



# THUNDERBIRDS of Southwest Ohio Newsletter



July 2024  
([www.thunderbirds-sw-ohio.com](http://www.thunderbirds-sw-ohio.com))

## MEETING MINUTES

**Call to Order:** At 6:47 PM on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, President Scott McGaha hammered our meeting to order at MCL Cafeteria. He welcomed the 21 members in attendance.

**Attendees:** Those members in attendance tonight included President Scott McGaha, Vice-President Mike Hall, Roger & Treasurer Lisa Hamm, Secretary Dave Harvey, Mark & Jackie Allen, Jeff Almond, Brett & Peg Andrews, Nancy & Julie Blake, Larry & Jo Doelker, Adam Gulden, Ron Heinz, Dave & Susan Menke, Ron & Linda Prater, and Charlie White.

**Approval of Minutes:** Since the minutes from the May meeting had been published in the June newsletter (sent out by email on Monday), President Scott asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion of those minutes. The motion was made by Ron Prater and was seconded by Larry Doelker. President Scott then asked if there were any questions, concerns, clarifications, corrections, comments or anything else regarding the May minutes as posted in the most recent newsletter. Secretary Dave Harvey commented that it was helpful that President Scott added some additional commentary as to some matters that had transpired after the meeting. Scott explained that, because of a date conflict, the decision was made by the event organizers and himself to remove the Hot Summer Nights event from our calendar. Scott indicated that it's likely this event could appear on our calendar next year. There being no other questions, concerns, clarifications, corrections, comments or anything else regarding the May minutes, President Scott called for a vote to approve the minutes (as amended by Scott), and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Membership Update/Discussion:** President Scott asked if anyone had any changes to report in contact information or any other roster updates. There were none to report. He also asked if anyone knows of any possible new members. Ron Heinz mentioned that he has been attending several car shows, and met Jimmie Allen (Goshen, OH), the owner of a 1956 Thunderbird, and he invited Jimmie to join us. Jimmie isn't likely to join now, but he did say that he would most likely attend our September car show (the combined Ford Torino and Mercury, as well as Thunderbirds of South West Ohio show), and members could lobby Jimmie to join then. He also met Christie Meyers (Sharonville, OH), who owns a '65 T-bird, white with a blue interior. Ron is not sure whether or not they'll join our club. In addition, Ron met Glen Conn, who owns a '77 Town Landau, blue with blue interior. Glen has an application and indicated that he might join us. He's planning

to attend the September car show. Ron also mentioned that he met "Frankie" (she lives near Columbus) at Der Dutchman, who has a Dusk Rose '57 T-bird. While not committed to joining our club, Ron is hopeful that she'll come to our September car show. Ron also has seen Jim Williamson at a couple of car shows - Jim has a red-on-red '57 fuel-injected T-bird (this comment drew several ooohs and aaaaaahs from the members). Jim may come to the September car show. Jokingly, President Scott asked for all those in favor of making Ron our Membership Chairman to speak up (there isn't such a position, of course, but Ron has shown exceptional enthusiasm in "talking up" our club to other T-bird owners, most of whom he didn't even know).

President Scott then asked if anyone had any contact information updates (addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, spouses, etc.). There were no contact updates to report.

He then asked if anyone had any Thunderbird updates (either vehicles newly acquired or recently disposed of, or work in process or recently completed). Dave Harvey reported that he and his son removed the starter once again from their '64 T-bird and had it rebuilt. After installing the rebuilt starter, the car fired right up. The next step will be to take a "shakedown run" on Saturday, concurrent with an "exercise run" for their '54 Oldsmobile, which hadn't been driven in at least a year. Their theory in taking out 2 cars at the same time that haven't been driven in 12-13 months or so is that it's unlikely that both would break down on the same run and not make it back home.

Charlie White reported that he had found an original brochure for his '04 Retro-bird at a swap meet. He also has put some after-market wheels on his car.

Ron Heinz reported that he had recently acquired a '90 Super Coupe, and he brought it to the meeting this evening for everyone to enjoy.

Adam Gulden reported that he had recently bought a '95 Super Coupe 5-speed "shell" originally out of Texas. Adam's plan is to move the necessary parts from his '93 LX to fill in the missing parts from this recent addition.

