



January 2018



Letter from the President



I trust that everyone has had a wonderful Christmas, Chanukah, New Year's and Holiday season. This year we have had great runs, events, meals and meetings. Our Holiday Party was a rousing success. I want to once again thank everyone who contributed. As noted during the party a big Thank You goes out to our Board. The Hirshbeel's for procuring our wonderful location. Becky Shaw provided our lovely centerpieces. A special mention goes to Ana and David Porter who returned from a long trip. The following day, the Porters went over to the Pork Shop in San Tan. They picked up a ham and two turkeys and prepared them for our meal. (Carving both turkeys and setting up both entrée's even though they must have been exhausted.) Our editor Paul Gaskill and Wade Phyfer for taking photographs. The Chabot's organized our annual toy drive. Our membership supplied great appetizers, side dishes and desserts. I had been told by many people that this was our best meal ever. If I forgot anyone please forgive me.

I also want to take a moment to let everyone know that Cynthia and Curtis Wood will be hosting our next monthly meeting at their home this January 13th. Please check Meetup for more details. As mentioned during the Holiday Party, we are trying something new. Every other month our Monthly Meeting will be held at a member's home. The club will be allocating funds in the amount of \$100 to help offset the cost of an entrée. Club members will be bringing a dish to share. Think of this as a mini holiday party every other month! The purpose for these meetings is to provide a more intimate setting so that we can get to know each other a little better. Restaurants are fun, but we hope a setting at someone's home will allow us to meet new members, celebrate special occasions and bring our membership closer together. A big thank you goes out to Cynthia and Curtis for opening their home to the Sahuaro Miata Club. And by the way, this idea came from Cynthia and Curtis. I also wish to take a moment to welcome Curtis Wood to our 2018 BOD. Curtis will be our new Treasurer.

Lastly I wish to thank our 2017 Board of Directors for their hard work and excellent service to our club.

Much health and happiness for 2018. Sincerely, Jeff Morris



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

First, let me wish all of you a Happy New Year. I hope all enjoyed spending time with friends and family during the holiday season.

With the start of a new year we welcome Curtis Wood to the Board. He will assume the duties of Treasurer.

Also this year, we will look back at the history of the club in pictures thanks to Rick Pasquale. He gave me many photo albums and CD's filled with events that the club held over the years.

The Holiday party was a huge success. We had a large turn out and several new members attended. Terye handed out gifts from Mazda embossed with Miata club member logo. The gift exchange was enjoyed by all even with the "stealing" of gifts which created some funny moments. You will find pictures from the party in the newsletter.

Several members have expressed an interest in improving the performance of their cars. With that in mind if anyone has done anything recently please share it with us. You can e-mail me with the details and it will be used in the newsletter.

In this edition Jeff Morris shares his DIY clutch extension project. This is a project that many members have a interest in; Rick Pasquale writes about the connection of the club to food. For those of you looking for track time, Mark Kucera tells us what options we have.

It looks like 2018 will be a exciting year for the club.

Until next month,

Paul Gaskill, Editor

Letter from our Vice-President and Events Coordinator

Welcome to 2018 and the 26th year for the Sahuaro Miata Club. In reviewing the previous runs/events the Club has had easy opportunities for everyone to host and lead at least one activity this year. One of the easier ways to come up with a run you would like to lead is to review the list of runs the club previously did that are listed in Meetup.com. Sign in, select our club, select "Meetups" and then select "Past". Every run/event the club has done since October 2015 is listed. Scroll down the list and you'll find runs you could easily duplicate because all the details are there. You could do the run exactly as it was done before, or make changes to make it new or more to your liking. Repeating previous fun runs is a club tradition because people that previously enjoyed a run like to do them again and there are lots of new club members that haven't done the run before.

I would be happy to help you plan and post your event. Prior experience leading a run isn't required because on the day of your event, I or another club member can help you host the event.

Of course you can also come up with new events/runs that you would like to propose and host. Please step up and contribute one event this year. We need everyone's participation to have lots of fun events in 2018. Email **Mark Kucera at VPEvents@SahuaroMiataClub.com**

Here's a partial list of the events that opened 2017. See Meetup.com for more.

