



Newsletter, Volume 6  
June 1, 2008

### Anyone can be a father, but it takes a special person to be called "Dad"

by Mark Brooks

The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909.

Having been raised by her father, William Jackson Smart, after her mother died, Sonora wanted her father to know how special he was to her. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910.



In 1926, a National Father's Day Committee was formed in New York City. Father's Day was recognized by a Joint Resolution of Congress in 1956. In 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June. So Father's Day

was born in memory and gratitude by a daughter who thought that her father and all good fathers should be honored with a special day just like we honor our mothers on Mother's Day.

### Veggie oil burners get burned

by Fran Rowell

A Half Moon Bay mechanic and local hero has been getting a lot of positive attention for his fleet of cars that run on disposed grease from a local chowder house. When he was contacted by Board of Equalization investigators, he thought the government wanted instruction on being greener. Not so, the government wanted taxes, and it wanted to see his diesel fuel supplier license as well as his license to pick up grease from the restaurant from the Meat and Poultry Inspection Branch. Turns out the poor guy also needs permission from the Air Resources Board to burn fat. (copied from a SF Chronicle article)

### Robins' Nest

by Robin George

The weather is getting warmer and I am feeling better. Damn allergies!! Since I have been cooped up these last couple of weeks I have been figuring how to stimulate the economy. What better way than to put a SUPERCHARGER in the Miata. I have been researching, reading, and figuring how to convince the boss. Well since she has a turbo in her car, I need one in mine. It worked. Do not tell her about the extra stuff like upgraded clutch, brakes and numerous other parts that were needed for a proper machine. It is a work in progress and I will need all the help I can get. This is what "TOBARR" is supposed to do when finished. <http://tinyurl.com/4dbhl2>. Turn the volume up loud and enjoy. Latest news: Great Valley Auto Dealership on Fulton Avenue is going out of business as of June 9th. Another dealership bites the dust. They will not be the last. Make sure you bring those old parts to the SWAP MEET at the next General Meeting on the 12th. We will have a short meeting inside then go outside to gab and find treasures. Bring your Miata chairs to relax. There will not be a raffle this month.

### May General Meeting

by Jeanne George

May's SAMOA meeting drew a larger than usual attendance. Most likely the nice spring night was the biggest factor. Or else they wanted to see what the rowdy BOO (Board of Officers) would do to top last month's meeting. By 5:45 pm over 30 people had arrived for early dinner, by 6:45 the room was packed as President Robin and Vice-president Mike D scabbled to set up more chairs.

Getting the meeting started on time, as is his usual plan; Robin tried to quiet the talkative group. Not having an immediate response, Secretary Pam Hunt, blew her new "crowd control" whistle to get their attention. After his initial opening remarks, Robin advised the group that he had been continuing his research to obtain a different logo for SAMOA. He presented his latest suggestion: a decal which read "Life's short—drive a Miata naked!" This brought laughter from the group and a large round of applause.

During the meeting Mike D introduced 6 new members that had joined that night. Each one was put through the time honored tradition of telling the group a little about themselves and their Miata. At the end the meeting, they still turned in their applications. It was nice to meet them and hear their stories. We warmly welcomed Bob Falconer, Dorothy and Don Cottrill, Diana Loo, Joe Harvison, and Stanley Eldridge, Jr. We hope to see you at future meetings and the many events coming up.

## Humor for Lexophiles (lovers of words)

by Jeanne George

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.

Police were called to a day care where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.

The butcher backed up into the meat grinder and got a little behind in his work.

To write with a broken pencil is pointless.

A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.

A thief fell in wet cement. He became a hardened criminal.

Thieves who steal corn from a garden could be charged with stalking.

We'll never run out of math teachers because they always multiply.

When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U.C.L.A.

The professor discovered that her theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.

The dead batteries were given out free of charge.

If you take a laptop computer for a run you could jog your memory.

A dentist and a manicurist fought tooth and nail.

With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.

A calendar's days are numbered.

