



# Thunderbirds

of Southwest Ohio

Newsletter

February 2024



Happy Valentine's Day

## MEETING MINUTES

**Call to Order:** As the time approached (and then passed) to begin our meeting, there was much convivial conversation going on in the room among all our members. After President Scott McGaha was made aware of the time, he left his conversation and gavelled the meeting to order at 7:01:40 EST on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at MCL Cafeteria. Following his call to order, he reminded everyone that, since there was no official meeting in December (due to the Christmas party), we will be asked to approve the minutes from the November meeting, as published in the December newsletter (more on this in a moment).

**Attendees:** There were 17 members in attendance tonight, including President Scott McGaha, Vice-President Mike Hall, Secretary Dave Harvey, Past President Roger & Treasurer Lisa Hamm, Mark & Jackie Allen, Nancy & Julie Blake, Adam Gulden, Dave & Susan Menke, Ron & Linda Prater, Jim Russell, Tom Tirey, and Charley White.

**Approval of Minutes:** Since the minutes from the November meeting had been published in the December newsletter, President Scott asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion of those minutes. The motion was made by Dave Menke and was seconded by Charley White. President Scott then asked if there were any questions, concerns, corrections, comments, or anything else regarding the November minutes as posted in the December newsletter. There being no questions, concerns, corrections, comments, or concerns about the minutes as published in the newsletter, President Scott then called for a vote to approve the minutes, and the vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

**Membership Update/Discussion:** Past President Roger Hamm reported that he had received an email from Tom & Fay Dupuis inquiring about membership in our club. Roger provided them with our mailing address and received yesterday their completed application and dues payment. Unfortunately, they were unable to attend tonight's meeting, but nonetheless, a hearty welcome to our newest members, Tom & Fay, who are the owners of a '55 soft-top T-bird (vehicle color not reported)!

President Scott then asked if anyone had any changes to report in contact information or any other roster updates. There was none to report.

Next, President Scott asked if anyone had any Thunderbird updates (either vehicles newly acquired or recently disposed of, or work in progress or recently completed). Charley White reported that he has recently ordered a new (split) boot cover for his Retro-Bird (it hasn't arrived yet). The boot will arrive unpainted, and he will have to have it painted to his specs. He also reported that he had found online

NOS "Thunderbird V8" emblems that were originally intended to be mounted on the front fenders of '56 Fords (non-Thunderbirds) that had the Thunderbird V8 engine installed.

During some discussion that followed Charley's remarks, a couple members mentioned that both eBay Motors and Amazon can be useful sources of needed car parts. If you log into either site with your logon credentials, you will be able to establish a "garage" in which you can store details about all your cars. This will make a search for parts and accessories much easier, by merely selecting the proper vehicle from your garage.

Note to webmaster: some of the members thought that it might be useful to add links to <http://ebaymotors.com/> and <https://www.amazon.com/> (search Automotive Parts and Accessories) in the "T-Bird Part Suppliers" section of our web site.

**Sunshine Committee Report:** President Scott reported January birthdays and anniversaries. Gayle Conrad will celebrate her birthday in 3 days (on the 14<sup>th</sup>), Roger Hamm will celebrate his birthday in 5 days (on the 16<sup>th</sup>), and Paul Loschi will celebrate his birthday 1 week from today (on the 18<sup>th</sup>). Of special note, our long-time members Guy & Jan Gifford will celebrate their 68<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Lisa Hamm's report covered two months (November and December), since there was no (official) meeting in December. She reported that during those two months, she had received and deposited \$220.00 in dues payments for 2024. We also incurred \$121.89 in expenses (including the TSWO web site domain, and a memorial gift in memory of Ken Shanley, who passed away last fall). Our treasury remains on solid footing. President Scott reminded everyone that dues are technically payable no later than today, but Treasurer Lisa stated that we traditionally have allowed payments as late as March. At this time, there are only three memberships that haven't yet been renewed for 2024, and Lisa said she would reach out to those people to find out their intentions as to 2024 dues.

