

REME Reporter

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A MINI VACATION IN VEGAS

Everyone's experience at A Mini Vacation In Vegas is different. For me, it is a lot more relaxing than Las Vegas should be. AMVIV attendees usually find themselves wondering aimlessly up to the roof of the parking garage first thing each day, as if drawn there by a magnet. Maybe it's that sinking feeling that your beauty got vandalized by some snotty skateboarder the night before and you have just GOT to check. Usually though it's because that's where everyone you know meets up. The Palace Station rooftop, a holy Mecca in the Mini World. The rooftop is a cool place really. Sort of a high school parking lot, carnival and beer garden all rolled into one. One can spend most of the day there soaking up the sun, downing suds and checking out the cool Mini chicks as they pass by.

Or, you can choose to burn your gas budget for the year driving out 200 miles and back through the desert to see some pretty red rocks or a ghost town. Been there, done that. The desert is pretty, but it's no Lake Tahoe. I did swing out to Pahrump on Friday to get some video of the Mini Challenge racing. Jerry and I got some great footage and pix before the safety Nazi's chased us away from the track. We were way clear of asphalt, but still got sent to the Principal's office because we actually saw something besides the BBQ lunch wagon.



Phyllis & Quinton at Hash House a Go Go

Vegas is definitely the city of big food. I'm not talking about buffets, those are everywhere there is a tribe with a casino. I'm talking king-sized, overpowering, almost intimidating plates of food, no doubt meant to impress the hick tourists from Iowa. One such

place was chosen as the official REME Vegas dinner spot, the Hash House a-Go-Go. Here, chicken pot pies are served up in sombrero sized crusts (above) and the burgers are meant to be shared by a platoon. I honestly did eat most of my burger, and much of the haystack they called a side of fries. The best part of this place was the funky industrial cow barn decor.

We spent an evening on the Strip waving and screaming for all we could at the passing Mini's on parade. For an hour, it seemed that the Mini World was taking over the Real Vegas World, except for the embarrassingly long Hummer limos that tried to run over the cute little Mini's racing around

them. Afterward we visited the "World's Biggest" M&M store, five floors of melt-in-your-mouth goodness with a real race car on the top floor.

The REME booth was a ton of fun as usual. I think we handed out over 500 Magical



Jerry, Alice & Rob

Mystery Mini Tour badges and flyers. The Cruisin' Cooler made constant rounds, dispensing beer and good will and we set up the Miniology mobile studio where we shot and edited nightly reports for the web site and iTunes. The REME booth attracted a lot of people on the non-windy evenings as Norm cranked up the movie projector and treated us to car flicks and that amazing race through Paris.

We did skip the official AMVIV banquet this year, but I heard that it has much improved over previous occasions. The real food bargain in Vegas is the coffee shop at the

Four Queens on Fremont Street. Not only did we all get a great dinner on the cheap, but a free light show out in front on the world's biggest TV screen. "It's really four football fields long" somebody told me. I started to see a trend in this bigness that is Vegas. It's a blast to wander down Fremont Street and soak up the old school tacky glitz of the t-shirt shops, donut death traps, nudie bars and a genuine ABC Store. This neon-encrusted tourist hell is not to be missed.

By far, the coolest thing this year at AMVIV was the spontaneous Mini party Saturday night at Palace Station's "authentic" Irish Pub. Imagine a bar crowded by a throng of Mini fanatics, swilling ale, dancing and singing along to "The Fab", Vegas' best Beatles tribute band (maybe their only Beatles tribute band)!

All in all, AMVIV V was an unforgettable experience. You can gamble and drink and eat until you drop in Vegas. You can look at Mini's all day long and into the night, but what makes AMVIV special is having all your best Mini friends there to enjoy it all with you. If you missed out on the fun, you can see the archive of my videos on the Miniology web site.

Thanks to every one of you who joined us in Vegas this year. Let's do it again!

-Rob "Califzeph" Saunders



Silly Gerry!