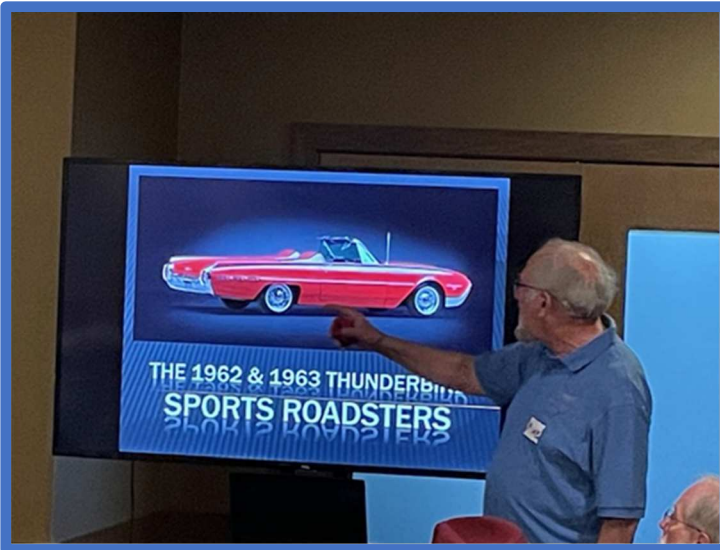
**Sunshine Committee Report:** President Scott reported our June birthdays and anniversaries. Birthdays include Michael Bach (June 12<sup>th</sup>), Dave Harvey (June 18<sup>th</sup>), Becky White (also June 18<sup>th</sup>), Jo Doelker (June 24<sup>th</sup>), Carol Taylor (June 28<sup>th</sup>), Mark Allen (June 29<sup>th</sup>), and Mike Hall (also June 29<sup>th</sup>). Anniversaries include Larry & Jo Doelker (June 16<sup>th</sup>, their 51<sup>st</sup>), Charlie & Becky White (June 18<sup>th</sup>, their 47<sup>th</sup> - note that Charlie only has to remember one date to encompass both Becky's birthdate and their anniversary), Paul & Sherry Loschi (June 20<sup>th</sup>, their 15<sup>th</sup>), Dave & Susan Menke (June 23<sup>rd</sup>, their 45<sup>th</sup>), and Michael & Donna Bach (June 27<sup>th</sup>, their 54<sup>th</sup>). Congratulations to all.

President Scott asked everyone who becomes aware of a member who is sick, going to have surgery, has some other special event in their life, etc., to send an email to either Nancy Blake

or Peg Andrews, so that an appropriate card can be sent. In other words, cards from the club don't need to be limited to birthdays and anniversaries.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Lisa Hamm reported that there was no activity last month, so our balance remained unchanged.

**Special Presentation:** Before Mike Hall's presentation, President Scott asked if everyone knows what years Thunderbird produced the Sports Roadster. Adam Gulden was the first to correctly state that the years were 1962 & 1963. After this short introduction, Mike launched into his presentation on the Sports Roadster.



After receiving some criticism from enthusiasts that a Thunderbird should be a 2-seat sporty-looking car, Ford gave in and produced the Sports Roadster for 2 years. While in reality it was a 4-seat car, the tonneau that came on the car covered up the rear seat and gave the sweeping perspective of a 2-seat car. Special Sports-Roadster-only features (other than the tonneau) included a passenger grab bar, special side badging, and 48-spoke Kelsey Hayes wire spoke wheels. It was quite an impressive sight to see such a large, magnificent Thunderbird (weighing in at

approximately 4,563 pounds) with the appearance of having only 2 seats. While it was a gorgeous car, it was pricey and didn't sell very well.

As a result of low production numbers, the value of these Sports Roadsters is among the highest of Thunderbirds of this era.

Note that this car is the only Thunderbird to carry Ford badging in addition to the Thunderbird badging - all others were badged solely as Thunderbirds, with no mention of Ford.

Mike had many examples to show in his presentation, and the members had lots of comments and questions for him. As usual, his presentation was very informative and entertaining.

Following his presentation, he showed a video of a 2022 Mecum auction in which a 1963 M-code Sports Roadster (the top dog of Sports Roadsters, and 1 of only 37 built) sold at a Barrett Jackson auction for the princely sum of \$165,000!

**Club Activities/Events:** The donut run in May was a success, and several members joined in for at least part of the event, if not all. We even picked up one non-member for our run who saw all

our T-birds outside Jim's Doughnuts in Vandalia and who went home, got his own T-bird, and came back to join us for part of the run.

We decided to enter the Vandalia-Butler Air Show parade, and approximately 6-8 people indicated interest in attending. The parade will be on Friday evening, June 21<sup>st</sup>, kicking off at 6:55 PM (gathering starts much earlier than that, of course). There was much discussion as to how the parade will work for us, how/where we'll gather and line up, etc.

Hemmings Great Race participants are scheduled to have lunch in Lancaster, OH, on Sunday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 12:30 PM. We're going to try to organize a trip to Lancaster to view the Great Race cars while the drivers have lunch. There was a great deal of discussion as to how best to see the race participants and their cars in Lancaster, including the best departure time and location for a mini-caravan to Lancaster.

July's event will be a Covered Bridge tour - more details to follow, although July 20<sup>th</sup> has been proposed as the date.

