

As you can see in the photo, we had a fun run down to the Crow's Nest restaurant on Venice Harbor on February 3rd. It was a "Top Up" trip unfortunately, as the day was downright cool, and, in fact we canceled the boat ride. We did enjoy walking about down town, doing some window shopping, but mostly talking... Even subjects other than Miatas! Thanks Pam!

We think we will try this trip again, when the weather is warmer, and maybe even tie it in with a stop at the Roaring Twenties (last year's Mystery Tour destination) on the way back. Wow, a cruise, a boat ride and Pizza & Pipes! Keep checking your events listing for the date.

I hope everyone got in some "Top Down" time the following weekend (the 10th & 11th). Talk about a drop-dead gorgeous weekend for getting some sun! I racked up more than a few miles!

Kathy Davis is collecting information on Sun Riders members for inclusion in the newsletter. Get this latest on juicy info about fellow Members starting with this issue!

Our next event is a Sunday Drive on February 25... A nice leisurely jaunt from Pasco county through Hernando and Citrus counties starting at 2:00 pm (so you can go to church and still join us). Thanks Ed Simon!

We have Club Autocross #2 on March 17th... Come on and blow the carbon out of your car. Thanks Jonathan & crew!

Don't forget Paul Shaffer's event, "Drag Slicks & Marshmallow Sticks" next month. Paul has put a lot of effort in on this March 24th event, and is looking for a good turnout.. Thanks Paul!

A bunch of stuff for us Miata-Nuts to do, don't be a stranger... See you at the events!

Dave Tietz



Smiles and jackets (and sweaters) except for a few at the "Miatas of Venice" tour on February 3rd. It did get a little chilly!

BOD Meeting Notes

January 9, 2001

Membership recruitment:

Possibly appoint member to be in charge of member recruitment, which could include contact dealerships in our membership area and offering memberships to Miata buyers.

Kathy Davis provided a sample of a business size card that members could carry in the glove box to place on Miatas they see in parking lots or to people who are interested in the club.

Kevin Morrison said that 25-35% of members come from the website, with the remaining 75-65% coming from Lindell.

The Board discussed placing a Sunriders poster at Lindell, or any other dealerships that wish to sponsor out club. Brochures are another option.

Stuart at Just Miata has a list of Miata owners in the area taken from DMV- Co-

op with him to get access to the list for recruitment.

Newsletter:

Offer electronic delivery to save on postage. Offer discounts renewals to members who sign up for electronic newsletter. The club would also offer an e-mail forwarding address.

Advertising in Horizons -Appoint a marketing/sales person to recruit for advertising/collections of advertisers. For those advertisers with outstanding accounts, do we pull the ads? Who is now responsible for collections? Offer flat rate for yearly business size ad.

Treasurer:

The Board of Directors voted to purchase a QuickBooks accounting software for the Treasurer.

Website:

Place pictures of Sunriders merchandise on Web site.

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Take individual digital photographs of members with their cars at meeting or other events so that the member profiles can be expanded.

Events:

Plan another Chili Cookoff, possibly in New Port Richey at Ilona's clubhouse, where we could use crock pots. She will try to secure a date in late Feb.

Autocross for March 17th?

Plan a camping trip around March 3rd. Paul said he could plan the details (somewhere around Crystal Springs)

Comedy Club- try in the summer (June or July) Great indoor activity when its hot.

East Coast shuttle launch cruise- Dave Tietz may have an "in" to get us close

Tacky Tourist/April Fools day parade

Feb 17th, 18th -Pro Solo in Ft. Myers

June Moon Zoom (MG club has fun doing it)

Everglades club- Sizzle event- we need a link on our website for the info

We discussed getting together with other clubs to plan an event together- Central FL possibly?

Charity:

Vote at monthly meeting on various charity- suggestions: Hospice, Ronald McDonald House

Cherie Turner

Monthly Meeting Notes

The Sun Riders kicked off the new year by with a January monthly meeting held at our new location: Paradise Restaurant in downtown Safety Harbor. There is a paved and lighted parking lot as well as lots of on-street parallel parking. The food was great with friendly and efficient service. Check the map in this newsletter for details about finding us.

We were able to report that we raised over \$700 in cash for Toys for Tots and collected 3 dozen toys. The folks at the Marine Corps Reserve who organize this drive every year were very grateful and pleased with our contribution as this had been a very lean year. They actually closed down the toy distribution a day early in Tampa because of running out of toys.