## Treasure Trove

by Jeanne George

### WELCOME to these new members joining in May

Robert Falconer

Don and Dorothy Cottrill

Diana Loo

Joe Harvison

Stanley Eldridge, Jr

Gary Nield

Vicki Titus

### Memberships Expiring June 1

Burgess, Jim

Melicharek, Andrew

Wise, Kevin

Zander, Ronald

### Memberships Renewed during May

Jensen, Dee and Bob

Bacon, Bob & Terri

Steele, Richard & Ann

JoAnne and Ralph Gingrich

## Parking tips...

by Mike DeLaurentis

When parking on a hill it is important not only to fully set the parking break but also to leave the transmission in reverse - assuming the car has a manual transmission.



## The Miata and the knee problem

by Adi Damiana

My knee problem (diagnosed as abrasion on meniscus) started as a lower back problem which in itself can be traced back to an ill-advised jump from the top story of an Olympic swimming pool and landing flat on my back over 50 years ago! Anyway, the lower back problem re-appeared after a 2-hour marathon table-tennis match with a sophomore at UC Davis. This took me to a student masseuse in Davis, who got rid of my lower back pain with her expert hands of course, but as I left her parlor (lighter by \$60 + tip) my right knee suddenly gave way and I could hardly make it back to my car.

Thereafter my right knee was never the same again. Last Thursday it became so bad that I could not sleep a wink and saw me Friday morning at the Woodland Clinic. A prescription of "Diclofenac" and a visit to a Physiotherapy Rehab clinic was advised. As I painfully got into the driver's seat of my 1999 10th Anniversary Miata (which I now drive only once a week), I thought about doing a little research to see if other Miatistas were suffering from the same problem. Boy! Did I hit pay dirt!

It seems a good number of our co-enthusiasts have a knee problem and have put up their stories on the internet, car forums, Yahoo groups and even uTube! A few of these worthies have solved their problems by cutting the gas pedal in half and removing the left foot-rest entirely so that there is more room to stretch both the left and right legs while driving. One bright young but tall Miata driver even suggested putting the car on Cruise Control on a long highway stretch and then crossing the legs in the foot well for better blood circulation. But he did admit that if there was an emergency, it would take a few vital (read that as fatal) seconds delay to reach the brake pedal.

Well, a couple of visits to the Rehab Center and knee massage with an ultrasound machine seem to have provided immense relief to yours truly. The purchase of a knee pad from Moss Motors at a cost of \$35 incl. S&H, has also helped to ease the resting of the right knee while the foot is on the gas pedal. In the meantime I have been avoiding beer and ketchup, the two most taboo food/beverage items than can exacerbate the problem 10 times!

I give below how one Miata driver carried out his "mod":

"I did the pedal mount adjustment today and join those already praising it. For those interested in what they're getting into I add the following: You really need an extension on your 10mm socket ratchet to get the top bolt. With that it's not too bad to reach, going over the top of the pedal. The longer bolt that you want to use to replace the stock bolt is a M6 x 40 metric flange bolt, 1.0 pitch I got mine at Sears Hardware for 70 cents. I'm using a 1/2" spacer. If you use a less wide spacer, get a

M6 x 35 flange bolt, for 65 cents. Flange bolts are just bolts with a washer type thing built into the head, the stock bolt you are taking off is a flange bolt, and so the head of the new one fits in exactly to the plastic space in the pedal assembly.

I recommend using more than a nut as the 12 mm spacer between the floorboard and the plastic pedal assembly. To give full support to the plastic piece, I used 1/2" wide oak stock and cut a piece to match the footprint of the part of the pedal mount that touches the floorboard. Basically it's just 1 1/2" square with the top corners rounded a bit, and a hole drilled into the middle of it for the bolt. Not sure the the rounding is necessary, but it was easy with a jig saw so I didn't try it without. Might fit just as well without hitting the foam floorboard padding. Although the plastic piece is built very sturdy, I'm thinking an extra measure of support at the mount site cannot be a bad thing.

