

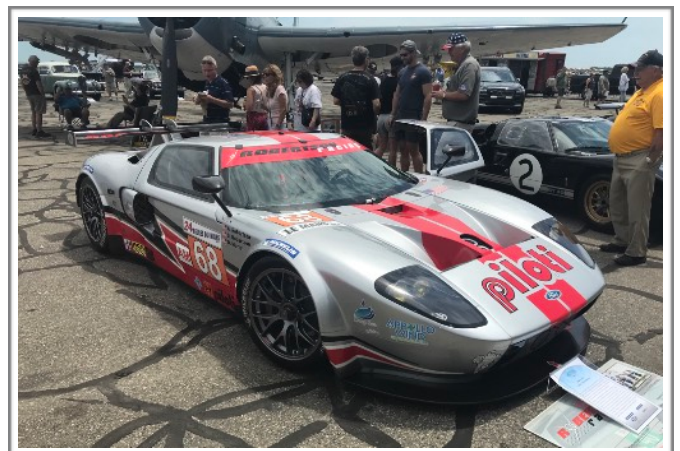
THE *M* EDITION

From the Editor

With no events to report on, these newsletters are getting a little thin. But thanks to our prolific Technical Editor, we DO have a nice article for you to read while nursing your sore arms from your Covid vaccinations.

Just remember, all contributions are gratefully accepted. Stories of past Miata adventures, or even other than Miata tales that you think might interest the group, would be appreciated. Meanwhile, I'll pull out some blasts from the past and other filler bits to keep the pages filled.

As a note to Greg's piece, the Willow Run Airport, near Ypsilanti, is still active. The Ford Motor Company plant on site, where nearly 9,000 B-24 bombers were produced during WWII, is now home to the Yankee Air Museum. Also, the airport has twice hosted "Wings & Wheels", a huge aircraft and car show, and another is planned for 2021. Meander, anyone?



From The Garage - The Arsenal of Democracy

by Greg Wilkins

I thought I'd take on something new this month that seemed appropriate as COVID-19 and winter weather keeps us apart and our roadsters in the garage. So here is a quick review and recommendation for a book to read while we await our vaccinations and a new driving season.

I recently read *The Arsenal of Democracy: FDR, Detroit, and an Epic Quest to Arm an America at War* written by A. J. Baime. It combined multiple topics that I have always been interested in (WWII history, automobiles and airplanes) so it wasn't surprising that I would like this work of non-fiction. However, I realize this may not be of interest to everyone.

The title of the book is taken from Franklin D. Roosevelt's fireside chat delivered December 29, 1940. In that address, FDR was making the case that the United States could not remain on the sidelines of World War II and expect to remain safe from the aggression of the Axis powers. One must remember that at this time, many Americans felt that the expanse of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans were enough to defend the United States from attacks. Some went so far as to advocate that we should align with the Axis powers as they were clearly winning. While not pushing to send Americans to the front lines, FDR was arguing that the United States "must be the great arsenal of democracy" and ramp up production of arms for the defense of the United States as well as to send more, much more, assistance to Great Britain.

The difficult task at hand for FDR was to convince American manufacturers to alter existing capacity from building luxury items to making arms as well as to build new capacity specifically for arms manufacturing. Automobile manufacturers had the tools, skills and knowledge to make many of the weapons needed to fight a modern war. As a result, Detroit played a major role in answering FDR's challenge and making arms to support Great Britain and ultimately to prepare the United States for direct involvement in WW II.

Anyone interested in the full text of FDR's fireside chat on "the great arsenal of democracy" can find it here: <https://web.mit.edu/21h.102/www/Primary%20source%20collections/World%20War%20II/FDR,%20Arsenal%20of%20Democracy.html>

The book focuses broadly on the role Detroit and the auto industry played in making the United States the arsenal of democracy and specifically explores the role of the Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford and his son Edsel. History does not always remember Edsel Ford fondly. This book reveals the significant role he played in ensuring that Ford Motor Company would fill a vital need in preparing the United States for war. Among other things, the Ford Motor Company was instrumental in making B-24 Liberator bombers, the most produced bomber in history.

While non-fiction can be dry, this book was written in a way that brings the historical figures to life. I found it to be a real "page-turner." Also, the book covers the period of time leading up to America's direct involvement in fighting. This period is not as well-covered in books and movies as is the attack on Pearl Harbor and all that came after that, so that made this new material for me.

If you have any interest in WW II history, the history of Detroit and/or the history of the Ford Motor Company, I can highly recommend this book as a good way to occupy some of your winter time.

Happy motoring!



Being a little older, I am very fortunate to have someone call and check on me everyday. He is from India and is very concerned about my car warranty.

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Dues Renewal Reminder

Just a friendly reminder that 2021 membership dues are now due. If you have not already done so, please send your \$10 check made out to NWOhio Miata Club to Pat Dettmer, 725 Pine St, Wauseon, OH 43567. Hoping for a better year to Meander. If you no longer wish to be a part of the club, send us a note to update our records. Thank you.

Also, for those of you who joined in 2020, no need to pay again. Your membership will still be good for this year.

Check Out Facebook Group

Wonder what's happening in the club between monthly M Editions? If you're not a member yet, go to Facebook and search on NWOhio Miata Club Group. Join the Group and you'll be able to keep up on all the latest happenings.



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**Stop in and talk to Nik, Mark or Bill,
 and check the club web site for
 the latest special deals.**