greeted by their two adorable wine dogs named Ralphy and Bridget. They found Bridget alone on a bridge about eight miles from the winery after midnight in October several years ago. She was just a teeny puppy at the time. Both dogs have been around the winery since they were pups, so they are used to having visitors. Actually, they think everyone comes just to see them. Although Alamosa Wine Cellars is a small winery, several of their wines are available at the new Spec's store in San Antonio. After exploring the grounds and playing with Ralphy and Bridget, we continued on our way. Between Bend and Nix we passed two ostriches that raced us for a short distance. Next we arrived in Nix, Texas where we found the old, historic Nix General Store / Sinclair Gas Station. While the population of Nix is only around 6, someone appeared to be keeping the exterior painted and in good repair. The gas price on the old pump was 42 cents per gallon. We finally ended up in Lampasas where we explored the square area which had some interesting stores and a beautiful courthouse that was built in 1883. If you like German food, Eve's Cafe on the square would be an excellent choice. From Lampasas we traveled South on 281 toward San Antonio. We made another short stop in Marble Falls for pie at the Blue Bonnet Cafe and then headed for home. The entire trip covered 292 miles and took about 11 hours. It was a fun adventure and we both thoroughly enjoyed Marilyn's Day Off.



Blanco Bowling Club Hill Country Breakfast Run

Submitted by Tim McCurdy

On 27 March, the annual breakfast group gathered in the early morning for a nice run up to the Bowling Club Café in Blanco. Only 7 cars showed up, but we have learned from runs past, that a smaller group of cars can lead to a more spirited run (not needing a sweep and everyone stayed together) We got a good appetite by transversing some great winding and curvy Miata-type roads. The room was set up for us when we got to the restaurant, and all seemed to really enjoy the breakfast...especially the huge biscuits that many got. Their reasonable prices were great too!

After breakfast we saddled up and headed for some more great roads. The River Road bridges out of Wimberley were under water and closed, but we took the Fisher Store Rd and enjoyed the full length of Mail Route Rd which has some great curves. (I love roads that have that sign indicating numerous curves ahead!) We moved on down 306 and got on the S. Access Road that led us up to the Canyon Lake observation point for a bathroom break and enjoy the seeing the lake on perfect day. After a brief stop we went down River Road to Hwy 46. The ride was slow and leisurely, but the scenery was awesome. At 46 we split up, those going east and those going west.

We were so thankful for such a beautiful top down day. Dave and Marilyn left the group after breakfast to enjoy the wild flowers up above Fredericksburg, but they enjoyed the ride up the Old Blanco Road and the breakfast at the Bowling Club. Ennie and I were pleased to meet Patrick and his son, Will. They, as well as everyone, enjoyed the great roads, great food, and great fun, with great friends!



Hamburger and Accessorizing Run

What looked like a potential rain event, turned out to be a delightful top down evening. The Miata Valero has always been a great place to start a run, except for Tuesday, April 13. Who would think that the store would upgrade their computers during working hours? With a closed store that meant no restrooms or filling of gas tanks. As you know, it's crucial for one to empty and fill one's tank. After several cars returned from other neighborhood gas stations, off we went to seek food and beverage. Along the way, Gene and Marcia lay waiting for us in Gruene to join our happy group. Another couple, Rohm and Barbara, joined us at Centerpoint Station. With baskets of French fries, onion rings, hamburgers and other assorted food groups being passed our way, the hungry Miataphites devoured their prey.

Centerpoint Station is not just a restaurant, but also a bakery (several members loaded up on ½ price cinnamon rolls), a store with a variety of things for accessorizing (chic stuff) and a soda fountain. Every time a thick milkshake was delivered to the restaurant, Glen's head would do a whiplash to the right. Yummy! After closing up the place, many took off for the Outlet Mall to see what deals the stores had for them. A big thanks to Dave & Marilyn, Glen & Liz, Wally & Susie, Tom & Sandee, JC & Betty, Marilyn, Gene & Marcia, Rohm & Barbara for joining Leon and myself for a fun time. Hope I didn't leave anybody out.....

