

The CAR Enthusiast

September 2003

The President's Post

By Christian LeHew

My phone rings several times a week. Usually, it's a telemarketer telling me I've won a trip, a charity wanting money, or another credit card offer. Every one of them a stranger who I probably have nothing in common with. But at least once during the week, I get a phone call that I look forward to.

Why? Because it's usually a Miata owner who's heard all about the Chesapeake Area Roadsters, and just can't wait to join the club. And it's great! It always catches me off guard, too. I answer the phone, expecting it to be another sales rep, when I get a voice on the other end saying, "Hi, I'm calling about the Miata club."

And usually an hour later, my wife comes in to remind me that we've been talking for an hour, and that once they see their phone bill, they're never going to join the club! But it's usually these hour-long phone calls that lead us to want to meet each other and check out the cars.

Over the last month, I met Ron, who couldn't wait to show me the new paint job on his '90, and see which of DuClaw's beers was the best. I helped Yair fix his Jackson Racing supercharger, and we had a great talk about everything from Miatas to Mexican food. I had a wonderful lunch with Bob and his brother Russ from Texas (Russ even made a special point to look me up while he was in the area visiting Bob). And John, who's personality and enthusiasm is as wonderful as a drive in his immaculate '97 M Edition.

But no matter who it is, the majority of the time, the person I meet with comments that they weren't expecting a 28-year-old to meet them! Does that bother me? Nope. Because it's one of the things that makes the CAR club so great. We're all enthusiastic. We're all willing to help each other out. We all love this little Miata.

And while everyone else who calls me during the week may be strangers, I'm grateful that there's a whole group of people that I've gotten to know who are now friends, and no longer strangers.

So be sure to check out the upcoming events, or give me a call, and come meet a great group of people!

Got Cold Feet?

Have you ever been sitting in the passenger seat of a car, and every time the driver makes a left turn, your foot suddenly gets drenched in ice water? Or perhaps if you're more fortunate, it'll miss your foot, but you'll see it pouring out into a large puddle on your floor mat.

Well, it's from your air conditioning system, and with it being summer, your car is probably more prone to have these symptoms at this time of year.

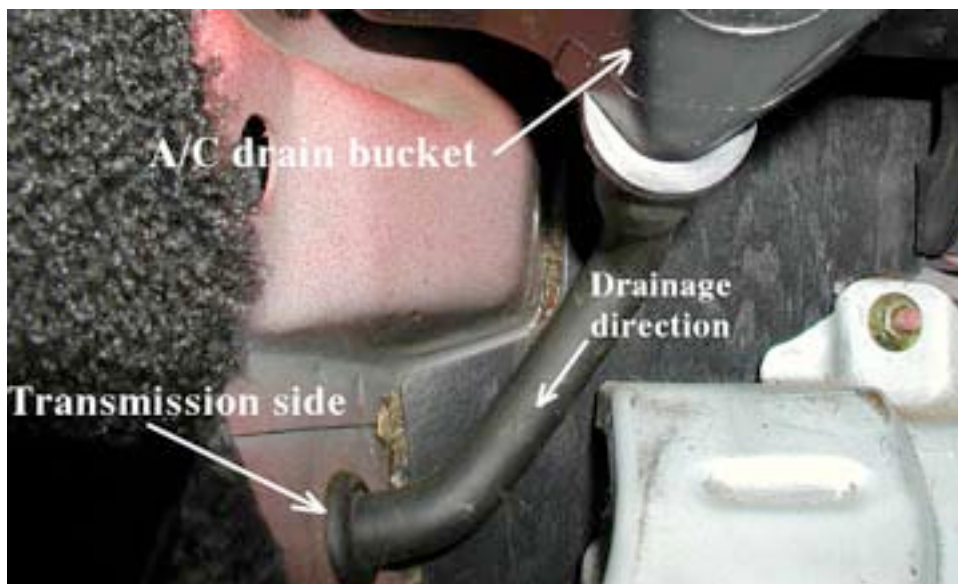
Is it expensive to fix? Nope. Is it hard to fix? Nope.

If you pull away the edge of your carpeting, and look behind the glove box, you'll find a black plastic "bucket". When you have your a/c on, the condensation from the lines behind the dashboard drip into this bucket, and it drains out through a rubber tube into the transmission tunnel. Occasionally, this tube will become disconnected or blocked, causing the water to overflow into the passenger compartment.

The first thing you can check is to pull the carpeting away from the firewall and lay a towel in it's place. Then make sure that the rubber hose is connected to the grommet on the bucket, and to the grommet on the transmission tunnel. If it is, then pull off the end that's attached to the bucket, and use something like a cotton swab to clean out the grommet, and loosen up anything that may be blocking the drain hole. If you suddenly notice water coming out, simply remove the cotton swab, and plug the drain with your fingertip until you can re-attach the rubber hose.

On '90-'93 cars, be very careful not to let too much water run onto the floor, as the car's ECU is located directly underneath.

If you feel adventurous, you can remove the glove box and access the bucket from there to clean it out completely, however this will require some time.



Visit our newest sponsor!