**Want A Nifty-Cool
Grill Badge?**



**Order one when registering for MMT
or contact [zied](mailto:ziedrich@rememini.com) to reserve yours!**

**The Magical Mystery Mini Tour!
September 5-7, 2008**

**Register Here:
www.magicalmysteryminitour.com**

Editor's Notes

With gas prices rising the way they are, enthusiasts like myself often have to weigh the costs of driving vs. the fun factor of driving our cars. HOWEVER. I've found there are many things that a fun-car-loving individual like myself can do to share time with others. AMVIV comes to mind. Huge group of MINIs (and Minis) and lots and lots of great people to get together with in a really fun city. How's that for a good time? On a smaller scale, summer seems to be the time for auto shows. Most recently, some of us participated in a show up in Chico. This month, we've got the Mini Mania event immediately followed by the UBSCC annual car show the next day. Look to the calendar for these and other show events.



How else are we addressing the "gas is so expensive, what can we do to get together?" dilemma? In June we have is our Giants Game Day. Last year we all gathered in Larkspur Landing and took the ferry over. We all had a blast (and splash) on our way to the game! July we've planned our Railroad Park Camping Trip in Dunsuir.

Now. For the Die-Hard Drivers. We know that sometimes the fun-factor of our cars and the camaraderie of this great group will send the sensible side of our brain out the window and we'll take our cars out for some serious non-economical driving fun. Keep checking the calendar for regional motoring madness!

...and just in case you were wondering, the bright magenta theme of this newsletter is in honor of my newly-AMVIV-blinged Pilotis. Wilma, eat your heart out!

-litabelle

Founder's Message

REME continues to grow! We had 35 new member cars in March and April. As of yesterday, we now have 400 member cars. At about 1.7 members per car, that makes about 680 actual members. The question I continue to ask, is why (yes this may be a rhetorical question)?



Founder Peter Ziedrich

I think we will all agree that we have a successful club. Yes, like every organization there are things that we could do better, maybe even a lot better, but we are doing something right. I hope that we continue to do more things right than wrong. The continued growth of our club and level of member participation will remain the method of gauging whether we continue with the same level of success or wither away to insignificance as have so many before us.

When the charm of a new car starts to fade, it is normal for a member to lose some enthusiasm for the car and enthusiasts clubs at about the same rate as the "new car smell" is replaced by smells generated from the Taco Bell or Carl's Junior's bags crumpled on the rear floor. What keeps a club vibrant is the infusion of new members. Yes, we existing active members are thrilled when we see the faces of new MINI owners after their first REME run. We love your car and enthusiasm and we will do everything in our limited power to keep that enthusiasm alive, even after your car has hit mid-life at 4 years old or 60k miles.

In my upcoming messages I will try to identify at least one thing we are doing right. If you can identify what we are doing wrong, please notify me or any of the board members or chapter chairmen so we can rectify our shortcomings.

One thing that we are doing right as evidenced by our growth and the growth of similar successful clubs in Florida and Arizona is having regional chapters. Not everyone has the ability or desire to travel 2-3 hours to a starting point of a 4-6 hour run and then return home exhausted. The chapter gives local members a chance to get together socially on short runs, meals, or movies (great idea Kat). At this time, I would like to announce to the membership that the Sacramento Valley Chapter of REME (SV-REME) has its first chairman, Leeta Bell. Thank you, Leeta, for all your enthusiasm in both publishing our newsletter, and leading our largest satellite chapter.

Our run on May 4 was a perfect example of a healthy club, with participation from both the existing membership and so many new members as well. Per Norm's count, we had over 40 cars participating at some level on Sunday, with 38 cars making the entire run. Look at the pictures posted online. We had a lot of new faces! Thank you all that attended, placing personal problems on hold, to celebrate life with your extended REME family, enjoying the sun, views, and winding roads.

Life remains good.



Regional REME

Mount Shasta

The Mount Shasta Chapter (formerly know as the Upper Central Valley Chapter) has been quite busy as we had two gatherings in April, and our first official run will be May 10th!

A short meeting at Starbucks the first week of April led to an impromptu run up to Shasta Dam, over Keswick Dam and down through Old Shasta!

We had a good turnout for our first year at Kool April Nights with 5 MINIs, 1 Mini and about 25 people, HUGE THANKS TO KATHY & TOM ZEH, who provided us with an awesome place to watch the parade and lots of great food. Looks like we're starting plans for next year!



