



# NATURALLY TOPLESS

Volume 25, Issue 3

March, 2025

**DRIVING TOPDOWN IN THE NATURAL STATE**

## **DRIVE TO OAKLAWN / DAY AT THE RACES 9:30am MARCH 22, 2025**

In March, we will be meeting on Saturday morning, March 22nd at the Starbucks in Benton, on the I-30 service road just east of Alcoa Road.

After a morning drive, we will stop at the Oaklawn Park Race Track in Hot Springs for a afternoon of watching horse racing.

Lunch will be on each person's own at the Park !!

Reservations will need to be made in advance if you are interested in Grand Stand seating

indoors (\$5 in advance, and we'll reserve a block of seats for the Club). The Outdoor Apron Area does not require reservations and is free of charge—first come, first serve.

**Let us know on FaceBook if you plan on attending the races .....**

Hope to see the Arkansas Miata Club in the lights on the race-track scoreboard during the afternoon .....



## **DUES ARE DUE FOR 2025 !!**

It's that time again, that dues (\$ 30) are due for the coming year. At the Board Meeting in September, a full calendar of events was scheduled for 2025; and payment of dues will help us to schedule, plan, and execute these events. Also discussed were at least one overnight trip, and the possibility of tShirts for Club members.

We are still planning on member name badges for all paid members, and hope to have them available by the June overnighter to Rogers and Bentonville.

So membership will get you a club pin, the club window sticker, eMail distribution of the newsletter, and a nice name badge with lanyard so we'll know who everyone is !!

Dues can be paid directly at one of our events, or sent by check. The membership form is available on the website.

Send your checks for \$ 30 to:

Arkansas Miata Club  
1 Juego Way  
Hot Springs Village, AR 71909



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### **Special Dates of Interest:**

• Drive to Oaklawn	March 22
• Toad Suck Bucks	April 19
• Shangri-La on Lake Ouachita	May 17
• Crystal Bridges and Baseball	June 6—8
• Brewery Run	July 19
• Shortest Drive	August 16
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**TOAD SUCK BUCK'S DRIVE AND DINNER****SATURDAY, April 19th****1:00pm****PARKING LOT****MARYLAND AVE and JFK BLVD (HWY107)****SHERWOOD**

The April event is a return event this year, with an afternoon drive ending in an early dinner at Toad Suck Bucks, 11 Roaring River Loop, Houston, AR 72070.

We will meet at 12:30 pm at the corner of Maryland Ave and JFK Blvd (Hwy 107) in Sherwood, right across from the Casey's Service Station. The drive will begin at 1:00.

We will play poker en route, so if you're interested bring \$ 5 for each person wanting to join in .....

Dinner will be around 4:30pm and directions for those who wish to skip the drive and meet at the restaurant will be on Facebook and the website.

Come hungry for great food and conversation after the drive

Dinner prices will be in the range of \$10—35 .....

**JOURNEY TO SHANGRI-LA****SATURDAY, MAY 17**

Maybe it was Vic Dana in the 60s, or the Lettermen with their ballad, or the Kinks with their song !

"....each kiss is magic that makes my little world a Shangri-La ...." or "....you can go outside and polish your car. Or sit by the fire in your Shangri-La ..."

Whichever is your memory, we want to make it come true on the May Arkansas Miata Club drive !

Webster defines Shangra-La as "....a remote usually idyllic hideaway...."

Now that sounds like the interior of my Miata as we're zipping down country roads and around curve after curve .....

We'll meet on Saturday morning, May 17th. After a cruise through the Arkansas countryside, we'll end up at Shangra-La, a premier destination for relaxation, adventure, and unforgettable memories. And we'll have a wonderful lunch together at the Shangri-La Café – comfort food with a view in Mt. Ida. Nestled within the lodge and restaurant, they serve up delicious home-cooked meals and desserts that will make you feel right at home. And no visit to Shangri-La Café is complete without a slice of their famous homemade pie. Baked fresh daily, these pies are legendary among locals and visitors alike. Once you take a bite, you'll understand why people say, "Stick a fork in that pie to save it for me!"

Put the date on your calendar, and watch the next newsletter for more information !

## ***Four reasons why it's better to drive a slow car fast than a fast car slow***

There's a common saying in automotive enthusiast circles that it's more fun to drive a slow car fast than a fast car slow, but there seems to be more widespread interest in huge horsepower, 0-60 times, and top speeds.

The truth is that squeezing out every bit of power from a modestly-powered vehicle often delivers a more rewarding experience than driving a pricey, high-performance car at a fraction of its capability. Here are four reasons why.