We're very proud to announce the addition of our newest CAR club sponsor, Rich Morton Mazda in Pasadena. They're very anxious to work with us, not only for future events and vehicle launches, but they're also offering a discount on parts and services, exclusively to CAR members. They are also an official Mazdaspeed dealer. Plus, I'm sure they'd give you a great deal on a new Mazda.

So stop by the dealership at 51 Mountain Road in Pasadena (near Marley Station Mall & Route 100), their site at <http://www.richmorton.com>, or call them toll-free at 866-260-6028.

Shop at the 'Parts Department'!

T-shirts. Mugs. Clocks. Grillin' Aprons. Hats. In fact, nearly everything you need to make a full wardrobe! And they all have the CAR logo emblazoned on them. They're affordable, make great gifts and all proceeds go towards the CAR club and future activities. Check out the online site at <http://www.cafeshops.com/chesroadsters>.

You could win a Pulitzer Prize!

Have you just completed a cool project on your Miata that you want to share with other club members? Did you attend an event that moved you so much you want to write an article about it? Find a new road that seems like it was engineered *just for* Miatas? Got an idea for a future event or article? Then drop us a line and we'll put it in next month's issue. Deadline for submissions is September 25th. All submissions can be sent to Christian LeHew at hotroddesigner@hotmail.com.

Playin' with the neighbor's kids

The idea has been brought up to see about doing an event or two with another car club. Not necessarily another Miata club, but perhaps a Triumph club, Jaguar club, etc. We've made a few contacts with a local British car club from the Baltimore area, as well as to the local Honda S2000 club. As you can probably assume, there are quite a few car clubs in the area, so if you're a member of one, know someone who is, or just think of one that would be cool to spend the day with (I'm leaning towards Ferrari, myself!), then feel free to drop us a line with the contact info, and we'll take it from there.

A place for the race

If you've gone to any autocrossing events this year, you've probably heard one of us (or someone else) griping about the lack of racing sites in the area. "So what can I do?" Glad you asked.

The autocross community is always on the lookout for new venues where we can race. In a perfect world, they'd be smooth, flat, free of traffic islands, and about 20 miles away from a residential area. Event coordinators realize not all these parameters can always be met, but there's been a plea to the community to help find some new sites where we can go racing. Maybe it's the parking lot at work. Or a big school parking lot. Or your friend's airfield.

So if you know of an area that you think might be a possibility, PLEASE let one of us know, and we'll have one of the local officials check it out.

Past Events & Happenings

Wings of Freedom Air Show – August 15th

The weather was hot, but it wasn't enough to keep Larry (call sign "Tiger") and a squadron of air show enthusiasts from piloting their Miatas through some great back roads towards Frederick for the annual Wings of Freedom air show. The rain held off until the ride home, and a number of new CAR members came out for the drive. According to reports, a good time was had by all, and the mission was deemed a success!

Upcoming Events

For full details, check out the Events section of the CAR forum at <http://www.chesapeakeroadsters.com>. If you have an idea for a future event, please drop a line to our Events Coordinator Christian LeHew at hotroddesigner@hotmail.com or call 410.377.8434.

September 20th - Charity Car Show – Bowie, MD

Shine up your cars and get ready to show your stuff at the 2nd annual MOSpeed car show at Mt. Oak Fellowship Church in Bowie, MD. About 12 of us went last year, and it turned out to be a really cool event. Plus, it's for charity, so it's all for a good cause and is a great outreach program. The event runs from 3pm – 5:30pm. Last year, we worked it in as a great ending to a light tech day/BBQ at Brad's, but he's terribly upset that he can't do it this year. However, if someone would like to host something earlier in the day, we can head over to the show later in the afternoon. It has also been informally suggested about having a detail day the morning of the event with Dent Busters performing painless dent removal at a discounted rate. If you're interested in hosting or Dent Busters services, please drop a line to Christian.

Mount Oak Fellowship Church is located at:
14110 Mount Oak Rd.
Mitchellville, MD 20721
(301) 249-2230 office
(301) 249-8326 fax

DIRECTIONS FROM WASHINGTON, DC:

1. Take the US-50 EAST exit towards ANNAPOLIS.
2. Merge onto US-50 E.
3. Get off on Exit 11 to Bowie.
4. Merge right onto 197.
5. Go to the fourth traffic light (you will see a Lowes on the left).
6. Turn RIGHT onto Mitchellville Road.
7. Turn RIGHT onto MOUNT OAK ROAD.

DIRECTIONS FROM BALTIMORE:

1. Take the MD-32 EAST ramp towards ANNAPOLIS.
2. Merge onto SR-32 E.
3. Take the MD-3 SOUTH exit towards BOWIE.
4. Merge onto CRAIN HWY.
5. CRAIN HWY becomes SR-3 S.
6. SR-3 S becomes US-301 S.
7. Turn RIGHT onto MT OAK RD.

September 27th - Tech day - Crownsville, MD

Not only does Mike (GoKart) have a new FM2 turbo, but he has a new house (to him) with plenty of space and a garage, and he's been dying to host a tech day. So bring your projects, or just bring yourself, and make plans to come out for a full day of Miata and food fixin' with the CAR club's usual brand of fun.

