

THE BAYFIELD REGATTA

By MaryLynn Cinealis

The Regatta was attended by 15 Miatas and was under the command of Captain Ron and First Mate Paula Beckman.

We individually drove our “ships” to Rice Lake on Friday afternoon and met up with everyone at the hotel. The proprietors were very friendly and helpful, even offering to carry our “duffel bags” to our rooms. After resting a bit, we gathered in the parking lot to caravan to the “galley” for “grub” – uh, dinner.

Our group had its own dining room at Adventures Restaurant that night, so we could be as feisty as we wanted visiting with friends without disturbing other diners. After a great dinner we still wanted to continue the party but realized that we did not have an assigned “party room”, so Craig and Mary Hodne offered up their room. Almost everyone popped in for an after-dinner drink, but the party had to come to an early end because we had a strict “on deck” call for 8:15 am Saturday morning.

On Saturday morning we were all ready “to shove off” and set sail for the journey to Bayfield. The weather started off a little cool but improved as the day went on. The ride was wonderful and fun with a lot of twists and turns.

Lunch was at very nice restaurant on the shore of a lake surrounded by trees, so of course the place was called “Lakewood”. We had our own taped-off area for parking the cars; it was kinda cute that they did that for us. In our dining room with big windows showing a lake view, there was a sandwich bar laid out with a variety of lunchmeats, cheeses, veggies and soups. Each of us could put together our own deli soup and sandwich meal. The food was delicious, and the cost was reasonable.

We arrived in Bayfield in the afternoon, leaving time for us to visit shops in town, take a nap or walk the beautiful grounds of the Winfield Inn. Some of us gathered on the patio for cocktails and conversation (and lots of laughter) prior to leaving for dinner. Dinner was in Washburn, a few miles down the road at the Steak Pit.

Again, because we tend to act a lot like “sailors on leave” we had our own dining room. Some of us enjoyed our dinners, while others were greatly disappointed, but we all appreciated having time to just sit and chat with each other and yes – laugh. When we left the restaurant to return to our cars, we were treated with a breathtaking orange-glowing moon over the Washburn bay. Before ending the evening we decided to have a bonfire back at the hotel, so we all drove back to grab a seat around the fire.

I think Brian Carney was sent ahead to get it going. Upon arriving back we did not see a roaring fire however; something about damp matches. Eventually with the help of 5 or 6 other guys the fire sparked and gently roared. But the women had

already settled in around the patio tables for a little libation and a lot of happy chatter. All of this with a spectacular view of Lake Superior below the cliff, a beautiful moon, and cool but pleasant temperatures. There was some event in town that concluded with the launching of several Japanese lanterns. They glowed as they drifted across the sky, over the lake, past the moon, and above us on the patio atop the cliff. Very cool! It was a very nice end to a very nice Miata day.

Sunday morning it was time to say goodbye. Most of us had breakfast at one of the excellent Bayfield restaurants then headed home. Others chose to start the long journey down-State and breakfast on the way. Still, a fair number were staying another day to enjoy boat rides, shopping , and visiting wineries.

The regatta was a success: all shipmates had a great time, our Captain and First Mate guided the ship expertly with a sense of adventure, humor and creativity, and while we had exciting, sometimes challenging “sea” roads, it was smooth sailing; and the Winfield Inn was the perfect port!

Thanks again to the Beckmans for showing us a wonderful time in Northern Wisconsin. They have always found interesting, fun roads to “sail” on and lovely places to stay.