We had a discussion about continuing to

support Toys for Tots in 2001 and/or some other charities. Lloyd and Kathy Davis and Mike and Charlene Emmet have agreed to lead a small committee which will recommend charities and fund-raising activities to the club.

After reviewing past events and our upcoming calendar (see other articles in the newsletter for details), we opened the floor for our member Roundtable. In addition to introducing themselves, each member described what they or their Miata had received from Santa for Christmas or recent trips. Following are some highlights:

Jonathan Skinner installed a new wood console and pearl finish Voodoo shift knob in his Laguna Blue and tan and mounted a set of the new Kumho Ecsta tires. Kat Bryce has been running these with good results and Jonathan also had a good report.

Brian Resche traded up and bought a brand new Miata -- a 2000 silver -- Brian and his wife are now guaranteed to be Sun Riders for the next 6 years!

Bill Bullington improved his ride and handling by installing adjustable AGX shocks on his '99.

Vinnie Lucido added to his tool box by picking up a torque wrench which will also come in handy on autocross days.

Taking advantage of the gift certificates which Ed and Tammy Lynch purchased at our Lindell event and Christmas party, Ed installed a Akiyama drive train brace from Rspeed and Max-5 headrest speakers.

Merril Turner has been on the road and experienced driving in the snow on a recent Maryland trip and will be heading to Switzerland soon for some more fun in the snow skiing.

Doro Anderson's white '99, Mikey, has a new friend, Genie, an electric garage door opener.

LoAn Linthicum's silver Corvette which



The Club's new Timing-Shack-On-Wheels in action at the January 20-21 Autocross Clinic and Autocross

recently replaced her '99 black and tan was washed for Christmas.

Ed and Eileen Simon recently returned from a train trip to Mobile with a group of Eileen's sorority sisters.

After seeing the new Hyundai Santa Fe at the November International Car Show, Joe and Illona Wessling replaced Joe's truck one of these eye-catching small SUV's. Joe reports that he's been getting a lot of questions and comments in parking lots about the new SUV.

Lloyd Davis, who came alone as Kathy was working late, was in Virginia recently for an all-years reunion at his high school.

Debra and Richard Oster are new members who are making some minor improvements to their white Miata: door sill protectors, air horns from a gift certificate purchased at the Christmas party, and floor mat.

Mike Emmet came without Charlene who is attending an evening class and told us about their December trip to St. Augustine to see the Christmas lights. It sounded like a lot of fun and a trip we might want to consider for the club for next year.

We also bid a temporary farewell to charter members Dewaine and Molly Norris who will continue to be long-distance members of the club during the next two years. By the time you read this, they will be in the Ukraine beginning Peace Corps assignments. Their white Miata has been deposited with Dewaine's daughter who promises to take very good care of it for them. We wish them the very best and look forward to hearing from them from time to time during their assignment

Pam Barker

Getting to know you...

by Kathy Davis

Wow! I am starting to appreciate the “diverseness” of this group! As you all know, I am interested in receiving profiles from the group. These profiles consist of 10-12 simple questions so that we can get to know each other better. Send them back to me (the questions have been sent to the e-group)! Each month I will pick a couple to highlight in the Horizons Newsletter.

Here are some things you might not have known about your fellow club members:

Myk Freeman, as a DCD/911 dispatcher gets paid to tell the cops where to go. How lucky is that! Not to mention being able to see the repo reports, neighbors included, and hearing them relate how their car was “stolen”.

Myk says one of the fun parts of the job is when he gets to pick up the phone, make a call and have a multitude of police cars and deputies, EMS units, fire trucks, and helicopters go where he tells them. Are you enjoying this a little too much Mike?



Myk drives a 1993 Red B Package by the name of Ginsu. Some of the things he enjoys in his free time include motorcycling, camping, snow skiing, writing and computing.

Myk was born in Alabama and raised in Virginia.



Ryan Russon drives a 95 Montego Blue. Ryan is a native Californian.

Currently Ryan works in his living room Programming for the web and doing computer consultation. I think this would be the ideal “office”, don’t you?

Ryan enjoys working on the computer and music (listening pleasure), art-viewing and dabbling, and solo sports.

Editor’s Request: Anybody out there that can help me with proofing the newsletter? I would like to e-mail copy to the person, have them read it for typos, etc., and advise me of any corrections that need to be made. You get to be the second person to read the newsletter!

Please volunteer to dave@sunriders.com



Bill Bullington at the January Autocross

An e-mail from Don Reese

This message is to the Sun Riders Autocross Group, the GCAC instructors and all the people that helped make this past weekend really great!