**Special Presentation:** Julie Blake showed the members a couple of the miniature die-cast Thunderbirds that are in her collection. The first car she showed us was one that had belonged to her dad and it was decorated with Cincinnati Reds colors and designs. This car is registered as an official Reds team car, with a "certificate of title" in the name of Charles Blake (it's a 1961 model). Julie said that her dad was a great Reds fan, and during the 70s and 80s, they used to go to Spring training camp in Florida every year.

Another car she demonstrated was a 1956 T-bird "pedal car." Everyone was impressed with these two examples from Julie's collection (according to Scott and Nancy, Julie probably has 100s of die-cast model cars in her collection). Scott asked her to bring a couple to each meeting, so the members could get an idea of what all she has collected over the years.

Next, Vice-President Mike Hall presented his collection of Thunderbird salesroom catalogs and sales brochures/guides, complete for every model year from 1955 through 2005 (obviously, excluding 1998-2001). One of Mike's bigger challenges was finding a 1958 catalog, as very few were printed, due to the extended model year production of the 1957's. All the materials were nicely presented in clear plastic sleeves, and he invited everyone after the meeting to come up and look through the items.

He commented about the special difficulty in finding 2005 catalogs, since Ford made so few of that model-year T-birds - therefore, few catalogs were printed.

Mike also has an original 1960 Ford shareholder annual report, which he was happy to show. In addition, his collection includes numerous magazine ads for Thunderbirds, as well as listings of options (and prices) available for many model years. All in all, Mike's enthusiasm for all things Thunderbird is evident by the extent of his various collections, and the excitement in his voice as he talks about Thunderbirds.

**Club Activities/Events:** President Scott has started to sketch out for the entire year possible events that we might do as a club. Scott is hoping for people to step up and volunteer to take on one event, planning the entire event (including not only the choice of event, but also the date and any associated activities). The sketch so far could include a solar eclipse event, Thunderbird Appreciation Day, Hemmings Great Race (which will pass through southwest Ohio - visit <https://www.greatrace.com/> for details), VTCI International convention in Grand Rapids, MI, the Dayton Concours d'Elegance, the WACO fly-in and car show, the Fairlane & Torino club meet (to which our club has already been invited), Valley Vineyards, Stoddard Ave. Pumpkin Glow, and/or whatever else you can dream up. Of course, the year will close out with our annual Christmas party & white elephant gift exchange. Linda Prater graciously volunteered to help organize events, and to head up a small committee to help do this. Scott quickly accepted her offer.

President Scott then offered some thoughts, observations, and history as to some of the proposed events. The to-be-formed committee will be asked to flesh out the plans for the year.

Scott also mentioned specifically the VTCI International Convention, which will be held in Grand Rapids, MI, in August. A few members indicated interest in attending this multi-day event.

**Old Business:** There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business:** President Scott is planning to discuss with Brett Andrews, our newsletter editor, the possibility of publishing the November meeting minutes in the January newsletter, instead of December, in order that the minutes would be more recent in our minds when they're discussed and voted on at the January meeting.

**Calendar of Car Events:** Our next club meeting will be on February 8<sup>th</sup> at our usual location, MCL Cafeteria (with dinner at 6:00 PM, followed by our meeting at 7:00 PM).

**Open Floor:** Nothing was presented for discussion at this point, probably because the meeting was running late, and we needed to wrap things up so MCL could close and let their staff go home.

**Adjournment:** There being no other business to be addressed, President Scott called for a motion for adjournment. The motion was offered by Past President Roger Hamm and seconded by Tom Tirey. With a rap of the gavel, President Scott declared the meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM EST.

***Scott McGaha***  
President

**Birthdays & Anniversaries in February:** We have a bunch of birthdays in February to celebrate, but no anniversaries. Happy Birthday to all our February celebrants.