Bagdad Arizona Run and Lunch
Falcon Field Museum, Car Show and Breakfast
Track Day or Autocross Events
St. Anthony's Monastery Visit and Lunch
Roma Café and Car Show
Lake Shore Restaurant and Desert Belle Saguaro Lake Boat Tour
Spring Splash Car Show at Trinity Lutheran Church
Drive-In Movie Night At Glendale Drive-In
Cave Creek and Carefree Arizona Hills Exploration
Phoenix Points of Pride Tour
Casa Grande Ruins and Artisan Village
Driver Safety Course by AARP
Escape From Summer In The City Run To Flagstaff
Lake Havasu City and Laughlin Run

Highlights from the recent Club Board of Directors Meeting

The Sahuaro Miata Club Board of Directors met at 10:00 a.m. December 5, 2017 at Berge Mazda in Gilbert. Two interested club members also attended as guests.

Treasurer Tony Munro noted the club has a balance of \$3,934.14.

Membership Coordinator Nancy Cunningham furnished a report showing that three new members joined in November, bringing the total to 103 dues paying memberships. In addition there are 3 active life members and 8 inactive lifetime members.

Merchandise Coordinator Martha Purfeerst provided an update on merchandise, special order, badge, raffle ticket, and gift certificate sales.

Vice President Mark Kucera discussed the need to establish additional runs for the upcoming months. Board members discussed a variety of ideas and will soon meet with representatives from the Old Pueblo Miata club to potentially develop a joint run in southern Arizona:

- New members Curtis and Cynthia Wood offered to host a reception for club members in their home in mid-January. The Board expressed hopes that other members might be willing to also host an event in their home as a way of strengthening the social aspects of our club.
- Holiday party. Final preparations were discussed. A draft agenda was shared too.
- Concourse in the Hills. Planning continues for this February 10 event, a fundraiser for Children's Hospital. Jeff is hoping for a very strong turn-out of our members.

President Jeff Morris discussed conducting some future board meetings via Skype, beginning in February. This will save board members a drive to meetings.

Hope Morris provided an update on electronic member enrollments and renewals using Survey Monkey. This system could also be used to gather member input during the year.

Next meeting 10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 11 at Berge Mazda. Members are welcome to attend, but should contact Jeff Morris in advance due to the limited size of the meeting room.

2018 Board Members

President:

Jeff Morris

president@sahuaromiataclub.com

Vice President / Event Coordinator

Mark Kucera

vpevents@sahuaromiataclub.com

Secretary

None

secretary@sahuaromiataclub.com

Treasurer

Curtis Woods

treasurer@sahuaromiataclub.com

Membership

None

membership@sahuaromiataclub.com

Marketing

Martha Purfeerst

marketing@sahuaromiataclub.com

Member At Large

None

memberatlarge@sahuaromiataclub.com

Editor

Paul Gaskill

editor@sahuaromiataclub.com

Mark Kucera, Vice President and Events Coordinator sent in this poem that he had e-mailed to the members last spring. With the start of the new year it bears repeating.

“Think It Over”

Author Unknown

Are you an active member
The kind who would be missed,
Or are you just contented that
Your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock
Or do you stay away
And criticize and knock?
Do you take an active part
To help the work along
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind who “just belongs”?
Do you ever work on committees
To see there is no trick,
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the clique?
So come to meetings often
And help with hand and heart,
Don't be just a member
But take an active part.
Think this over friend,
You know right from wrong
Are you an active member,
Or do you...Just belong?

Do It Yourself Project - Clutch Pedal Extension

Jeff Morris recently extended the clutch pedal in his car and shares with us how he went about it and where he purchased the parts needed. If you have any questions about this contact Jeff and he will answer your questions.

First off. This mod has changed my life. This simple extension allows me to drive my NC with complete comfort,

The part comes from Bondra Performance Engineering. I paid \$44.00 on eBay for one. Plus I bought a Mustang clutch pad (Dorman part number 20705) for \$10.00.