Gotta Miata!!!!

Pat Franklin



12 Hours of Sebring-Texas Style

continued from front page

Saturday started very early as the mattresses in our wonderful accommodations were starting to lose their glow and our bodies were exhausted. Well, we at least got to the track without waiting in much of a line! The accessibility of the event surprised me even more when I found out what the "Grid Walk" actually meant – OK, I'm a rookie at these things! We all got to physically go out on the track, asphalt, glowing terra firma of rubber and sweat and see the cars in their grids surrounded by the mechanics, drivers, and owners! This was exciting even for me and especially for my son who could appreciate the celebrity and knew the cars and teams from following them for years. We retired to our perch above the crowds that had gathered at our glorious Turn One post and settled in on the roof of the Olsens' RV for the beginning of the race. Even though we had been listening to the sound of engines racing around the track for four days now, the beginning of the race was an impressive show of sight and sound. As it continued, we could pick out the tenor of each team's engines as you met first the steady hum of the diesel Peugeots, then the rumblings of the Corvettes, followed by the distinctive tones of the Ferraris, Aston Martin, Porsches, the solo Mazda engine, and others. The American Le Mans Series was something I knew of prior to this race, but to actually experience it was something that opened my eyes. By watching its current incarnation, you can appreciate its beginnings with a bunch of guys who had different cars that just wanted to race. You still get that feeling which is the best part! The drivers, teams and fans are there for the love of the race! And love it they did! I thought that 12 hours might drag on, but it was all very exciting. It was disappointing to see my car, the Mazda Lola, lose quite a few laps at the beginning of the race, but it came back out. My son's fav, the Corvettes, somehow managed to bump each other in the pits and lose their competitive placings. The Peugeots won of course, but the Flying Lizard and Patron teams were captivating to watch. There were few

mishaps resulting from the professionalism of the drivers and perhaps chance, but the race continued to enthrall the audience; that and the festival atmosphere. Oh, an other highlight to the experience – our "host," Pete Olsen, just couldn't stand to take \$150 from us for the privilege of getting to know us. After 15 minutes of saying no, Sean finally gave in and took the refund for the Golden Turn One spot!



Sean, atop an RV taking pictures

Would I go again? Yes! However, the best way to attend would be to sleep at the track in an RV on the fence. Something a bit cost prohibitive unless you already own an RV – rental is around \$1,600 for the four days. I'm not a camper at heart, but I think the benefits of the experience would outweigh the inconvenience. The people and the adventure were memorable and I can't even explain my delight at getting to enjoy the four days with my son as my companion!

Some of Sean's pictures are available for your perusal at gallery.wedgenet.us

GIMMICK RUN THAT WAS NOT

Paul Faulkner prepared, copied and stapled a great gimmick run. Everything was set. But Mother Nature had other plans. She sent a very cold and rainy Saturday for San Antonio and the area on March 13, 2010. In reviewing the weather report @ WOAI on the evening news, Paul cancelled the run by Friday evening, March 12 and had George send out the word to all Miataphites. Later, Dave Hamilton said, "That was the best decision you ever made. It would have been a miserable, cold run." Paul opted to move it forward two weeks to Saturday, April 3, 2010.

GIMMICK RUN THAT WAS... AND WILDFLOWER RUN

Fast forward two weeks to April 3, 2010. This is Easter weekend and it was questionable how many of our club friends would be there. But Paul did remark that if it were good weather, they would come. And they did! Everyone met in Poth, Texas at the Tetco, (because they had a restroom). Twelve cars came. It was a bit foggy but that was just because it was early. For a few days prior, there had been wildflowers spotted as they were beginning to pop out everywhere. This was to be THE weekend in the area. So, ...each of the cars set out on the umpteenth gimmick run of Paul Faulkner. The course went over hills and dales and through wildflower meadows and how each car did zoom. Mario heard a snake and ran over another. (He got extra points.) We met for lunch at the Blue Quail on Goliad Square. The run continued for another page and all cars ended at the J4 Ranch for dessert of Black Forest Cake. It was pleasant sitting on the veranda and visiting with friends. The kids got in a bit of egg hunting with Abby. Pat and Marilyn were the winners and were rewarded with country, fresh-laid, farm eggs. If you were not with us, we hope you were with family and among wildflowers. The beauty was everyone's to behold. It was a wonderful day!