Steven, Randy & Ellie, Sandie, Mindy, Mary& Nolan, Norm

Jessica Nelson took first place with PYNT SYZ in the Super 70's division, which as far back as she could look is the first time a British car or a Mini has ever placed in Kool April Nights.

Hot-Orama, another car show in our area (Anderson) was the weekend of April 26th, which both Norman & Jessica Nelson took all British Trophies for Pooper & PYNT SYZ.

May 10th we have our Lewiston run, which was snowed out in January. We'll start in Old Shasta, head west on 299 to Lewiston and Trinity Dam, where we'll have lunch, then return home. Anyone up for some great roads is welcome to join in on the fun!

–Mindy Brown, Mount Shasta REME Chair

Sac Valley

On April 20th, the Sac Valley members (and others from REME at large) did a little something different for our monthly events. Usually we do a dinner, perhaps a run, maybe even an outside social event. On this particular day, members had a chance to have a taste of each.

The Chico Area All British Car Club held their 19th Annual All British Meet, which a few of our members entered. They were able to enjoy a day on the green of the Canyon Oaks Country Club surrounded by fabulous new and vintage British cars. A few others took a miniature tour of Butte County, finding some roller coaster twisties and some easy turns before heading back down the hill to Chico to enjoy the car show. Afterwards, it was off to explore Downtown Chico. We found Powell's for the sweet tooth and Tres Hombres for the beer tooth! Afterwards, we all headed over to Basque Norte for some family-style dining with portions that gave Hash House a Go Go a run for its money! Almost too full to move, we all waddled back to the MINIs to head back down to Sacramento (although I did hear rumor that some made it to Starbucks on the way home!) It was a thoroughly enjoyable day. Hopefully, next year we will have more participants in the show, and possibly a longer run up the canyon.

I'm looking forward to some regional runs we have planned in June and August. I'm having a lot of fun learning how to route, although I'll probably never be able to find those "Howard" roads! Also, be on the lookout for other events that might not involve driving (gasp!)

–Leeta Bell, Sac Valley REME Chair

East Bay

On March 29, a small group of five MINIs, including a couple of new members, Don and Brandon, met up in Pleasanton to go on a nice run. We drove up to Mt. Hamilton and the Lick Observatory in San Jose. Then we drove down the hill into Del Puerto Canyon and over to Tracy and had lunch at a nice little Mexican restaurant. Del Puerto Canyon road is a GREAT clean road of smooth twisties for motoring. If you get a chance, download the map and you can do the run yourself if you want!

Thanks to Howard and Peter for the route/map and Ed and Denise for the photos!

All of us at Mt. Hamilton in the fog:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/minipenny/REMEEBDelPuertoRun/photo#5198105189276488082>

Happily motoring along:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/minipenny/REMEEBDelPuertoRun/photo#5198105137736880354>

We have an upcoming event on Friday, May 16th.

What: Speed Racer the movie

When: 7:30pm

Where: Century Downtown Walnut Creek 14

Buy tickets in advance at www.fandango.com.

Please RSVP to Kat by sending an email to minipenny@gmail.com

–Kat Noble, East Bay REME Chair

Rob Cernohlavek

I first saw a “new” MINI in 2002 and promptly fell in love at first sight. We visited the dealership several times, but since we had just signed a four year lease on a VW Passat, it was not to be for three years. When that lease was coming to an end that Leeta convinced me to actually take one for a test drive. I was online as soon as we got home that night and had Minion, my first 2006 MCS convertible, all set up within about two hours. We printed out the complete booklet and took it down to Niello MINI the very next day, surprising Wade, our MA, with the fully formatted booklet. Once ordered I sat down to wait... and wait... and wait and wait and wait... after about two days I had had enough and needed to find something else to occupy my time while Minion was being built and shipped over. Being a techie I turned to the web and started digging into the new world we were soon to join. Ooooo, you can do that to a MINI? Does it void the warranty? Do I care? After I had completely modded out Minion five or six times over and had my plans all laid out I started exploring the online communities to see what was out there. I had heard that Mini owners waved to each other and seemed to have a kindred spirit similar to what I remember when riding my



motorcycle back in college. Looking in this area I found a club that looked interesting but was revealed to be mostly talk and eventually went defunct even before I got the car. Somewhat frustrated by this experience I decided to wait till Minion got here before getting my hopes up.