**February Birthdays**

- 4<sup>th</sup>: Linda Prater
- 11<sup>th</sup>: Peg Andrews
- 16<sup>th</sup>: Jeanne Hall
- 14<sup>th</sup>: Nancy Moore
- 24<sup>th</sup>: Gina Hocter
- 26<sup>th</sup>: Barb Kraemer
- 27<sup>th</sup>: Charles White
- 28<sup>th</sup>: Owen Taylor

**February Anniversaries**



### What's With All the Rubber Ducks in Jeeps?



Greetings fellow TSWO club members. I'd like to veer a little bit off-topic this month and talk about a facet of car culture that does *not* involve Thunderbirds. Late last summer or early fall, as I was driving around the Dayton area running

errands, etc., I noticed another vehicle stopped at the same traffic light that had several rubber ducks perched on the dashboard across the front window. As I sat waiting for the light to change, I said to myself, "Seems like I see that a lot lately. I wonder why people like to put rubber ducks across the front window of their cars?"



I also noticed that it was a nice-looking Jeep that had all these ducks in the window. A few days later, I'm out running errands again and notice *another* vehicle with rubber ducks in the window. There were even a couple on the outside of the vehicle, apparently glued, or maybe magnetically attached, to the front fender and along the cowl. And I noticed again that it was a JEEP that had these ducks!!

So now I'm curious. Over the next few days, as I'm out and about, I'm looking for any and all Jeeps that are also out on the road. And sure enough, **MANY** of them have rubber ducks



somewhere on the vehicle! So naturally, there was nothing else for me to do except get on the computer as soon as I got home and ask Google the question that is the subject of this article.

Well, apparently, I'm not the most observant person when out on the road, because what I discovered from my internet research is that this phenomenon started back in 2020. It's called "Jeep Ducking," and all those ducks on the dashboard are what's known as a "duck pond."

An April 2023 article I found on Hemmings.com's website describes it better than I can:

*"Have you seen an iconic rubber duck perching on a Jeep in a parking lot, or perhaps a whole flock of rubber duckies hanging out on a Jeep's dash? That's because the squeaky child's bathtub toy is being repurposed to spread joy amongst Jeep owners.*

*The Jeep ducking craze started its migration in Canada. In 2020, Canadian resident Allison Parliament was feeling down after an encounter with an angry stranger, and to cheer herself up she bought a bag of rubber ducks and left one with a positive note on someone's Jeep. Her kind gesture was shared on social media and quickly spread throughout the world.*

*Today, the Jeep ducking trend is so popular that accessories such as pre-labeled packs of rubber ducks ... are available for purchase on websites like Etsy or Amazon. There are even Jeep model-specific duck landing pads for those Jeepers who really want to get quacked up.*

*A lot of Jeep owners have started carrying rubber ducks in their vehicles just in case an opportunity arises to make another person's day ducky. When they spot another Jeep in the wild, they place a rubber duck with a note where the owner will see it (on the front bumper, on top of the side mirrors or door handles, or on the front fenders), and when the unsuspecting Jeep driver spots it, the hope is for the recognition to brighten their day. If a Jeoper receives a duck that's just too adorable to part with, that's OK! It can be added to their collection on the dashboard, otherwise known as the Jeep "duck pond." Or the duck receiver can spread the joy of the game to the next cool Jeep that they see.*

*Notes left on the ducks can range anywhere from, "Nice Jeep," to "Duck, duck Jeep" or "Your Jeep has been ducked." Social media hashtags like #duckingjeeps and #duckduckjeep are also encouraged and the post numbers are growing every day.*

*Jeep ducking began as a Jeep Wrangler thing, but there really aren't any rules against ducking other Jeep models, whether its rusty or clean, bone-stock or a built rock crawler. Ducks have even appeared on similar 4x4 vehicles such as Ford Broncos, Suzuki Samurais, and older Land Cruisers. After all, ducking is considered an act of kindness, and that's something that everyone should get involved in."*

I don't know about you, but I thought this was a pretty cool social trend that reinforces my belief that "car people" are some of the kindest, best-humored people on the planet.