Our August event will be a trip to the Garst Museum/Annie Oakley Museum in Greenville on August 10<sup>th</sup>. This event will be organized by Jackie & Mark Allen. We will meet around 10:00 AM and caravan to the museum. Jackie will have some museum brochures available at the next meeting.

**Old Business:** There was no old business carried over from past meetings.

**New Business:** Brett received an email through our web site from someone who has a '56 T-bird available for sale. Rather than having Scott be an intermediary in mentioning such matters at our meetings, Scott asked Brett if it would be possible for him to forward such emails directly to our members in the future. Brett said that should be do-able.

**Calendar of Car Events:** Our next club meeting will be on July 11<sup>th</sup> at our usual location, MCL Cafeteria (with dinner at 5:45 PM, followed by our meeting at 6:45 PM).

**One-time car events:**

- VTCI International Convention, Grand Rapids, MI - August 7<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Dayton Concours d'Elegance - September 15<sup>th</sup> at Carillon Park

**Recurring car events:**

- Cars & Coffee at Horsepower Farm from 8:00 AM to noon (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month, year around).
- Cars & Coffee at Liberty Center from 8:00 AM to noon (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday pf each month, May - October).

- Dayton Cars & Coffee at Austin Landing from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM (generally the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month, April - October, although it moves to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays in July and August, and to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in September, in order to coordinate with the Dayton Concours d'Elegance, which will be the next day).
- Springfield Cars & Coffee in downtown Springfield (generally 9:00 AM to noon on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month, April - September: remaining exception is August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM).
- Kettering American Legion (5700 Kentshire Dr.) holds cruise-ins once a month (on Sundays) from May through September, beginning at 11:00 AM. This year's remaining dates are: June 23<sup>rd</sup>, July 28<sup>th</sup>, August 25<sup>th</sup> and September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Open Floor:** No topics were offered for discussion.

**Adjournment:** There being no other business to be addressed, President Scott called for a motion for adjournment. Due to the lateness of the hour, however, President Scott declared the meeting adjourned by executive order at 8:22 PM EST.

**Scott McGaha**  
President



**Birthdays & Anniversaries in July:** Look who's celebrating birthdays or anniversaries in July. Best wishes and congratulations to all of you on your special day.



**July Birthdays**

2<sup>nd</sup>: Susan Menke  
13<sup>th</sup>: Jackie Allen  
16<sup>th</sup>: Dave Koehler  
20<sup>th</sup>: Tom Tirey

**July Anniversaries**

1<sup>st</sup>: Darrel & Ruby York (29 yrs)  
15<sup>th</sup>: Jay & Bea Walsh (57 yrs)  
28<sup>th</sup>: Jeff & Monica Almond (12 yrs)  
29<sup>th</sup>: Beverly Knauper & Jim Ross (17 yrs)





## President's Message

Summertime salutations to all Thunderbird lovers!

The activity-filled season for classic car owners is well underway here in our part of the country and I know many of you have been out having fun, fun, fun with your Thunderbirds and other vintage automobiles. Our

club had two unique and enjoyable activities planned for June and there was good participation for both. What was interesting was that I heard from several members who told me they were unable to participate in those events because they had commitments to participate in other car-related activities on those dates. Having too many car-related activities to choose from and not enough time to fit them all in is a nice problem to have after sitting through the winter months with nothing to do. It is nice to hear that everyone is out making the most that they can of the summertime season with their Thunderbirds.

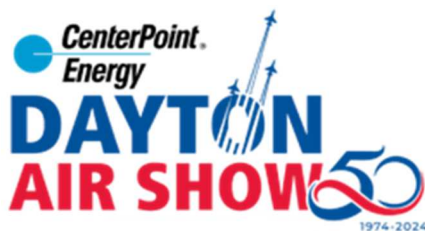
The two unique events in June were participation in the Dayton Air Show Parade on Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup> in Vandalia, Ohio, and a trip to Lancaster, Ohio the following Sunday on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to watch the vintage vehicles participating in the Hemmings Great Race pull into town and stop for lunch. We had 8 Thunderbirds and 11 club members for the parade. As is so often the case, it seems, for the Dayton Air Show weekend, the weather was VERY HOT for the parade, but a large crowd still showed up to watch the parade and it was fun to drive our cars together as a club and wave to everyone watching and waving back at us.