Then one evening the family and I had a hankering for steak so we headed over to Outback Steakhouse for dinner. Lo and behold, there in the parking lot was this really cool, blue MINI with these freakin’ awesome frosted flames running along the side. Dead center on the bottom of the back window was a sticker reading “Redwood Empire Mini Enthusiasts”. I thought that, with this being a really nice car that obviously had a proud owner, maybe this group was something to look into. While I had seen the REME site mentioned online in a few search engines, I hadn’t ventured to it but

vowed to do so as soon as we got home that night. Got onto the site and joined up. Our first event was a Sac Valley dinner at the Streets of London pub in downtown Sacramento. Even though Minion was still 2-3 weeks out (just shipped out on the boat and being tracked hourly with progress charts and all...) we were openly accepted by the great REME people and had our first taste of this fine group and the people that makes it all worthwhile. The food was good too...

The following few weeks were horrible – the waiting unbearable for both myself and Leeta, who by this time had had just about enough of her car-obsessed husband and his constant whining about how slow the locks were in the Panama Canal and that the north winds were slowing the ship as it progressed up the west coast towards Port Hueneme. Wait! It disembarked a day early and got to the distribution center? Umm, it’s at the dealer? We can pick it up in three days? Oooo ooo oooo! OK. So those of you that had your babies shipped over have had that same experience but it was the first time for me and I was excited! We picked up Minion on March 23rd 2006, and went on our first run with the club on April 8th (2nd Annual Delta Run). Since then, we haven’t looked back.

Along the way from then to now, we somehow picked up a second MINI Convertible named *Fayt* (Leeta got jealous of my car but she can tell you about that later), *BamBam* - a 1964 Austin Mini, and our most recent addition, a 2008 MINI Clubman named *Kokofix* or *Koko* for short. We are hooked and I honestly think we will have a hard time moving to any other vehicle in the future. We discovered that when you buy a Mini you are not buying just a car, you are buying into a absolutely wonderful community of diverse yet like-minded individuals who enjoy their cars and the company of their fellow motorers. We found our home in that community with REME and are living happily ever after. See you at a run near you sometime soon!

Rob Cernohlavek
REME Board Member

Fiona. The “really cool, blue MINI with these freakin’ awesome frosted flames.”



Wilma Champlain



too much fun. I knew after my first run that white knuckles and screaming wasn't the way to have fun, so it was off to Thunder Hill for a day of learning how to drive a MINI with an instructor at my side - let *him* scream for a while. I was way out of my comfort level on the race track, but that was OK. I now love going on runs and showing off my picture in *MC2 Magazine* to anyone who will stop and look. What fun to talk cars with the young men and when they brag that they have a 5-speed and I smile and say I have six. Other than driving, the great bonus in all of this is the wonderful friends I have made in REME. I get to be with others who love MINIs as much as I do, and I love having friends of all ages, it keeps you young. My goal is to get as many people to start driving MINIs as I can, and to enjoy life to the fullest.

Where to start with this story of the crazy old lady and EZ Parker? Well about a year ago I needed some change. You have to jump start your life every once in a while to keep it interesting. My first thought was a motorcycle and then my inside voice said, "no way." A nice young man at the motorcycle dealer suggested a MINI Cooper and the rest is history. My first question to Toni at Niello was, "Is there an age limit?" and he smiled and said no. After showing me the cars and finding out I wanted a 6 speed we went for a test drive, and after the second turn I was ready to go back and give him a deposit. I was hooked *big time*.

Now when you approach your children about a new adventure it is best go give them a feeling of contribution, so I let them chose between the motorcycle and a MINI. I had no idea that it would lead to joining REME, going to Thunder Hill, and having way

Norm Nelson

Hello, my name is Norm Nelson, sometimes known as "Pooper" or "Mini Pooper" and at other times known by names that can't be published. I got involved in the "Mini community" by receiving a card on my Mini by Peter & Janet Ziedrich on the Windsor town green. I had just purchased "Pooper" and was taking Jesse out for a ride and dinner. I came up to my Mini to find a card stuffed into the window molding. At first I thought it might be a ticket or just another shameless advertisement but it was a welcoming card that caught my eye.