While I was at it, I shortened my accelerator a bit more today, too, and knocked off the part where it widened out on the left side. More room down there to not turn off the cruise accidentally. Works for me.

You can tell that wide open throttle is not affected, because the travel is limited by the plastic mount assembly itself, with the pedal not hitting anything. My pedal was already shortened, but I think you DO need to do the cut (at least a little) or else the pedal would hit the floor as it travels.

Thanks and cudos to "slopercat" for having the nerve to first attempt this mod. Once done, everything is sturdy as stock, just a lot more comfortable.

I'm saying that for me it's a wonderful mod, and applying the same disclaimer he did about whether you want to do it for yourself. FWIW, very short drivers might consider putting spacers at both top and bottom (or just the bottom) to raise the position of the pedal. I look forward to a post of someone trying that out. Drive by wire works well for us, allowing the pedal to be repositioned w/o complications."

If there are any Miatistas out there who have the same or similar problem I would like to hear from them. Till next time, Ciao, Ciao!



## Autocross Results

by Jack Parker

### Shriner's Hospital Charity Autocross Results...

Being a member of the local chapter of SCCA for many years has its rewards. One being you can anticipate a disaster about to happen. Such is the case with the Shriners Charity Autocross held at Mather Field on May 17. Give the Corvette guys a chance and the room to design a course for horsepower and it pretty much appears. The May 17 event was a couple of left turns out to a long straight, a hairpin followed by lots of horsepower eating straights and sweepers. Needless to say the local Miata group was at a slight disadvantage. But none the less it was a for a good cause.

C Stock with Rod Gonzales competing saw a past club member pretty much win convincingly. It didn't matter that the past member is a nationally ranked type of driver. So Rod took a second and kept his lead in the overall point standings.

Street Tire class was dominated by the high horsepower crowd with Porsche, blown Solstice, Mustang Cobra, and Bimmers dominating. Club member Darrel Huckabay took a seventh place and maintained his third place overall standing in the season long points chase.

STS2 saw a newcomer to this years events with Ken Johnson making his first appearance in the recently acquired white 92. Ken did a great job of beating four others and taking a respectable third in his first try at this class. Way to go.

Street Modified 2 was not even close with Jack Parker getting his butt kicked for the first time this year. The Corvette crew was just too fast and had too much torque for the blown Miata. Jack took fourth and newby Eric Vance placed seventh. Jack maintains his points lead though.

It was a very hot 103 degrees and not a great way to spend a day "enjoying" the cars.

The second day of the event saw much the same results as the course was lengthened and straightened out a bit which made for more fun for the high horsepower crowd.

In Street Tire class Darrel improved on his previous day's results with a solid showing of a fifth place this time beating a couple of Corvettes in the process. Darrel, based on that showing maintained his third place season points standing.

Then there was Street Modified 2. With the temperature having come down a bit, the results were about the same. Jack Parker just didn't have the torque to pull out of the corners and kept running out of second gear and manged a dead last (fourth). But on the bright side, he pulled enough points to maintain a slim hold on the season points total.

All of us Miata guys will be returning to the tight, twisty and slow confines of the San Joaquin Fairgrounds in August and resuming the battle on a more event playing field. Can't Wait!

### SCCA SAMOA Results

April 26 and 27 provided some interesting and somewhat exciting results in the world of autocross. The club had a large contingent of members out crushing cones and flogging their cars.

C Stock was once again the domain of Rod Gonzales. Rod gained a first place on both days. Times are improving and Rod maintained his first place standing in class.

In Street Tire, Darrel Huckabay found the going a little tougher. His victory celebration from the last event was cut a bit short, not for lack of effort. On April 26, the defending class champion brought back his G35 once again and took class honors and relegated Darrel to a fifth place finish. Must have been a bad day for him. Darrel did beat a Viper, an S2000, a Lotus Elan and a Corvette. Among those was the reigning national champion in STS.

On Sunday, Darrel could not seem to pull it together and let us just say it was not a good day. However, after the results were tabulated, he is just 10 points out of second place in Street Tire.