Kevin Morrison, Jim Pohlman, Paul Shaffer and Jonathan Skinner are the members that have made the autocross event a success. These guys are great and need all the support the club can give. Again, thank you for your continued efforts. I will help whenever I possibly can.

Kevin, thanks for taking the lead on getting the Saturday clinic organized. I know it is hard to find the time for these events and really do appreciate the extra effort.

Instructors from Gulf Coast Autocrossers: Marty Southard, Dan and Sharon Shields, Steve Bryce and (sorry if I mess up here) Mike Southard (I did not catch the name, I am bad about that). Thanks for taking the time to come up on Saturday and Sunday to help us introduce autocrossing to some people who have never tried it before, as well as help some of us who have figure out what we are doing wrong. I know that I benefited from the experience and am sure others did also.

Other drivers: Thanks for coming out to support the Sun Riders Autocross effort. These events are constantly getting better with moneys raised being

put back into the equipment. The new timing trailer is a great addition (one that will be much appreciated in the summer months). All Sun Riders should appreciate these events, they are fairly unique within the Florida Miata clubs.

Other workers: Thanks for your help out there on the course. Yes it was miserable out there Saturday morning and just plan cold the entire time, but without course workers these events simply can not be done. Everyone really needs to take their turn working the course so that others can also drive.

Other Sticker Peelers: Thanks for helping remove the lettering from the trailer.

We now have only one side with letters, but it was just too cold, and these were in the shade all day, so it was better to wait for another day to complete the letter removal task.

Enough for now. Have a great day.

Don Reese

And another...

Good Morning Sun Riders,

If you want to start learning how to autocross, I suggest that you spend a couple Saturdays with the Gulf Coast Autocrossers (GCAC) in Fort Myers (www.gulfcoastautocrossers.com). Their Saturday test and tune (and novice clinic) is held ten times a year (they take off the two hottest months) and only costs \$10 (including the novice class). Their events are held on Sunday and cost \$25 (including a hamburger lunch).

The Sun Riders course is much more fun due to the tighter course layouts, but instruction is not normally available (normally a large one day event). The Sun Riders events are great fun, but I found that more seat time and instruction was needed than what I could get with the great events that the our autocross group puts on.

NOTE: Everyone who attends the Sun Riders Auto Cross Events owes Jonathan Skinner, Kevin Morrison, Paul Shaffer and Jim Poehlman a really big thank you (Thanks Guys!). Also all Sun Riders that

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Cherie Turner at the January Autocross



Don Reese at the January Autocross - All Autocross photos by Don

attend these events need to get out and help when ever possible, there is a lot of work to setup and tear down the course.

Now some information for anyone who wants to give GCAC a try:

As a newbie you need to be registered and ready to start the clinic at 9:00 AM (not that it always starts right on time). This means that you should plan to arrive between 7:30 and 8:00 AM, find a parking place you like and unload the car (there are no chairs and there is no cover, this is an old air field landing strip). Register your car (\$10 for Test and Tune day, you must have a driver license with you for insurance reasons), purchase paper numbers for your car at the tech session (number assigned at registration) and tape them to your car (tech also has the masking tape), and have your car teched (they check to make sure that your battery is tied down, that you don't have anything in the cockpit that will bounce around, getting in your way or distract you on the track, check under the hood to make sure you have brake fluid and everything looks OK). On street tires you should pump your tires up to 40 PSI while you are in the tech station (a air compressor will be found there, bring your own tire pressure gauge).

Once you get through tech, find someone that does not look busy (most people are friendly and will help if asked) and ask any questions. You will find trash cans around the parking area (please use them

and help police the area - we are quests) and two port-a-pottys are set up near the entry gate (always a good idea to bring TP, but I have not seen it needed as there is a supply somewhere). These are the only facilities, so bring wet wipes if you want to wash up.

The class should be announced just before 9:00 and you will be given instructions to drive your car down towards the other end of the pavement (about half way down) where you should find others starting to gather around for instructions.

You will need a helmet in order to participate. GCAC does have some loaner helmets at no charge (just leave your driv-

ers license with them), though get there early or you may find slim pickins.

The autocross clinic is taught by several members of the GCAC group that have been designated as instructors. They will help you understand how to drive your car though verbal instructions (inside - as a passenger - and outside - as a spectator - the car), and demonstration (they will drive if you want them to demonstrate and you will ride to watch what they do). Kat Bryce is often one of the instructors (she is a Sun Rider that lives in Fort Myers).