The clamshell from Bondra is made to fit Mustangs. The Mustang pedal is smaller than the Miata's so you either grind down the clutch pedal on the Miata or you take a Dremel and grind out the slot that fits around the Miata pedal. This is a pain in the butt however just have patience. Grind the groove in the clam shell then check it to the pedal, then grind some more on the clam shell and check it again. Etc. etc. Keep removing plastic with the Dremel until the clamshell just fits. If you grind off too much plastic you can ruin these \$50 dollar plastic parts.

- 1.) I took a channel lock and removed the original pedal pad from my Miata.
- 2.) Find the two clam shell halves and place them on your work surface. When you look at the inside of the clam shell you will see a groove that runs on the back side of the clam shell that fits around the metal Miata clutch pad.
- 3.) Take your clam shell and place it around your Miata clutch pedal. You will see the groove in the extension is too small. I took my Dremel tool and ground the heck out of the Bondra clamshell groove. (See description above)
- 4.) When you have ground out the groove so that the extension closes around the metal pedal you can assemble the Dorman rubber pad onto the extension. (I heated the new pad with a heat gun first, this helps in fitting the rubber pad onto the Bondra clamshell.)
- 5.) Opening the clamshell on the ends opposite the pad, I slipped the assembly onto my Mazda's clutch pedal.
- 4.) You must tighten down two bolts that hold the clamshell together. Use a #2 Philips screwdriver. Do not over tighten.

Job complete!

Now you don't have to sit so close to the dash. On my way to MRLS this year my right leg was cramping up. Now with this mod, I can drive all day, I am 5' 10".

Below is a YouTube video showing how to install the clutch pad extension on a Mustang. Please note as mentioned above, the Metal Mustang clutch pedal pad is smaller than the clutch pedal pad on the Miata NC. So the big difference is that we have to grind out the groove in the plastic extension. This will allow the plastic extension clam shell to fit on the larger metal Miata clutch pedal.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7b_xybUQIk

This is a link to CJ Pony Parts where you can order the Bondra Performance Engineering kit.

https://www.cjponyparts.com/clutch-pedal-extension-1994-2018/p/PCS68/?year=1998&utm_source=Shopping_Com&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=EbayCommerceNetwork

You may also find this part on eBay. Look for Bondra Performance Engineering or Mustang Clutch Pedal extension etc.

Below is a photo that shows what the clutch pedal looks like after the modification.



The delicious connection: Sahuaro Miata Club and food

What? I thought this was supposed to be a car club? Relax, it's a great car club. Enjoying good food just helps bring us together, as has been the case for more than 25 years.

- One of the very first Sahuaro Miata club events was “Burgers & Miatas” in September 1991. Eating together, then viewing the automotive cruise-in at Pavilions.
- The next month, the club held its first overnight run. A newsletter article written back then describes the fun of the drive to Greer AZ and enjoying lunch together at the Christopher Creek Steakhouse, dinner at a lodge, and breakfast at the Rendezvous Diner. Another member's article discussing the same trip said dinner was “a great opportunity to know more about each other.”
- The first of many gatherings around pizza was at Peter Piper. There members socialized and discussed plans for the club's first run to Sedona, including lunch at The Hideaway restaurant.
- Club members have gotten to know one another better over food in members' homes too. Starting with the 1991 Christmas dinner at Carol and Tod Solomon's home. Three dozen members attended and then went on a holiday lights tour.
- The first annual meeting with elections was held as an evening picnic.
- When a trip to Jerome and Prescott ended early due to heavy rain, club members headed to Rock Springs Café and enjoyed lunch and a few beers together.
- We even went on a “Food Fun Run” with 14 Miatas joining multiple other car clubs on the way to Desert Mining Camp restaurant in Apache Junction.

This combination of what we must do (eat) and what we enjoy doing (driving Miatas) continues to evolve. The purpose remains the same though, developing a strong club.