Perhaps we can leverage this to come up with a similar thing to promote Thunderbirds. Hmm . . . let's see, instead of "You've been ducked" we can say "You've just received the 'bird!" And then, the recipient can choose to keep their 'bird, or maybe "flip the 'bird" to the next Thunderbird they spot on the road.

Oh, I'm just gettin' started folks!! Might need to workshop this a bit more, but I could be onto something. Feel free to share any thoughts/ideas you might have on the subject. In the meantime, . . .



Drive safely everyone.

*Scott*



## Do Other Countries Celebrate Valentines Day? Let's Find Out



Since Valentines Day was fast approaching, I began to wonder just how widely Valentine's Day is celebrated. During my online research I ran across an article on the "World Strides and Educational Travel Experiences" web site entitled "6 Valentine's Day Traditions Around the World".

The article pointed out that Valentine's Day, or a variation thereof, is celebrated around the world. There is some mystery in the legend of St. Valentine. The Catholic Church recognizes at least three martyred saints named Valentine or Valentinus. In my February 2023 writeup on Valentine's Days I described the legend that speculates Valentine was a priest in Rome in the third century. When Emperor Claudius II believed single men made better soldiers than a man with a family, he forbids marriage. Valentine disobeyed those orders and continued performing secret marriages which led to Claudius ordering his death.

Other stories suggest Valentine was killed for attempting to help Christians escape Roman prisons. Yet another legend says Valentine fell in love while in prison, possibly the jailor's daughter who visited him. Before being put to death, he was believed to have sent her a letter signed "From your Valentine."

Regardless of its origins, it appears Valentine's Day is celebrated around the world in one way or another. We in the U.S. give flowers, candy, cards, and partake of romantic dinners. Other parts of the world celebrate the occasion somewhat differently. Here's how the online article described how six other countries celebrate this romantic occasion. I found them intriguing and thought I'd share the highlights of each with you.

United Kingdom: Their tradition, which dates to the Victorian era, involves sending anonymous valentines to romantic interests. They considered it bad luck if they signed their names. They were the ones who began the tradition of giving roses on Valentine's Day because the rose was perceived as the favorite of Venus, the Roman goddess of love.

Wales: Their celebration of romance is January 25<sup>th</sup> and is known as "St Dwynwen's Day" who was the Welsh patron saint of lovers. Men traditionally gifted women with hand-carved wooden spoons which is based on the idea that Welsh sailors carved designs into wooden spoons while at sea to bring back to their lovers at home.

Japan: It is the women who initiate the romantic gesture by giving gifts to the man on Valentine's Day. The most popular gift is a home-made chocolate known as honmei-choco. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, known as "White Day", men reciprocate the gesture. On this day men, as a sign of affection, give their special someone white chocolate and other white gifts.

South Korea: As was done in Japan, so too in South Korea, the women give gifts to men on Valentine's Day. The men also celebrate White Day, as was done in Japan, and give gifts to their special lady. South Korea also has a holiday known as "Black Day" which they celebrate on April 14<sup>th</sup>. On this day, unmarried friends gather to eat noodles and celebrate being single. The name comes from the noodle dish which is made up of white noodles in a black sauce.

Slovenia: Slovenians consider February 14 an important day for working in the fields since St. Valentine is one of several patron saints of spring. Instead, they celebrate romance on "St Gregory's Day", March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Finland and Estonia: Fins and Estonians celebrate "Friend's Day" on February 14, to honor both friends and significant others. Cards and gifts are still exchanged and can be for anyone from a lover, a best friend, or a neighbor. February 14 is also recognized as a popular day to get engaged in both countries. In Estonia they have an interesting tradition whereby a single person can take a ride on the Love Bus in hopes of meeting that special someone.

#### CLUB OFFICERS

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