### **1. Lower-powered cars are more accessible**

Contrary to social media videos of drag racing supercars and insane electric vehicles, you don't have to have gobs of horsepower to enjoy the driving experience. It's a truism that the fundamental joy of driving comes from engagement—the connection between driver, machine, and road.

When a car has over, say 250 horsepower, that connection becomes limited because of speed limits and traffic. You feel that your car is being held back, and you can never really enjoy yourself until you come to a stretch of highway that you know isn't patrolled by law enforcement. Shy of a track, there probably isn't even a roadway where you can exploit the handling capabilities.

Consider the driver of a modern 600-horsepower performance car. On public roads, they might use perhaps 20-30 percent of their vehicle's capability during a spirited drive. Meanwhile, the driver of a 181-horsepower [Mazda](#) MX-5 Miata or a 221-horsepower [Toyota](#) GR86 can safely explore 80-90 percent of their car's performance envelope on those same roads. They can wind out gears, brake later, and carry more speed through corners—all while staying within reasonable safety margins and legal limits.

This accessibility of these lower-powered cars provides a thrilling driving experience in ordinary conditions. It alters your perception of fun, and that's a good thing. In the slower car, every on-ramp becomes an occasion to wring out second and third gear.

If you have a manual transmission, that engagement quotient ramps up significantly, giving you more of a connection to the road and the car. The driving experience becomes active rather than passive, requiring skill and involvement rather than restraint and a dependence on power to equal fun.

### **2. Learning to drive a slow car fast develops skills**

Just because you drive a slower car doesn't mean you're going to be good at driving it at the limits. That's something that requires skill. Maybe not Ayrton Senna-like skill, but way more than high school driver's ed skill levels.

Most high-powered vehicles these days rely on layers of electronic intervention rather than mechanical processes that contribute to driver engagement. Features like stability control, traction control, and torque vectoring help keep drivers out of the weeds. Cheaper, older cars have fewer driving nannies, and this opens up an opportunity for drivers to be more connected to the driving experience.

Driving a slower car at 80 percent of its capability requires greater skill than driving a high-powered car at 20 percent of its performance potential, providing the opportunity for you to become a better driver.

In a less powerful, more basic car, the direct connection between input and output creates a more transparent learning environment. Carrying speed in a lower-powered vehicle requires maintaining momentum through corners, precisely timing gear changes with a manual transmission, and developing a deeper understanding of how the car transfers its weight.

These skills become immediately apparent during driving, when the driver who brakes too late or downshifts roughly in a lightweight, lower-powered car will feel the consequences immediately.

(Continued next page)

## ***ADDITIONAL 2025 EVENTS***

August 16th      Shortest Drive  
October 15th      Mount Magazine

November 15th      JoJo's Catfish & Leaf Peek  
December 6th      Holiday Party

## ***Four reasons why it's better to drive a slow car fast than a fast car slow (continued)***

This skill development creates a virtuous cycle of improvement and satisfaction. As drivers perfect their technique, they extract incrementally more performance from their vehicles, creating tangible rewards for their efforts. It's a progression towards mastery, something that's nearly impossible to create on legal roads with a 600-horsepower beast.

### ***3. The economics of driving fun***

High-powered cars are not cheap. The 617-horsepower [BMW X6](#) M Competition, for example, has a starting price of almost \$119,000. Even a Toyota GR Supra will set you back over \$56,000. You pay the price for power. A \$250k [Porsche](#) 911 GT3 RS might cost nearly ten times more than a Mazda Miata, but it won't deliver ten times the fun on legal roads.

High-performance vehicles often come with high levels of worry: concerns about rock chips, door dings, and the significant financial consequences of even minor mishaps. These worries create a psychological barrier to full enjoyment. Meanwhile, the owner of a modest performance car can drive without the same levels of anxiety, knowing that replacement parts are affordable and scrapes won't require remortgaging their home.

Don't forget that you'll also probably save money by not getting as many speeding tickets. Not only is it harder to get into trouble, you're also less noticeable by law enforcement. Just maybe don't upgrade to a giant wing on your Miata RFClub !

### ***4. The rewarding challenge of limitations***

When the sky is the limit, there is no challenge. A land-based rocketship, like a 621-horsepower [Audi](#) RS6 Avant driven by a septuagenarian with a heavy foot, can outgun almost anything on the road.