- In 2015, the club initiated breakfast meetings on one Saturday of each month. The breakfasts were often followed by short runs in the valley.
- In 2017, the club began breaking bread together at weekday lunches. Alternating every week between different areas of the valley as well as Prescott.
- This past year the club also began evening dinner meetings. Sharing ideas for future runs, and information about our cars and ourselves. Even celebrating birthdays.

We're also renewing events in member homes for the first time in a number of years. This setting is especially conducive to developing friendships and a strong club. Rick & Linda recently hosted a BBQ at their home following the scavenger hunt style rally. In January,

- Curtis and Cynthia Wood will host our first bi-monthly home reception/pot luck.

And don't forget the out-of-town runs. In 2017 club members dined together in Tortilla Flat, Bagdad, Florence, Lake Havasu City, Laughlin, Kingman, Saguaro Lake, Coolidge, Flagstaff, Globe, Prescott, Springerville, Monterey (CA), Sonoita, Bisbee, and Tombstone!

The best Sahuaro Miata club and food connection? At a club dinner meeting held at the Pinnacle Peak Patio Restaurant two first generation red Miata owners met one another for the first time. Less than a year later, Colleen Pool and Dennis Webster married.

Thanks to **Rick Pasquale** for writing this article.

3rd Place Winner !!

The club was awarded 3rd place in the Veterans Day Parade civilian vehicle category. The award was presented to Becky Shaw at the Parade Victory Party on December 7th. Accompanying Becky at the award presentation was Terye Van Sanford. Congratulations to the club for a great show of support.



Our Mission

The Mission of the Sahuaro Miata Club is to increase the fun of driving and owning a Mazda MX-5 Miata. This is achieved by combining fun runs and outings that allow us to take advantage of our roadsters phenomenal performance. Through meetings, meals and activities we meet like minded club members. We share our Miata experiences and develop friendships along the way that makes us all proud to be Miata owners and members of the Sahuaro Miata Club.

Serving the Greater Phoenix Miata Community

Sahuaro Miata Club Annual Membership Meeting and Holiday Party

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Morris, President

Officers / Directors Present:

Jeff Morris - President

Mark Kucera - Vice President

Rick Pasquale - Secretary

Tony Munro - Treasurer

Other Directors Present:

Martha Purfeerst - Merchandiser Coordinator

Terye VanSanford - At Large Member

Director Absent:

Nancy Cunningham - Membership Coordinator

Welcome/Opening. Jeff welcomed everyone and wished a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all.

Appreciation. Jeff thanked Mark and Sheryl Hirshbeel for arranging the use of their clubhouse. He thanked Dave and Ana Porter for picking up and slicing the turkey and ham and also Ed and Ginger Chabot for handling the toy drive. Jeff then awarded gifts to the current Board members as acknowledgement of their contributions over the past year. Mark recognized Jeff for his dedicated efforts as well.

Gifts to members. Terye helped distribute hats, shirts, and other Miata items that she obtained free for the Club from Mazda North America. Jeff noted that every club member also received a golden outlined 25th Anniversary door magnet when checking in for the party.

Run Leader recognition. Martha awarded 2017 door magnets to additional members who led events this year. Included were Mike Paar for Tech Day, Terye VanSanford for a backstage tour of the Tempe Center for the Arts, Becky Shaw for the Veterans Day Parade, and Leo Fiebiger for the visit to the World Wildlife Zoo. Becky noted the club's parade entry was awarded 3rd place in the civilian vehicle category.

Monthly dinner meetings. At Tony's suggestion we recently began monthly dinner meetings at restaurants. Jeff explained that Cynthia and Curtis Wood offered to hold a reception in their home on January 13, 2018 which offers even better opportunities for club members to get to know one another. Members are encouraged to bring a pot luck dish. We hope to alternate the dinner meetings between restaurants and homes each month. To support the hosts, the club will provide up to \$100 reimbursement for appetizers or other expenses. Willing hosts for future months should contact Mark Kucera to coordinate the arrangements.