STS2, the most popular class from last year, seems to be going through some tough times as most of the competitors have either dropped out or moved on to new classes. On Saturday the 26th, Andrew Melicharek, in his 93 took first place in class over a Porsche 914 by almost 2 seconds. On Sunday, however no one competed from our club. Andrew and Tak Auyeung are tied for first in class, each with a win.

In Street Modified 2 (SM2) the story was quite different. Jack Parker, in his newly supercharged 97, had quite a battle with the Corvette crowd, not to mention a former member, J B Parker, his son, co driving the 97. On Saturday, J B was the tire warmer and went out set a fairly fast time of 38.8 which was good enough for third. This was the first time out in the car for J B. A Corvette was sandwich in between J B and Jack. All three were were within 8/10 to set up a an interesting battle. The Corvette and J B were both slower on their second runs and Jack improved by almost 2 seconds. Then the excitement started. J B went out for his third run and turned in time good enough for second in class. The Corvette responded by lowering his time by 6/10. As luck would have it, going into the first slalom the car became very difficult to steer and lost power. Shutting down and coasting home found Jack not improving any time and hoping that the second run would hold up. Opening the hood found a dislodged power steering belt and a semi-frayed supercharger belt. End of the day for the 97. But the good news is Jack's second run was good for the win and J B's third run was 9/1000 of a second faster than the third place Corvette. By the way, 9/1000 of a second is less than a foot as near as we can figure. The winning time was ninth overall for the day.

Day two found Jack alone with J B attending Euro Sunday. After the first runs on Sunday Jack found himself in third place after coning his way out of second. So what else is new. The two Corvettes were well ahead. Round two saw a slight improvement, but both Corvettes were also faster. Jack found himself in second. Round 3 found Jack taking over the lead with a 33.403 and Corvettes not improving. Round 4 saw the fastest Corvette run a 33.493, good enough for second with Jack taking first by 9/100 of a second. After 4 rounds of competition the two weekend wins placed Jack in first overall for the season.

## Upcoming Events

by Jack Parker

### Hotcakes Run To Kirkwood

We are going on our annual trip to Kirkwood Inn to enjoy those tiny little hotcakes. I am sure that one hotcake could probably feed a) a small undeveloped nation for a week, b) a large developed nation for 5 minutes, c) the club for half an hour, or d) everyone who owns a red Miata (a choice you make to remain PC or just have fun). We will meet at Mar Sha Tes, located at 7238 Murieta Drive in Rancho Murieta. We will meet at 8:00. An 8:15 drivers meeting will take place with a departure of 8:30. We need the extra time because the Inn stops serving breakfast at 11:00. We will be taking a route that goes through Volcano for a short pit stop and then a trip up Rams Horn Grade, which is always fun and then onto Shakeridge Road to Kirkwood. We will return by way of Omo Ranch Road through the Shennandoah Valley wine region and should be home by 2:00.

Contact Jack parker at [culdad@svics.com](mailto:culdad@svics.com) or at (916) 698-2006.

### Monthly Club Meeting at Cocos June 12

Don't forget about the monthly club meeting at Cocos starting at 7:00PM. If you would like to come to dinner that usually starts about 6:00. And bring that junk, er high quality use Miata parts, accessories and other treasures for the sort of annual swap meet in the parking lot. The business meeting will include a charitable donation from Ron's Got Guts Event and the meeting will be cut short for the swap meet. So we only have to put up with Robin for about half the usual time. Just kidding. I LOOK FORWARD to Robin's ramblings, words of wisdom every month.

### Rivercats Baseball Game June 16

Join us for a relaxing evening at Raley Field as the Sacramento River Cats, champions of all of AAA baseball, take on the Tacoma Rainiers. SAMOA has secured 30 prime seats behind third base for this outing. The price is just \$12.00 per ticket, and they are first-come, first-served. BUT YOU MUST SEND ME YOUR CHECK TO SECURE TICKETS. Checks will not be cashed until we make our final payment to the River Cats.