After all, the only thing we do better than fixing Miatas is cooking on the BBQ.

Mike tells me we'll probably make the standard hamburgers/hotdogs and have the regular refreshments (cheap beer/sodas). If we ask nicely, he might even make his famous Spinach dip. There will be a gas grill and a gas steamer/fryer so if anyone else could bring something that would be great.

His house is pretty easy to get to, and directions follow. Just be careful about his driveway where it meets the road. You'll probably want to take it at a pretty good angle. The house is green, and has a red garage behind it. When you pull up the driveway, you can park your car on the left side on the grass. His address is 1218 Generals Highway, Crownsville MD 21032.

Directions from 695:

- Take 97 south toward Annapolis (12 miles)
- Take MD-178 (Generals Hwy), exit #5, toward CROWNSVILLE
- After getting on the exit ramp my house is the first one on the right (about 1/2 - 3/4 mi). The driveway before the black mailbox.
- If you make it to the 1st traffic signal (Herald Harbor rd.) you went too far.

Directions from 495:

- Take 50 east toward Annapolis (10 miles)
- Take 3 north, exit #13, toward Baltimore / Crofton ~~19~~ miles)
- Take 97 south exit toward Annapolis (1 mile)
- Stay in the far right hand lane and take the 1st exit (MD-178 - Generals Hwy), exit #5, toward CROWNSVILLE
- After getting on the exit ramp my house is the first one on the right (about 1/2 - 3/4 mi). The driveway before the black mailbox.
- If you make it to the 1st traffic signal (Herald Harbor Rd.) you went too far.

Directions from the East (Annapolis Mall):

- Take West St. west toward the Annapolis Mall
- In front of the mall West St. turns into Generals Hwy.
- Stay straight on Generals Hwy. (178) for 5 miles
- My house is just past the Herold Harbor Rd. traffic light on the left (across from the Shell station)

Directions from the West (Columbia):

- Take 32 east (10-12 miles)
- When 32 east turns into 97 south, take the 1st exit (MD-178 - Generals Hwy), exit #5, toward CROWNSVILLE
- After getting on the exit ramp my house is the first one on the right (about 1/2 - 3/4 mi). The driveway before the black mailbox.
- If you make it to the 1st traffic signal (Herald Harbor Rd.) you went too far.

October 5th – TARA/MWCSCC Autocross -

As you may know, we've developed a sizeable Miata contingent within the club who go out and autocross pretty regularly, much to the chagrin of their fellow competitors in the CS, CSP, and SM2 racing classes. And while it's really a lot of fun to go out and watch them race, it's almost more fun to try it yourself. And this is the perfect time. Team Asylum Racing (TARA) is hosting a practice autocross session on October 5th that is open to the public. If you've ever wanted to see what it's all about, this is a great opportunity to get your feet wet, or just to see what your car can really do. They are currently finalizing details, but it will most likely take place at FedEx Field or Rosecroft Raceway. We'll be going down as a group, but if you'd like to participate in the actual autocrossing, then register on their site at www.autocrossers.com.

October – Tech Day – Owings, MD

One of our newest members, Wally Simpkins, is a proud new owner not only of a '99 Miata, but of a new 2-bay garage! Well, Wally's one heck of a nice guy, and is so happy to meet a bunch of Miata nuts like us, that he's invited us down to his home for a tech day. The pool will be closed for the winter, but said we were welcome to come by. Directions will be in next month's newsletter, but until then, make sure you mark calendar (probably the 18th – the date will be finalized soon), and take a nice drive out to this event. I already suspect there will be at least one roll bar install...

November 9th – Charity Autocross

Grab the hardtop, and warm up the car! We'll be taking a drive to join the Z Car Club of Northern Virginia at a charity autocross on November 9th. It'll be fun, the points don't count, but it's all for a good cause. They are still finalizing details, but it will most likely be held at FedEx Field or Rosecroft Raceway. More information should be available by next month's newsletter, but you can also keep an eye on www.autocrossers.com for more info.

November - Scenic drive/tour to Linganore Winery & Vineyard - Mt. Airy, MD

At the request of several members, we'll be taking a Sunday drive via the scenic route through the fall colors (hopefully) to the Linganore Winery in Mt. Airy. The drive is supposed to be beautiful, and the winery itself is a perfect compliment. We'll be able to tour the winery and see the manufacturing process, and you may be able to do a tasting as well. I'm not much on wine myself, but Linganore wines are really pretty good, not too terribly expensive, and are made locally. Look for more details online and in next month's newsletter.

Support your sponsors

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<http://www.endlessroad.com>
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MIATANUTS

<http://www.miatanuts.com>
866-642-8268.
- 10% OFF ALL Jackson Racing Products
- 1/2 PRICE SHIPPING ON HARD DOG ROLL BARS (savings of between \$25 & \$32.50/ bar)
- 20% OFF All Apparel (polos, tees, fleece pullovers, vests, jackets)
If there is something else that you may be interested in, contact them about that specific item and they'll work with you the best they can. They even sell BMW and MINI parts too!

RICH MORTON MAZDA

<http://www.richmorton.com>
866.260.6028
- Exclusive CAR member discounts on all parts and service