



Welcome MINI5280 Members,

**January 2022**

I'm so excited to be the current president of **MINI5280**. We have recently had the change in officers, and we are all super excited for what we already have in the works. I'm excited to work with a great group of ladies:



After the last few years of being cooped up because of Covid we are excited to get out and about. We can't wait to see each and every one of you on our upcoming adventures.

**President Erin Autobee**

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# Meet Your New Officers:



**Erin Autobee**

President

**Tell us about your family:**

My family is made up of my husband Andy, our son Ben 11yo (recently not enjoying the drives, they take away from his gaming time, our daughter Ellie 3yo (loves to go on adventures), and our 1y Boston Terrier Poppy.

**What MINI/Mini do you have?**

Our current MINI is a 2019 Red Countryman S named Clifford the Big Red MINI. He is the 4th MINI we have had since Joining the club in 2004. Our

prior MINIs were a 2005 Cooper S Hardtop (Rex), a White 2013 Countryman S (Orion), and a 2015 white Countryman S (Baymax).

**Where does your MINI sleep at night?**

Our MINI sleeps at night securely tucked into his cozy garage.

**When did you join MINI5280?**

We joined MINI5280 in 2004 before we even had our first MINI. The first MINI was like having a child. The dealership only got so many S models at the time and from when we ordered it to deliver was 9 months.

**OK now the fun stuff:**

**What was your best MINI adventure?**

We have been on so many MINI adventures over the years it is hard to just pick one: Yellowstone, Mount Rushmore, Vegas, Four Corners, and the Missile Silo,

**What was your first MINI sticker and why?**

My first sticker stuck to my car was of a T-Rex with a bunch of stick people and the saying "Your stick figure family was delicious."

**When was your last check engine light in your MINI?**

Ugh... you are supposed to pay attention to those? I can't remember the last time the light was on.

**If you could drive your MINI anywhere in the world, where would you go?**

I have always wanted to visit all 50 states. I have visited 38 states so far I would love to take the MINI to visit the rest.

**Do you have any "not-normal" driving habits?**

I eat breakfast everyday in my car.

**What is one goal you want to achieve while being an officer of MINI5280?**

One goal that I want to achieve while being an officer is to see more rides, events and involvement from officers and members.



## Cait O'Connor

Vice President

### **Tell us about your family:**

There are 3 humans in our family (4th on the way). We also have two dogs, and it seems like one less fish each day (RIP fish). My husband is Brian and he's relatively well-known within the club as a helper and a friendly mechanic. He's my go-to for all mechanical questions, and he's taught me a lot over the years about the more challenging maintenance and repair aspects of our multiple MINI and other motor vehicles!

We also have a tenacious little human named Reagan. She's 2.5 years old and she really runs the show. She's been my co-pilot since she arrived 7 weeks early back in 2019. After her graduation from the NICU, she's basically been my back-seat hula girl – a fixture on all our family adventures!

Our doggos are Sam Houston (aka "The General"), with whom some of you are very familiar, and Cricket 22. Houston is an almost 13-year-old Yorkshire Terrier and Cricket is a 2- or 3-year-old Chug (or Chihuahua/Pug mix). It's never a dull moment in our home!

### **What MINI/Mini do you have?**

Our family has had multiple MINI/Mini over the years. Our initiation into the Cult of MINI began back in 2011 when I took delivery of my very first, brand new, Spice Orange 2012 MINI Cooper S Hardtop. Eventually, Brian became indoctrinated into the lifestyle and we adopted a 5280 club member's Laguna Green 2012 MINI Cooper S Hardtop. In addition, during a pregnancy-induced impulse, we purchased a Frankenstein '74 Mini Morris Minor. This classic Mini sits on a rotisserie in our too-small garage waiting for parts to arrive!

### **Where does your MINI sleep at night?**

Interesting question! We are brimming with vehicles, so it's constantly changing. Coopa (my MINI) was definitely a garage queen. However, we recently inherited my dad's '68 Barracuda, so all our daily drivers are currently sleeping in the COLD. (For shame.)

### **When did you join MINI5280?**

Feels like I've been in the club forever, but we moved to Colorado in 2013, so I think we joined in 2014.

### **What was your best MINI adventure?**

I've had 230,000 miles of MINI adventures. And honestly, since most of our friends these days are "MINI People," I suppose everything is at least a MINI-adjacent adventure! For the sake of simplicity, I'll elaborate on my adventures \*IN\* my MINI. Coopa's been on beaches in both Washington State, Massachusetts, and Texas. She's been to the top of some of the highest roads in the nation, and along the most beautiful scenic byways. The best adventure was probably MINI Takes The States (MTTS) back in 2018. I got to spend it with some of my favorite people, both local and national!