To join us, send your RSVP to Ron Petrich at (916) 454-1008 or at [freescopesdad@comcast.net](mailto:freescopesdad@comcast.net), and follow that up immediately with your check, payable to SAMOA. Mail it to Ron at 905 Sonoma Way, Sacramento, CA, 95819. As soon as we receive your payment we will contact you via email to confirm your tickets.

Here is the plan for the evening. The River Cats management has assured us that we can all park together as long as we arrive at the same time. So we will meet at Ron's house at 905 Sonoma Way in East Sacramento at 5:30 PM Monday evening, distribute the tickets, and leave for Raley Field as soon as everyone has arrived. Parking is estimated to be \$8.00 per vehicle, payable at the ball park.

### Scavenger Hunt June 22

Spend the afternoon driving interesting roads and scavenging for items on our Top Secret list. At times you'll be laughing, shaking your head or just plain wowed by what you'll see and need to find. A passenger would come in handy on this event, but not required. Also, no special equipment is needed, just a keen eye and a little creativity.

Bring just \$1.00 for miscellaneous costs and money for pizza and refreshments.

Our meet time is 12:30 PM sharp. We will meet at the El Dorado Hills Park-n-Ride (corner of White Rock and Latrobe Roads) for a 1:00 PM departure. We recommend you have lunch prior to our departure. We will finish at the Round Table Pizza at 2222 Francisco Drive, El Dorado Hills (at the corner of Green Valley Road). Plan to stay for dinner and share scavenging stories while your event hosts tally the found items and declare a winner. No RSVP is required for this event.

Questions? contact Bob & Genny Paauwe at (530) 672-0601 or at [genny@bobshome.org](mailto:genny@bobshome.org)

### Quad Counties Run July 12

Take a scenic drive with us through 4 counties and up twisty route 49, and have lunch and tour historic Downieville. Downieville, the county seat of Sierra County, is at an elevation of about 2,800 feet and at the confluence of the north fork of the Yuba and Downie rivers. Downieville's population is 325 but that could change if mollie Higgins delivers or if Jack Carson isn't off to prison by then.

We will meet at the Denny's in Newcastle (681 Newcastle Road, Newcastle, CA 95658 916.663.2011) at 9:30 AM for a 10:00 AM departure.

Questions? Contact Mike DeLaurentis at 916.791.9418 or at [mdelaurentis@hotmail.com](mailto:mdelaurentis@hotmail.com).

## Upcoming SAMOA and Local Events

- Sat, June 7 - Hot Cars and Hotcakes at Kirkwood
- Thurs, June 12 - SAMOA Club Meeting
- Mon, June 16 - Rivercats Baseball Game
- June 20-22 - Weekend in Bear Valley (BAMA)
- June 22 - Scavenger Hunt
- Thurs, July 10 - SAMOA Club Meeting
- Sat, July 12 - Quad County Run
- Sat, July 19 - Delta 50's Bash and Roast
- Fri-Sun July 25-27 - Explore Oregon
- Sun July 27 - Miata Roundup (BAMA)
- Thurs Aug 14 - SAMOA Club Meeting
- Fri-Sun Aug 15-17 - Monterey Historics

## Sign of the times

taken from Yahoo News

Dale Fortin is getting a new kind of customer at his Detroit auto repair shop, customers who have not just been in a fender-bender or had a windshield smashed by a rock.

The soaring price of crude oil has turned gas tanks into a cache of valuable booty, and Fortin has replaced several tanks punctured or drilled by thieves thirsting for the nearly \$4-a-gallon fuel inside.

“That’s the new fad,” said the co-owner of Dearborn Auto Tech in Detroit. “I’d never seen it before gas got up this high.”

While gas station drive-offs and siphoning are far more common methods of stealing gas, reports of tank and line puncturing are starting to trickle into police departments and repair shops across the country.

Some veteran mechanics and law enforcement officers say it’s an unwelcome return of a crime they first saw during the Middle East oil embargo of the early 1970s.