Judy and Paul Faulkner

Bluebonnet Miata Club Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2010

Open Meeting

Introduction of new members - Ed & Melissa Lee '08 Highland Green Touring
Guests – George's brother, Mike Lucas.

Reports

Treasurer's Report: Marilyn McCullen reported that our current checking account balance was \$. The savings account balance is \$.
Membership: Betty Jackson reported that we have 97 members.
Webmaster: Don was not present at the meeting to give an update.
Newsletter: George requests more stories and encouraged run leaders to send in stories of their run.

Old Business

Club Pins are free to new members. \$2 for current/old members. See Betty Jackson for more information.
Club Stickers are 2 for \$5.00. See Betty Jackson for more information.
The Bluebonnet Miata Club Business cards are available for members to pass out.
Name Badges are available from Betty Jackson upon request. They are \$6.50 and due when ordering one. She needs a few more name badge orders to complete the minimum requirement.

New Business

BBMC will be hosting the 2010 Texas Miata Round Up. Participants were encouraged to reserve rooms at the Y.O. Ranch for \$89 a night + tax.
Run leaders need to mail the run sheets to the Secretary.
New Miata Hawaiian shirts are available for purchase from www.thompsonautomotive.com.
Price is about \$55.00.

Past Runs and Activities –

Dave told us about his Hamburger Run to Rudy's.
Marilyn talked about Bowling with Betty.
Dave also told us about Jim's Hamburger run to Roxy's.

New Runs and Activities –

Cars N Coffee. Blanco & 1604. March 27, 2010.
Hill Country Breakfast Run. March 27, 2010. Meet at Exxon at Ralph Fair Rd and I-10 at 7:45.
Breakfast at the Blanco Bowling Club.
Lunar Zoomers Run, March 30, 2010, no run. Meet for dinner at Papoulis Greek restaurant, located at I-10 and Huebner.
Gimmick Run. April 4th.
Trash Pick Up. April 10th.
Pat's Hamburger and Accessory Run. April 13th. Meet at Miata Valero at 6pm.
Corvette Car Show in Boerne, TX on April 17, 2010. Proceeds to benefit St. Jude's Children's Home
Security Hilltop Car Show. May 15, 2010 @ Cowboy's Dance Hall

New Miata Stuff

No new toys were reported.
People asked for advice on brake pads and strut bars.

The Meeting was adjourned. People went to the parking lot for more Miata talk.

In The Breeze

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



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

Upcoming Runs and Events

- **Wednesday, April 28th, Lunar Zoomers Dinner** - 8:00 p.m. Pig Stand, 1508 Broadway, San Antonio. Join us at this historic nostalgic drive in. The Pig Stands were the first ever drive ins in Texas and we have the last one "standing"! Car clubs clamor at this locale almost every day and night of the week, just to see and be seen. Don't miss out as we'll enjoy this diner and it's great food and visit in the parking lot under a full moon!
- **Thursday, April 28th, through Sunday, May 2nd. Miatas doing the Charleston.** If you haven't already made plans for this, you're probably too late when reading this. However, check our Forum for more details.
- **Tuesday, May 11th, Hamburger Run**, led by Scott and Adele Long. Details TBA, watch the website for future details.
- **Saturday, May 15th, Hill Country Run**, led by Stephanie Bell-Turner. Details TBA, watch the website for details.
- **Tuesday, May 25th, Monthly Meeting**, Country Line Restaurant on IH10 West. Eat at 6:30 p.m., meet at 7:30 p.m.