### **What was your first MINI sticker and why?**

Probably the giant Boston Bruins Spoked B decal! I think I applied it at the same time as my "USE YA BLINKAH" decal.

### **When was your last check engine light in your MINI?**

Oh? Is that supposed to NOT be lit up? Kidding. It was probably a high-pressure fuel pump (HpFP); I lose boost all the dang time. It's pretty

depressing!

**If you could drive your MINI anywhere in the world, where would you go?**

Our favorite place in the world is Bhutan, but realistically? Probably take her to Ireland to drive around some of my old neighborhoods!

**Do you have any “not-normal” driving habits?**

No, but my husband does. He ONLY changes lanes within an intersection and it drives me mad. Hahaha!

**What is one goal you want to achieve while being an officer of MINI5280?**

I just want to find ways to really engage and build the club. I am looking forward to helping the club adapt to the “new normal” of socializing in a pandemic. Your team has already started working on some ideas to keep the club relevant and a positive force in the Colorado community, while also keeping our members’ health and safety paramount.



**Michelle**  
**Goldberg Fending**  
Treasurer

**Tell us about your family:**

My little family is just my husband David (Ford Focus ST driver and fellow car enthusiast) and our little puppy bundle of terror, Houston.

**What MINI/Mini do you have?**

My love is a 2011 Countryman S All4 named Josephine. White with her signature purple racing stripes and other accents.

**Where does your MINI sleep at night?**

Unfortunately, due to another car enthusiast (aka my husband), Josephine has to sleep outside.

**When did you join MINI5280?**

Joined in the fall of 2018 after a (still unknown) member of the group tagged my car while at work! I had heard about the group from the lady I bought Josephine from, but it took the push from someone tagging me to join.

**What was your best MINI adventure?**

I think my favorite adventure would have to be my very first drive with the group. The Countryman Color Run in 2018. My mom was in town visiting and we had a blast getting to drive over Boreas Pass with the group and get to meet Rhonda for the first time.

**What was your first MINI sticker and why?**

The very first sticker to be stuck to Josephine was the Slytherin crest. And why... well everyone must know how ambitious and cunning I can be.

**When was your last check engine light in your MINI?**

Just a few months ago... want to know what it was... you will have to ask my mechanic about that one.

**If you could drive your MINI anywhere in the world, where would you go?**

Since I got my mom just as obsessed as me, I would love to be able to do a cross country roadtrip with her in our MINIs.

**Do you have any "not-normal" driving habits?**

Pretty much all my driving habits are "not normal" as being normal is overrated!



## Rhonda Johnson

### Secretary

#### **Tell us about your family:**

In the house currently is just me, hubby Carl, and pupper Milo. We are enjoying being empty nesters and just hanging out. Carl is truly the social butterfly between the two of us. When we decide to go out to dinner, the first thing he says is not, "where would you like to go?", but instead, "who can we invite?" Outside of the house I have my daughter Erin and her fiancé, Jeff.

#### **What MINI/Mini do you have?**

I have my true love Clara. She's a 2014 Countryman S All4. She's a jealous one. I cannot say anything nice about the other MINIs in our herd around her or she will throw a tantrum and/or a light of some kind. So, Clara is the best ever.

I also have my Black Dahlia. She's a 2013 Roadster, and Carl has a 2021 Paddy Hopkirk Edition.

#### **Where does your MINI sleep at night?**

All three of the Johnson MINIs sleep in the garage. In September 2021 we purchased a 3-car garage with a house attached for our MINIs. They are very happy here in Windsor.

### **When did you join MINI5280?**

I joined MINI5280 after I purchased Clara, but before I had taken delivery of her. So it was sometime in Sept/Oct of 2013. One day during that time frame, I was walking into the WalMart in Broomfield and I saw a MINI pulling out of its parking spot, and there was a MINI5280 sticker on the back windshield. I hit Carl in the arm and said "OMG, there's a club!!!" I went home and joined that day.

### **What was your best MINI adventure?**

I'm going to have to say it was in 2016. Erin and I joined up with MINIs Take the States in Sioux Falls, SD and stayed with them until Park City, UT. Then we went on our own vacation to San Francisco and up the coast of California, getting lost in the redwoods, going whale watching in Washington, going through Montana, down through Yellowstone, and back home. It was a two-week MINI adventure that was a lot of fun with some great memories.