Streamlining membership and renewals. Hope shared that the club will be incorporating Survey Monkey into our enrollment process, making it easier for members. There will also be a direct link to PayPal.

Newsletter. Paul Gaskill was recognized for his re-instituting the club newsletter. Art Kessel was also thanked for his assisting Paul.

Board of Directors for 2018. Jeff announced that four members expressed a willingness to be nominated for the Board of Directors in 2018.

President - Jeff Morris

Vice President - Mark Kucera

Secretary - NONE

Treasurer - Curtis Wood

Membership Coordinator - NONE

Merchandise Coordinator - Martha Purfeerst

At large member on behalf of the preceding president - NONE

Elections. The membership unanimously elected those four individuals. Club members were asked to further consider volunteering for the three remaining positions. Jeff noted that Hope can help fill-in for Membership Coordinator until someone volunteers,

Concourse in the Hills. This prestigious event is a charitable car show to benefit Children's Hospital of Phoenix. The entire \$60 per car entry fee goes direct to Children's Hospital. In just a few years, this event has grown to over 600 cars, and the 5th annual event is scheduled for February 10, 2018. Jeff urged members to consider participating. He noted that if we get at least 10 cars we'll be provided space to put up a tent.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 12:45.









How to find locations to get track time

Several members have asked if there was a track in the area where they could put in some track time. I reached out to **Mark Kucera** and he wrote the following article which should answer that question.

If you would like to experience the excitement of learning to drive your MX-5 on a track just for fun, join your fellow Club members that have been taking lessons with local clubs and organizations running these events at Phoenix area tracks. For an idea of what these past events were all about look at “Past Events” posted on the Sahuaro Miata Club Meetup page.

Here are four organizations and descriptions of their events. There are possibly other clubs organizing events, such as the Corvette club.

ProAutoSports <http://www.new.proautosports.com>

ProAutoSports is a commercial business that has been running these events in the Southwest since 1992. Each event has something for drivers of all experience levels. They have a new member orientation class, performance and defensive driving program, and full road racing program. The cost for the new member orientation class is \$200 which includes a 30 minute classroom instruction. Also 3 or 4 twenty minute on-track sessions with an instructor for at least one session. More instructor ride-along sessions are available. Subsequent events costs vary depending on the track, but are about \$185. See their website for all the rules and requirements, or talk to Club member that has participated before.

Porsche Club of America, Arizona Region <https://az.pca.org/>

The local Porsche Club puts on Autocross and Driver Education events. Non-Club members are welcome, and all makes and models of cars are accepted. I found the Porsche Club members very friendly and open to all participants. There is no need to feel your Miata isn't good enough or fast enough to run with the Porsches. Heck, our Miatas even passed several Porsches. It's more about the driver and the handling of the car, rather than the cost of the car and the power of the engine. Go Miatas!

Their driver education events are similar to the ProAutoSports events described above. The events are run by local Club members and are somewhat more professional, thorough, and safe, in the opinion of this author. Cost is \$160 for the one day events, which for first time participants includes multiple classroom sessions, and 5 twenty minute on-track sessions, with an in-car instructor with you for all sessions, and lunch. After a day of instruction you'll probably be let on the track for a session without your instructor to “Solo”. After a successful Solo and instructor sign-off you'll move up in the class and run without instructors. For more information go to their website, or talk to a Club member that has participated before.

NASA (National Auto Sports Association) Arizona Region <https://nasaaz.com/>

NASA runs a similar program to the Porsche club listed above. See their website for more information

SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) Arizona Region
<http://www.azsolo.com/backup/>

This is an Autocross or Solo club. “Solo®” is the brand name for SCCA® Auto crossing and on paper it seems very simple – use traffic cones to make a mini-road course in a large parking lot or unused airport tarmac and see who can drive it the quickest without hitting any cones or going off course.

Despite the generally low speeds attained during competition, it’s one of the fastest paced, rapid-fire forms of motorsports you can find, with barriers to entry so low that many people are able to compete and be competitive at it.