I was so caught up in the idea of owning a Mini Cooper and enjoying every minute, I had no idea that there was actually a local club that shared my insanity! I quickly responded and met Peter and Janet. Next thing I knew I was signed up for a "run" to Fort Bragg. What a wonderful weekend! There were twisty roads, fun people, and Minis, Minis, Minis!!!!

From there I just jumped in with both feet. I have met the most wonderful group of warm, caring, generous, friendly, fun people that I now consider "my family". Becoming a part of Redwood Empire Mini Enthusiasts has opened my eyes and my heart to new adventures with friends I will keep forever. Thank you all for being a part of our lives.

"Keep the rubber side down"

Cheers,

Norm Nelson & Pooper
REME Board Member



What's Happenin'

May

- 17 (Saturday): **Mini Mania**, A Nevada City Adventure Open House ([Info](#)) ([RSVP](#))
17 (Saturday): **SV-REME** - Giovanni's Pizza ([RSVP](#))
18 (Sunday): UBSCC All-British Car Show, Woodland, CA (previously held in Dixon) ([Info](#)) ([RSVP](#))

June

- 7 (Saturday): MOASF - Hayward Field Meet/Car Show ([Forum](#)) ([RSVP](#))
14 (Saturday): **REME** - Mini Day @ AT&T Park Giants vs A's ([RSVP](#)) ([Forum](#))
22 (Sunday) **SV-REME** - Run to the Hills! ([RSVP](#)) ([Forum](#))
26-29 (Thurs-Sun): MOALA - Mini Meets West in Orange County, CA ([Info](#))
28 (Saturday): **SV-REME** - Dinner/Social ([RSVP](#))

July

- 11-13 (Friday-Sunday): **REME** - Railroad Park Sleepover in Dunsmuir ([Forum](#)) ([RSVP](#))
19 (Saturday): **SV-REME** - Sac Area Social - Play Ball! ([Forum](#)) ([RSVP](#))

August

- 2 (Saturday): **REME** - North Coast Run
9 (Saturday): **SV-REME** - Search for Twisty Gold! ([RSVP](#))
21 (Thursday): Hooked on MINIS Thunderhill Raceway Park Willows CA ([Info](#)) ([RSVP](#)) ([Forum](#))
24 (Sunday): **SV-REME** - Dinner/Social ([RSVP](#))

September

- 5-7 (Friday-Sunday): **REME** - Magical Mystery MINI Tour, San Francisco, CA ([Info](#)/[Register](#)) ([RSVP](#)) ([Forum](#))
13-20 (Saturday-Following Sunday): TARGA New Foundland ([Register](#)) ([Info](#))
14 (Sunday): Palo Alto British Car Meet (location to be determined)
20 (Saturday): **REME** - End of Summer Luau ([RSVP](#))
20 Vintage Mini Challenge at Sears Point - Infineon Raceway ([Info](#))

October

- 12 (Saturday): **SV-REME** - Dinner/Social ([RSVP](#))
18-19 (Sat/Sun): California Autumn Classic (location to be determined) ([Info](#))
25-26 (Sat/Sun): **REME** - Monterey run

November

- 9 (Sunday): **SV-REME** - Dinner/Social "Guy Fawke's Day" ([RSVP](#))
15 (Saturday): **REME** - TBD

December

- 6 (Saturday): **REME** - Christmas Run & Dinner
7 (Sunday): **REME** - 2009 Planning Meeting

I'm getting really good gas mileage back here!!!

...recently overheard on the Fairfield/Berryessa Run

Redwood Empire Mini Enthusiasts was formed for both new and classic Mini Cooper owners located within an hour radius of the Petaluma to Healdsburg Highway 101 corridor. Counties served include San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Mendocino, and Lake. We also have very active members located in the Sacramento and Central Valleys, as well as the South Bay and Peninsula areas. Anyone wishing to participate from outside of the area is invited to join our membership and our activities.

Our group is informal and activities are intended to be fun. We will do everything in our power to facilitate that goal for all members. Our club is still in its infancy. Participation in any group activities is at the sole risk and cost of each participant.

Redwood Empire Mini Enthusiasts

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