

THE *M* EDITION

Pandemic Still Affects Plans

We had all hoped that by this time, we would be able to restore our typical calendar of club events. Alas, as we know, the coronavirus situation is worse, not better, so mass gatherings are off the table for the foreseeable future.

Thus, there will be no fall dinner gatherings, including our traditional holiday party. Let's hope that by next spring, we will be able to at least resume our meanders in some form.

The *M Edition* will continue to provide communication while we are physically distanced, and don't forget our Facebook page. It's an easy way to connect with your fellow members using comments and photos to let them know how you are doing, and what mischief you are up to. If you haven't already joined, just go to Facebook and search for **NWOHio Miata Club Group**.



From the Prez

Since there is no Christmas party this year, maybe we should put on our best Santa sweaters and post the pictures on our Facebook page. Also, now would be a good time to start thinking about those trips for our next driving season, maybe finding a few places we've never been.

Wishing everyone a happy Thanksgiving and hope for better times.

Bill & Linda Roan

Letters to the Editor

Bill:

Thanks for the newsletter. Dan and I had a great time at the anniversary party.

Technically, the word "switchback" is a railroad term, in which the train moves forward, a switch is thrown, and the entire train backs up to the next switch, after which it is thrown, and the entire train moves forward again. Hence, the term "switchback."

This engineering feat was employed in mountainous terrain because not enough space to build a 180 degree curve, and it allowed the train to achieve higher elevations easier. These can still be found in regular use in Peru and Ecuador. You can find videos of these on the internet.

Jon Laux

Reply from the author, Terri Wilkins:

Based on the Oxford English Dictionary and the fact we are in North America and not Britain, I think the use of switchback in the article is spot on.

switch·back

/ˈswiCH_bak/

noun NORTH AMERICAN

a 180° bend in a road or path, especially one leading up the side of a mountain.

BRITISH

a road, path, or railroad with alternate sharp ascents and descents.

verb US

(of a road or vehicle) make a series of switchback turns. "a road that switchbacked up blue and distant hills"

From the Garage - Winter Storage Tips

by Greg Wilkins

As we come to the end of another driving season many folks are getting ready to put their roadsters away for the winter. Here are few winter storage tips.

Interior/Exterior

I always give my cars a thorough cleaning inside and out prior to going into storage. Depending on the condition and age of the current layer of protection, a new coat of wax may also get applied. This helps get contaminants off the car so they don't have all winter to attack the finish. I also put car covers on for winter storage. This offers some additional protection against scratches and ensures that I have a clean car when driving weather returns.

Battery

If you don't mind losing radio presets and other electronic settings, it is a good idea to disconnect the battery. This prevents it from being gradually drained of power. However, I like to take my roadsters out periodically in the winter. There are always those days that pop up where the sky is blue, the roads are dry and the temperatures are moderate. So I put trickle chargers on the batteries of my cars that are stored in the garage and they are ready to go in a moment's notice. I have had good luck with the \$5 trickle chargers from Harbor Freight. If you use a battery charger, it is possible for some gases to be emitted from the battery during the charging process. I crack the hood of the car and also take the car cover off that corner of the car to help ventilate the area around the battery. I don't use a trickle charger on my car that is stored in an unattended commercial storage unit for safety reasons.

Engine Oil

Most experts recommend replacing the engine oil prior to placing your car into winter storage. This is to get contaminated oil and accumulated sludge out of the engine before it sits for an extended period. With four cars going into winter storage, this is one area that I do not follow the expert advice. It is extremely rare that any one of my

toys accumulates more than a few thousand miles during the driving season, so I put mine away with lightly used oil and immediately get an oil change when they come out of winter storage to start a new driving season.

Gas Tank

It is always a good idea to store your car with a full tank of gas as this minimizes the opportunity for condensation to form and accumulate in the fuel tank. The addition of a high quality fuel stabilizer is also a good idea to help prevent varnish, gum and rust. Run the car for a few minutes after adding the stabilizer to distribute it throughout the fuel system.

Parking Brake

It is best to leave the parking brake off for winter storage. I'm guessing all of us have experienced a sticky parking brake where the brake pad does not immediately release from the rotor. This can become much worse if the parking brake is left on during an extended period of storage and can cause damage to the parking brake mechanism, pads and/or rotors. It is best to store the car in gear, parking brake off and use wheel chocks (another \$5 item at Harbor Freight).

Tires

A common practice for protecting tires from flat spotting during long term storage has been to place the car on jack stands to take the weight off of the tires. This also provides the opportunity to remove the tires entirely and store them in a climate controlled area. However, there is also a school of thought that leaving a car on jack stands for an extended period of time can damage suspension components.

An alternate technique to protect the tires from flat spotting is to slightly over inflate them. This is the technique that I use. I add 20% above the recommended tire pressure while ensuring to not exceed the maximum tire pressure stamped on the tire. In the case of the Miata, I store them with

the tires inflated to 35 psi rather than the usual 29 psi. It is also recommended to place a piece of plywood between the tire and the concrete floor and it doesn't hurt to periodically roll the car a small distance to change the section of the tire that is in contact with the ground. Don't forget to return the pressure to the recommended setting prior to driving your car.

Pest Control

I have experienced pest problems with my cars for the first time recently. Mice built a nest in the engine bay of one of the Miatas during winter storage. Fortunately, they did not chew up any wiring or cause any damage. In another case, a squirrel found its way into the air intake of my son's car and was storing nuts in the air filter box (his car sits outside). A trick I recently read about is using dryer sheets as a rodent repellent. Apparently the smell is effective at keeping rodents away. I have never tried this before but plan on strategically placing a few in each of my stored cars this winter.

Insurance

Insurance is a necessary evil, but I try to not spend more than I have to. I discontinue all insurance coverage with the exception of comprehensive when my cars are in storage. My insurance agent is very accommodating and will turn on all coverage for a day if I want to drive one on a mild winter day. With four cars in storage, this equates to significant savings during the winter months. If you store a car other than at your home, you should confirm that your insurance will cover it.

I hope you find these tips useful and have a safe winter!

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Mazda3



CX-5



MX-5 Miata

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and check the club web site for
the latest special deals.**