### **What was your first MINI sticker and why?**

I remember when I first got Clara, I treated her like she was gold. I said she was never going to get stripes because she was NOT a race car. She was not going to get stickers on her because that just looks cheap and who puts stickers on an expensive car?? I'm not ever going to do that to my dream car! Yeah ok... fast forward a few years later, she's got graphics and her windows are covered in stickers. I think one of the first stickers was the MINI5280.org sticker. I was so proud to be a part of such a cool group of people.

### **When was your last check engine light in your MINI?**

Which MINI? As far as the "check engine" light, that would have to be on Miss Dahlia. I was at MINIs in the Ozarks in October 2021. The very last day of the event. Carl, in all of his MINI optimism, had been trying to guess how many check engine lights would be at the event, I said none. So he bet me that there would be at least 5 check engine lights during the event. I said there wouldn't be, and I bet him something, I can't remember what. I was SO SURE there wouldn't be one, that I doubled the bet if it happened to someone in our little group of friends that went to Arkansas. So yeah, it was me. Of course. Dahlia's check engine light shone brightly for about 5 miles the morning we decided to leave. Then it went off. It did not come again and hasn't been on since. I guess

that will teach me about betting, and especially including my friends in it.  
Sorry!

**If you could drive your MINI anywhere in the world, where would you go?**

I've seen so many gorgeous photos online and there's so many places in the world to choose from. I think I still want to do my pre-covid idea of the Cruise to Calgary. I really want to drive up to Canada and drive all around the Canadian Rockies. Maybe all the way to Alaska and around the Western coast. It's so pretty up there. Maybe I'll drive over to the Eastern coast of Canada while I'm at it. My final answer is Canada.

**Do you have any "not-normal" driving habits?**

To me they are all normal. I do like to drive for longer stretches than most people though. A 12-14 hour day is fine for me. I don't mind it that much. Just not too many of them in a row. I also only stop for bathroom breaks (or try to) when it's time to get gas. Is that normal? It seems that when I'm traveling with others, I tend to have to stop more often.

**What is one goal you want to achieve while being an officer of MINI5280?**

I want to bring the fun back to 5280. Covid has really sucked all the fun out of the club it seems. I want things to be light and cheerful again. Let's get rid of this dark cloud we are under! I think we can still do fun stuff even with Covid, and I'd like to try as hard as possible to make that happen.

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# Welcome to the Newest Generation of MINI5280 Members!

Scott Kear • Bastien Breche • Makia Minich

[Membership Info](#)

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## Taking the Scenic Routes: The "MINI Way"

April 27 – May 1

**MINIs on the Dragon**

**Fontana Dam, North Carolina**

MINIs on the Dragon started out as a get together to drive 11-mile stretch of road with 318 curves aka the Dragon. That is more than enough reason to travel to the breath-taking mountains of North Carolina. But in the first weekend of May each year, it has evolved into much more than that. Just like our beloved MINI's have evolved into more than just a car to us. So, you take the 11-mile stretch of road, then you toss in the mountains, country roads and waterfalls. Now add 600 to 1000 fellow MINIacs and it takes on a whole new meaning. Wake up each morning and see hundreds of MINIs each day, attend

dinners and events, go on group drives, or just gather and drool over each other's mods. Get a chance to put a face to a screen name, see some old friends and make some new ones.

April 28 – May 1

**Let's Go to Branson!**

**Branson, Missouri**

Hosted by High Plains Motoring Society

Yes, this coincides with The Dragon. But we are much easier to get to. Full info is in our FB Facebook Web Page, HPMS High Plains Motoring Society. This is a closed page, so go ahead and request access. There are no costs, fees, nor dues for HPMS. Note that while everyone is welcomed, not everyone is invited.

Contact Rick Gonzales or Jonathan Souza for further information. Jonathan is at 720-422-6440 and JonathaninDenver@Gmail.com  
Holiday Inn Express Branson 76 - Click to RSVP your room

May 28 – 31

**8th Annual MINI Rushmore**

**Black Hills, South Dakota**

Hosted by MiniCOW (MINIs of Colorado & Wyoming)

Home to Mount Rushmore, Deadwood, and Sturgis. We are planning on a 4 day 3 night overnighiter run to Hill City, SD in the Black hills May 28-31, so save the dates. A lot of folks leave on Monday, but we added Tuesday for those that can stick around.