The clinic and test and tune start at 9:00 AM (not sharp) and run until 12:00 (not sharp either) when a lunch break is taken. A hot dog lunch is provided in the \$10 fee, though you may want to bring a sandwich if you are picky. Additional drinks (water / Sam's soda) are available for \$.50 each. The class ends at 12:00 so that the instructors can have time to test and tune also. Test and tune will start again at 1:00 PM (not sharp). I would suggest that you hang around and use the test and tune (1:00 PM - 3:00 PM) to reinforce what you have learned in the clinic. So eat quickly and walk the track. Try to find an instructor that is done eating and ask them to walk it with you so that you can better understand the course. Ask anyone else walking the course if they have any suggestions on what to do for a particular section of the course (most will answer, some will not, don't take it personal). They will announce a last call for walk-

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Doug Presnell at the January Autocross

ing the course, if you are not on the course and want to walk it, then get out there.

You walk the course so that you know where to go and what to expect when you are driving the course. You should first become completely familiar with where you need to go without having to figure out where the next gate is. Second you need to figure out what is the best track through the gates, curves, cones that you think you can take. Drive the course in your mind several times. Walk the course multiple times if you want, many people do as driving the course takes a lot of concentration and mental preparation before your run will make you better.

The test and tune track is always the same track. It is basically a first come, first served approach, so find a place in line, take your turn and come back to the same place in line. A good afternoon should be between eight and twelve runs on the test and tune course (a good morning session will get you between twelve and twenty runs as there are fewer cars on the course).

Once again, ask for help from anyone that does not appear to be busy, if you do something wrong (we all do), someone will let you know, apologize and don't take it personally, just don't do it again.

Note: All drivers must take a turn on the course setting up cones. There are bikes provided so that you don't have to walk all the way. Use them if you like. At the Sunday event you will be assigned to a run group and each group will be assigned one session to work. Anyone who does not show up for work will not get an award if one would otherwise be given and is put on a list of not so nice people. Hey, if you play, you need to work (the same goes for our Sun Riders events!).

The test and tune day closes at 3:00 PM. Police the area, hang around for the awards (first and second in each class get a wooden plaque and a stick on placement add-on for the event - one plaque per person) and then head home.

From I-75 exit 41 (AKA SR 70 in Manatee County - where I live) down to exit

23 is roughly 90 miles. Traffic is normally light in the morning and only slightly heavier in the evening south of the Venice exits. North of Venice, I-75 gets a bit heavier on the way home. I plan on around 75 minutes each way. There are gas stations as exit 23. Maps and event schedules can be found on the GCAC web site. If we get enough people going we should try to set up a group drive to make the time pass a bit faster.

If you plan on attending both Saturday and Sunday, I would suggest finding a place to spend the night (that drive gets long on the way home - these events do wear you out). Perhaps someone has a camper several people could share (and some way to get it there) or split the cost of a room for the night. I don't know if there are any camping sites in the area (I have not looked).

Thanks for putting up with the post, and I hope to see more Sun Riders at these gatherings.

Don Reese



Ed Link (left) and John LaVigne at the January Autocross

From: Susan Nikolas (Princess Miata)
Date: Wed Aug 2, 2000 9:17 am
Subject: Re: How'd you choose your Miata?

How did you choose your Miata, it's year, and color?

Impulse purchase, saw it from Dale Mabry at the Hillsborough overpass.

Pulled into the dealership in a 97 green Toyota Camry., left in Ladybug. Camry was reliable yet boring. Everybody has one, never could find mine on the parking lot until after I tried 2 or 3 locks. Why red? Why not. I figured in order to be treated like the princess that I am, I had to be the one to do it. And, I always wanted a red Miata automatic also a must.

So there she was a red automatic! Love a first sight. You might have appreciated that right hand turn at a high rate of speed to get into the dealership, I don't think the vehicles and drivers around me did.

Why automatic transmission you ask? The Princess finds manual transmission to much work and Ya get the picture?

Sun Riders Miata Club Calendar of Events

All events are open to all Sun Riders Miata Club members, their guests, and prospective members unless otherwise noted.

We are always looking for fun activities and events. If you have a good idea, don't be bashful! Something that you enjoy is likely to be enjoyed by other club members also. Contact Pam if you have suggestions for events or would like to volunteer to organize an activity.

If you have questions about any of our activities or events, please contact the event organizer if one is named or Pam Barker at 727-415-3217 or pam@sunriders.com. You may also call the Sun Riders Miata Club Event Hot Line at 813-225-4240 for the latest updates or to leave a message.