Gasoline prices surged just before the long Memorial Day holiday weekend and crept a hair higher overnight Monday to a new record national average \$3.937 for a gallon of regular, according to a survey of stations by AAA and the Oil Price Information Service.

Given their height, Fortin said pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles are more vulnerable to the thieves who puncture the tanks and use a container to catch the fuel.

Plastic tanks are typically the target, he said, since there is less chance of a catastrophic spark, and they are easier to drill into.

A design change may also be contributing to the preference for a drill rather than a syphoning hose. The tanks in many vehicles now have check balls, which prevent spills in a rollover accident. They also make siphoning more difficult.

In recent weeks, police in Denver arrested two suspects in connection with about a dozen cases of damaging tanks and stealing gas.

Denver Police Det. John White sees this “new way of siphoning gas” as a bigger problem.

“What made this particular method so dangerous and concerning for us was the way in which they were doing it — using cordless drills to puncture holes in these tanks,” he said of the rash of cases his department has investigated this spring. “The heat, friction generated could have easily sparked a fire. It just made for a dangerous situation for the suspects and the community.”

## Garage Sale

Stuff for sale...

- Aftermarket 96 Montego hard top. Has been hanging in my garage for 5 years. \$1000 Call Fran 530 344-1913
- Stock springs from a '94 Miata (make offer), Falken Azenis RT215 tires (205/50/15) about 60% used. Set of 4 (make offer), Stock taillights for NA Miata (make offer), Set of 4 Toyota MR2 Spyder wheels (15x6 and 15x6.5) with 205/50/15 tires (Falken Azenis RT615) about 60% used (\$300). Contact Mark - cagecko@comcast.net

Tank puncturing has yet to reach the radar screens of law enforcement organizations such as the National Sheriffs’ Association, or the Automotive Service Association, a group that represents independent garage operators.

Still, at least one insurance company has taken notice: AAA Mid-Atlantic issued a press release earlier this month that cited a case in April in Bethesda, Md., involving a thief who broke the fuel line underneath a car and sapped five gallons of gas. Montgomery County police said a bus in the same parking lot had 30 gallons of diesel stolen.

“These are crimes of opportunity,” said AAA spokeswoman Catherine Rossi. “Right now, some people think that stealing gas is a way to get rich quick. It becomes a question of whether you’re leaving yourself open to the possibility that someone can get to your car without being seen.”

The cost of replacing a metal tank on passenger vehicles is between \$300 and \$400, and the plastic tank common on newer vehicles would be at least \$500.

Bruce Burnham said thieves have hit the Budget Truck Rental business he owns in Shreveport, La., about a half-dozen times in the past three years. The thefts started shortly after Hurricane Katrina when prices spiked, then stopped for a while, then restarted about a year ago.

In some cases the gas lines have been cut; in others, gas has been pumped out. He figures he’s lost at least a few thousand dollars in stolen fuel, repair costs and loss of rental fees.

Burnham said he has taken “extra measures to protect the vehicles,” but declined to elaborate.

Gas and diesel aren’t the only fuels being plundered. Restaurants from Berkeley, Calif., to Sedgwick, Kan., are reporting thefts of old cooking oil worth thousands of dollars. Cooking oil rustlers refine it into barrels of biofuel in backyard stills. Biodiesel can also be blended with petroleum diesel, and blends of the alternative fuel are now sold at 1,400 gas stations across the country.

Still, the theft of regular unleaded gasoline — the kind that leaves everyday drivers high and dry — is on the minds of more law enforcement agencies as prices rise.

Troy Police Lt. Gerry Scherlinck said his suburban Detroit department this month received a report of a stored motor home whose tank was siphoned and drained of 50 gallons of gas. They also had several incidents last year in industrial parks where the gas tanks of vehicles were punctured.

“Gas is liquid gold these days, and has been for the last year-and-a-half,” Scherlinck said. “I would anticipate seeing more of these kinds of incidents as the price continues to go up.”