We have a run setup on Iron Mountain Road. 314 CURVES, 14 SWITCHBACKS, 3 PIGTAILS, 3 TUNNELS, 4 PRESIDENTS, 2 SPLITS in 17 MILES, with another run on Needles Highway. Some of the attractions, Mount Rushmore, 1880's Train, Casino's, Great Drives, Great food, Great Scenery. For comparison Tail of the Dragon is 318 curves in 11 miles.

July 9 – 17

**MINI Take the States (MTTS)**  
**Beginning in Burlington, Vermont**

Hosted by MINIUSA

*WHEN LIFE ZIGS, ZAG.*

We're back on track and we're ready to rally – together with our MINI community! Territories unexplored. Vibrant cities. Small towns. History around every corner. And speaking of corners – how about some winding roads? Lots of them.

The 8th edition of MINI TAKES THE STATES will happen starting Saturday, July 9th and ending Sunday, July 17th. Together, the MINI community will reunite to drive thrilling roads that MTTS has barely touched in our 16-year history. In the meantime, check out the daily drives and book your hotel rooms. The route is from Burlington, VT to Greenville, Spartanburg, SC.

[>> minitakesthestates.com <<](http://minitakesthestates.com)

July 15 – 17

**Mini MINIs in the Mountains**  
**Salida, Colorado**

Hosted by MINI5280

This will be an “unofficial” MITM. More details to come as we get closer to the event. But yes, we are back baby!!

We need anyone who is interested in any way to SIGN UP to be a part of the coordination committee – any level of interest and experience is welcome to join in the journey of putting on the best MINI event in the region! We look forward to your help!

MITM Interest Form:

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

August 6

**MINI on the Mack**

**Mackinaw City, Michigan**

Hosted by MINI of Grand Rapids

They're back at it again! MINI of Grand Rapids is trying to break the world record of "most MINIs on a bridge" again. The current record is 1450. We came close in 2019 and it's time to try it again! Be sure to check here for more details as we get them [MINIonthemack.com](http://MINIonthemack.com)! For more information on the event area visit St. Ignace Visitors Bureau and Mackinaw City websites.

September 10 – 11

**ArtoCade Art Cartopia Festival**

**Trinidad, Colorado**

Hosted by Eleanor & Whitlow Wong

Art Cartopia Museum is an art car museum based in Trinidad, Colorado. It came into being due to the unexpected but delightful success of ArtoCade, Trinidad's yearly art car parade dedicated to building community through the arts. Home to over 25 art cars and serving as a regional center of creativity and shenanigans, Art Cartopia opened its doors in the fall of 2018 and is only just getting started! More details to come on this event, so save the date!

[>> www.artcartopia.com <<](http://www.artcartopia.com)

October 27 – 30

**MINIs in the Ozarks**

**Eureka Springs, Arkansas**

Hosted by Arkansas Mini Owners Klub

Minis in the Ozarks started out as a weekend getaway for the members of the Arkansas Mini Owners Klub in 2007 and grew an event that draws Mini enthusiasts from all over the United States and Canada to what is known as one of the best, and friendliest, regional Mini events. It is held every October in the beautiful small resort town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas in an scenic area with some of the country's best twisty roads.

[>> www.ozarkmini.com <<](http://www.ozarkmini.com)

July 2023

**MINIs in the Mountains**

**Location TBD**

Hosted by MINI5280

This will be the full blown major Wednesday through Sunday event with drives, and dinners, and drives, and a car show, and drives, and a group photo, and drives, and a brew swap, and drives!!! Woo-Hoo!!

>> [www.minisinthemountains.com](http://www.minisinthemountains.com) <<

## [M]INFO

### SHARED CALENDAR

For local MINI Clubs

[VIEW EVENTS](#)

### NEED TAGGING CARDS?

Sign up to get more tagging cards in the mail.

[GET MORE CARDS](#)

### MITM VOLUNTEER SIGN UP

for MITM 2022 or 2023... BOTH!?

[SIGN UP](#)

### MINI5280 MERCHANDISE

Get some MINI5280 swag!  
*Home to stickers, badges + more!*

[SHOP NOW!](#)



### ARTISTIC REFLECTION

for all your sticker/graphic/eyeshade needs!

[SHOP NOW!](#)



### ATTITUDE DETAILING

for detailing needs. Just yell "DEBBIE!" really loud in the FB Social Hub group, or go to:

[MORE INFO](#)

## JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

MINI5280 has a group on Facebook to chat and share information about upcoming events, drives, fundraisers, and general MINI banter!

[MINI5280 Social Hub](#)