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, February 20th - 6:30 PM kick the tires - 7:00 PM dinner and meeting. Please note the new location, Paradise Restaurant in quaint downtown Safety Harbor at 443 Main Street. Parallel parking is available in a lighted, paved lot behind the restaurant and along Main Street. We will meet in the private dining room.

Sunday Drive

Sunday, February 25th - Come join us for a Northern Run & early supper!

In deference to our St. Petersburg members, this time we will be meeting in Port Richie for the drive from Pasco County, through Hernando County and on to Citrus County. Since this is a Sunday, and we don't want to get in trouble with the Man upstairs since He may be looking for you that morning, we'll meet at 2 PM and after 47 miles and 75 minutes, arrive at the restaurant at about 3:15. That will give us time for a leisurely meal and still return home while it is still light.

Our meeting place will be Checkers, one mile North and on the East side of Route 19 from the bridge that welcomes you into Port Richie. (Don't be distracted by the Hooters or the SunCruz gambling ship on the West side of 19). Meeting on the East side of Route 19 will enable us to smoothly merge into traffic going North. (People from up North can hook up with us at 19 and 52 or 50)

From Checkers, it's an easy run right up Route 19 through Homosassa and on into Crystal River and our destination, Cracker's Restaurant. (NOT Cracker Barrel). This is a well known and popular sea food restaurant on the Nature Coast. In addition to seafood they have meat items. With the weather cooperating, we will be seated outside next to the water so the sea gulls can share our appetizers.. There is also indoor seating.

From there we'll travel East on Route 44 for a few miles and then South on Route 491 towards Brooksville, on a nicely paved and rolling two lane road. Approaching Brooksville, on the left you'll notice a high berme (don't be embarrassed, look it up) hiding some of the phosphate mines in the area and huge magnolia trees on the left side of the road which has mysteriously changed in order to test your springs and suspension. Then we'll get to try out the newly opened stretch of the Veterans Highway which by then will be extended to Route 50 in Brooksville from its start at the Tampa Airport. Then a short jump over the Courtney on SR 60 and most of you will be on familiar territory. For you Tampans, instead of getting on the Veterans, you can catch Route 41 in Brooksville and travel home that way.

Sorry, but please don't expect to get any speeding tickets; this will be nice pleasant speed limit (all right, maybe plus a little) journey up North to see where you all might want to relocate when you realize how close Brooksville now is via the Veterans Highway. See you on the 25th ?

Chili Cookoff

Saturday, March 10th Details to come.

Sun Riders Autocross #2

Saturday, March 17th. Registration starts at 8:00 am and closes at 9:30, drivers' meeting at 10:00. This is a great way to improve your driving skills in a place where you can't get a ticket and you can't hurt your car. If you are not a

member of the Sun Riders, you are still welcome to participate. You don't even have to own a Miata, any type of car is welcome. Cost is \$25 and includes lunch. Spectators can eat lunch with us for \$5. Contact Jonathan Skinner at 727-784-5529 or jonathan@sunriders.com for more details. A few helmets will be available for rental for \$5.

The event is held at St. Petersburg Junior College - Allstate Campus in St. Petersburg, at the Southeastern Public Safety Institute. The Campus is located at 3200 34th Street South, St. Petersburg.

Directions from I-275 South-bound: Take Exit #6, which is 22nd Ave. South
Directions from I-275 Northbound: Take Exit #5, which is also 22nd Ave. South
Head West on 22nd Ave. to 34th Street, take a left at the light onto 34th Street South. (This is also known as US 19) Head South for about a half-mile, SPJC-Allstate Center will be on your left.

Monthly Meeting

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Drag Slicks and Marshmallow Sticks

Saturday, March 23rd - 10:00 am. We'll head up to the Ocala area for a day trip to Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing and Antique Car Museum. Admission for adults is \$10, senior admission is \$8, admission for children 13-18 years is \$8, and children 5-12 is \$2. We'll meet at 10:00 am at the Cracker Barrel restaurant just off I-75 at SR 50 (exit 61 Brooksville) for breakfast and then caravan to the Garlits museum.