But if you're driving a 10-year old sub-200-horsepower, manual transmission car, you're faced with pushing it to the edge. Tantamount to cooking a delicious three-ingredient meal or sculpting a block of wood into art with just a hammer and chisel, driving a low-powered car hard is a challenge in and of itself. When achieved and repeated, there's deep satisfaction.

I have enjoyed driving my 184-hp 2020 Mazda MX5 RF GT on suburban roads at 9/10ths more than I ever did helming a '66 Corvette at 3/10ths. It forces you to plan how you're going to hit an apex on an off-ramp, thread a needle in traffic, or downshift at just the right time to merge seamlessly at 60 mph. These limitations of power and performance create a more mentally engaging driving experience.

The driver of a modest-powered car also experiences the satisfaction of "giant-killing," otherwise known as keeping pace with or outperforming more powerful vehicles through superior driving technique. Few automotive pleasures are greater than maintaining contact with a much more powerful car on a winding road through better corner entry, exit, and overall momentum conservation. Just the other day, I managed to outpace a [BMW](#) M3 through highway traffic through careful planning, well-timed lane changes, and solid downshifts. It was incredibly satisfying.

### ***Final thoughts***

Don't get me wrong. If someone handed me the keys to a [Ferrari](#) 812 Superfast, I would take them in a heartbeat. Nevertheless, the legal and safety constraints of driving high-powered cars often feel like a wet blanket in everyday circumstances. You just can't wring out the car or even drive it at 50 percent of its potential.

A less-expensive, lower-powered car with excellent steering, chassis, and mechanicals delivers far more driving satisfaction because you can push the envelope in everyday driving. It's an experience every driver should have at least once in his or her life, and then you'll understand how truly gratifying it is.

***Thanks to Amos Kwon from the March 3, 2025 Auto Blog article .....***

**TAKE US OUT TO THE BALL GAME !  
JUNE 6—8, 2025**

WE



Our June plans take us back for a week end in Rogers, Arkansas .....

The week end will include a ball game of the Northwest Arkansas Naturals, the minor league baseball team that is based there, and plays at Arvest Ball Park. The game will be against the Wichita Wind Surge.

**JR Mills will need a accurate number sometime in late April, in order to reserve seats.**

**Please let him know by eMail (miata2003@yahoo.com, by text (501) 416-7787, or by leaving a message on the FaceBook invite for the game .....**

We'll be driving up on Friday, attending the Saturday evening game (with fireworks !) and returning to the Little Rock area on Sunday .....

Possible sidetrips to Crystal Bridges Museum, Oark Café, etc.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS !**

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS !**

Give a hearty Arkansas Miata Club welcome to .....

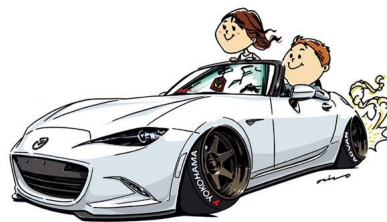
I. David Martinez, joining us from Mountain View

Deborah Akers, joining from Benton (attended our Holiday Party)

Mary and Dino Ochello from Arkadelphia



Just a reminder that dues are due ..... there are 12 members from last year that haven't renewed yet, and about 20 we haven't heard from since years prior to 2024 .....



Drawn by order of Mario Schweizer

**Life is too short to drive boring cars !!**

## ***Business Tagline or Motto***

### **ARKANSAS MIATA CLUB**

**1 Juego Way  
Hot Springs Village, AR 71909**

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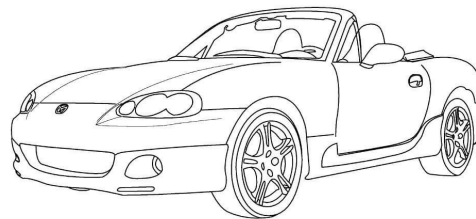
***We're on the Web !***  
***www.arkansasmiataclub.com***

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***Facebook:*** For up-to-the-minute events information, member input and other stuff, visit our Facebook page at Arkansas Miata Club Group. You may also consult the newsletter, which is published monthly and uploaded to the Facebook page, as well as the web page.

***Change of Address & Member Info:*** Be sure to keep your contact information and particularly your email address up-to-date; you don't want to miss anything! Submit your email address, snail mail address, new car info and any other contact information changes to the Membership Officer at membership@arkansasmiata.com.

***New Members:*** You may register to join our club at www.arkansasmiata.com. Download the printable form, fill it out and mail it together with your check to the club address or bring your completed form and dues at the next club event. Be especially careful in printing your email address to ensure we record it correctly so that you will receive the newsletter and club announcements. Dues are \$ 30.00 per year



#### **Board Members**

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