Competitors range from the casual participant who may use the same daily driver that they car-pool with to the hard-core driver who has a special car, special tires and uses lots of vacation days to squeak out every last fraction of a second. In between the extremes, there are levels and classes for different degrees of car modification. There are even classes for ladies. Whatever your level or car – there is a place for you in SCCA Solo.

Tracks

The tracks in the area are:

Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park has multiple sports car tracks.
<http://www.racewildhorse.net/>

Arizona Motorsports Park (AMP) has one sports car track and a large parking lot where Autocross or Solo events are held. <http://arizonamotorsportspark.com/>

Inde Motorsports Ranch is close to Wilcox Arizona. It has one large sports car track that can be configured multiple ways. <https://www.indemotorsports.com/>

Chuckwalla Valley Raceway is in southern California about 3 hours from Phoenix.
<http://www.chuckwallavalleyraceway.com/>

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Tim Kroll



Arizona has only been my home for the past 2 1/2 years. Most of my life (45 yrs) was spent in Hawaii. I escaped to Hawaii after my first 18 years in Detroit, where I hated the long, cold, grey winters. I had several occupations in Hawaii also completing two MS degrees. It is also where I had my first 2 seat car experience. About 50 years ago is was a bright red 1959 MGA that was fun to drive but a pain as it always had something going wrong. That car was around for less than a year. The next one was 20 years later, a 1987 Porsche 924S, Zermatt Silver and a real fun car to drive. Many great activities with the Porsche Club. A zippy little car that was mine for almost 2 years before it caught fire early one morning on the way to the airport. Everything in front of the firewall was toasted, behind it not even touched. In 2007 I retired from a business I owned for almost 25 years. Sold everything I had in Hawaii (properties and business) and moved to Denver. Had a house built near a golf course I liked and got ready to experience a winter with snow rather than sun. Colorado is a wonderful place in the summer, but the winters got to me, so while visiting friends in Phoenix, I decided to buy a home and move here, which I did in late 2014.

Purchased my 2007 Galaxy Grey MX-5 PRHT in Nov of 2016 and after a crash a month later have been enjoying it, learning about it and tinkering with it. Added a few things, Good Win muffler, aluminum coolant tank, shock tower strut, and some outside bling. Just turned 96k miles but it runs great, no leaks, gets great mileage and still looks pretty good. Joined the Club shortly after purchasing the car and enjoy all it has to offer.

I spend my days playing golf in the morning, reading, doing some volunteer work and continue doing arbitration for FINRA, and now also for the Better Business Bureau. My house is populated by myself and two dogs. Both of my sons live in Southeast Asia.

Afternoon at the Wildlife World Zoo hosted by Leo Fiebiger

This was a fun event led by Leo Fiebiger. Leo put a lot of effort in this event and the club is very appreciative. Leo even arranged to get the club into the park with half off admission. Thank You Leo, job well done.

We started off with seventeen people attending the lunch at the Dillon's restaurant which is adjacent to the Wild Life Park. The meal was great as was the service. We had the opportunity to enjoy great weather on the patio. Our view consisted of a flock of beautiful Flamingo. Lunch was fun.

We then proceeded to the park where the group split up and ventured off to three separate sections of the park. The park has a Wildlife Zoo, Aquarium and a Safari Park. As you can imagine we visited all three parks and enjoyed everything. The zoo had a wide gamut of animals. Many animals were kept outside in habitats designed specifically for their species. There were also indoor exhibits that were great fun. The Aquarium was quite expansive. As Hope and I walked through it, I was amazed at the size and quality of the exhibits. The Safari park was also fun, we took the opportunity to ride their train and travel the lovely lift that provided us a great view of the park.

I left the park feeling what a hidden treasure we have here in western Phoenix. I trust all of our members will get the opportunity to visit this park at least once. They deserve our support.

Article written by Jeff Morris.



Afternoon at the Wildlife World Zoo hosted by Leo Fiebiger



A BIG Thanks
to our Sponsors!



Erich Van Sanford 12/6/17



*******NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMER*******

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Send all submissions to:
editor@sahuaromiataclub.com

LAST LAUGH