Saturday and Sunday, March 23rd and 24th. For those who would like the challenge of surviving a night in the wilds of the Central Florida forest, Paul Shaffer will be leading an intrepid band from the Don Garlits Museum to Paynes Prairie Preserve located just south of Gainesville on US 441. There are miles of hiking and biking trails as well as canoeing and a visitor center describing the natural and cultural history of the preserve. The camping area bathroom facilities include flush toilets, hot showers, mirrors, and electric outlets. Parking is generally less than 20 yards from the actual campsite. Bring your tents, sleeping bags, cook stove, pocket knives, lanterns, long-johns, etc. Sorry, no alcohol or pets are allowed in the Preserve.

Paul has reserved 2 adjacent tent campsites for Saturday night. Each site includes 4 people and 1 car for \$10. There is an extra charge of \$2 per person and \$3 per extra vehicle. Please RSVP to Paul at paul@sunriders.com or 813-231-5025.

Sunshine State Sizzle 2001

Friday - Sunday, May 18th - 20th. Hosted by Florida Miata clubs, this weekend event will be held at the Admiral Lehigh Golf Resort & Spa in the Ft. Myers area and will attract Miata enthusiasts from all over Florida and the southeast. \$250 per couple includes meals, most events, and 2 T-shirts. Extra charge for the autocross school and practice and some tours.

What is a Sizzle? It is a gathering of Miata enthusiasts who come together for a weekend of fun, to celebrate our love for our cars, and to enjoy the pleasure of each other's company. Planned events include an autocross school on Saturday followed by open practice on Sunday, a Miata Show 'n Shine, discounted use of the golf and spa facilities (golf is \$15 per person), area trips to local attractions including a special Mystery Tour on Sunday.

Meals include a Friday night reception and cash bar, breakfast Saturday and Sunday, lunch at the autocross site Saturday and Sunday, and a Saturday night pool side cookout with cash bar. Hospitality room will be open late both Friday and Saturday.

We are also expecting Miata vendors so bring your MSU's (Miata Spending Units). Tentative list includes Crazy Red, Miata World, Southeastern Specialties, Grassroots Motorsports, and RSpeed.

More information regarding registration, specific events, etc. will be available soon.

First Class Mail

Tampa, FL 33623-6071
P.O. Box 26071

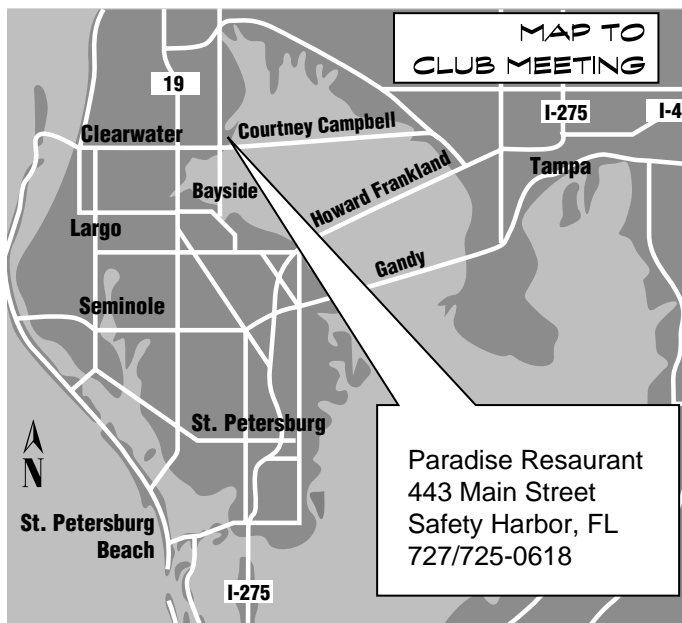


Join Us at Our Club Meetings

We meet the third Tuesday of each month at the Paradise Restaurant, tire kicking starts at 6:30 pm, the meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Visit the club's web page at: www.sunriders.com

Call the Event Hotline at 813/225-4240 for the latest event information.



President	Pam Barker pam@sunriders.com	727/415-3217
Vice-President	Jonathan Skinner jonathan@sunriders.com	727/784-5529
Secretary	Cherie Turner cherie@sunriders.com	727/577-1573
Treasurer	Sandi Scott sandi@sunriders.com	727/372-8617
Board Member	Kevin Morrison kevin@sunriders.com	813/222-0509
Board Member	Jim Poehlman ragtop@sunriders.com	727/895-4224
Board Member	Don Reese don@sunriders.com	941/739-0104
Newsletter Editor	Dave Tietz, dave@sunriders.com	727/321-3809
Webmaster	Kevin Morrison kevin@sunriders.com	813/222-0509
Club Merchandise	Ilona Wessling (home) (work)	727/376-2484 727/937-8247

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