The trip to Lancaster was also fun, although this time it was a little bit of rain in the area that threatened to dampen our spirits. We had 6 club members and two guests participate in that event. The race cars were a little delayed arriving into town for their 12:30 lunch break due to a stopped train blocking the course outside of Lancaster. But by 1:30 p.m. there was a steady flow of vehicles turning into South Broad Street in Lancaster for their short stop for lunch provided by Whit's Frozen Custard. Hundreds of spectators turned out to cheer and clap for the cars as they were guided into their parking spaces by volunteers from a local car club. And then, before long, the drivers and navigators began climbing back into their 50+ year old vehicles to continue the next leg of the race which included an overnight stay in Marietta, Ohio. It was really something unique and exciting to see. Plans are already underway for next year's race which may include an overnight stay in Dayton - something we'll have to put on our agenda for June 2025!

For July, we have planned a repeat of the driving tour of historical covered bridges in the region that we last did in October 2021. Details are still being reviewed and finalized, but it should be nearly the same course and bridges that were visited in 2021. And there are more events to follow after that!! I hope some of these activities will fit within your schedule this season, and I hope to see more of you out and about with your Thunderbirds soon!

Until then, drive safely everyone!

*Scott*



# Thunderbirds on Parade

(by Brett Andrews)

On the evening of June 21st, 2024, eleven TSWO club members and eight Thunderbirds participated in the parade that kicked off the 50<sup>th</sup> Dayton CenterPoint Energy Airshow. Club members in attendance included Scott McGaha ('02 Retrobird), Dave Harvey ('57 Babybird) , Roger & Lisa Hamm ('02 Retrobird), Brett Andrews ('66 Flairbird), Paul & Sherry Loschi ('94 Superbird), Dave Menke ('03 Retrobird), Charlie White ('04 Retrobird), and John & Linda Prater ('04 Retrobird).

The group met up at the Living Word Church on the east side of Vandalia where several members enjoyed snow cones from a booth in the church parking lot as we waited for others to arrive. At 5:30 PM we caravanned our way the few blocks to the airshow parade check in tent. After but a few moments our entourage was on its way to the parade staging area in the St Christopher Catholic Church parking lot. To say it was a hot day would be a grave understatement. We spent the next hour plus in the 95-degree temperature trying to stay cool as we waited for the parade to start. When that time finally arrived, we watched those parade participants staged ahead of us slowly starting to move. It was close to another 30 minutes before it was finally our turn to start our engines and join in the movement. After a slow start-and-stop roll of another 20 or so minutes we finally turned on to the parade route and proceeded at a walker's pace on our trek for the next several blocks through the heart of town. Despite the heat, hundreds and hundreds of people lined our path on both sides. What made it all worth it to this writer was seeing the kids, and some adults, pointing at our T-birds and reading their lips as they mouthed "cool car". Soon, we were making the one and only parade route turn north on to the final short leg of the parade. As we reached the end, we were directed onto a side street where we wove our way through a residential area to a large business parking lot at which point we were on our own.

I can't speak for the other club participants, but my eyes were as much on my car's temperature gauge as they were on the crowd. Historically older birds were prone to overheating. My flairbird lived up to that reputation as it got awful close to pegging the gauge out to the right. To combat that rise in engine temperature I employed a technique I learned decades prior - - turn on the heater full blast. That forces some of the hot coolant through the heater core as the fan blows air across that core thus extracting some of the heat and blowing it into the car. Imagine driving a car with no air conditioning in 95-degree heat with your heater on full blast that is pulling heat off 200+ degree coolant. Now I know what a chicken feels like in an air fryer. Here's a few pictures from our rendezvous location, but many more photos from the event can be found on our club website under "Recent Club Events".



# The "What Is It" and "Why" of Thunderbird Nicknames

(by: Brett Andrews)

In our October 2022 Newsletter I published an article entitled *Ford Thunderbird Field Guide: Know Your 'Bird Nicknames'*. It was an edited version of an article written by Mike Austin that appeared on the Hemmings website. In that October 2022 article, the nicknames of each of the eleven generations of Thunderbirds were identified along with the reasoning behind being given that name. The writing also provided some tidbits of information about each generation as well as an estimated value for that generation of T-Bird at the time of Mr. Austin's original publication. Since all our newsletters are accessible on our website, I have chosen to provide a truncated version of that article to familiarize our new members with the nicknames and why they got that name just in case they were not familiar. Mr. Austin's full article, if still available, can be viewed online at the website address provided below.

<https://www.hemmings.com/stories/2020/07/30/ford-thunderbird-field-guide-know-your-bird-nicknames>

**Introduction:** Ford's Thunderbird spans 11 generations involving several theme and mechanical variations. Keeping them straight, though, isn't that hard since Thunderbird enthusiasts gave each generation a nickname. These nicknames are much easier to relate to than many of the codes used by car manufacturers to designate variations. Let's start the tour of the eleven Thunderbird names and how they got that way.



## **Classic Bird (aka Early Bird, Little Bird, Baby Bird): 1955-'57**

Why: It's the original recipe. "Classic" and "Early" are kind of self-explanatory, while "Little" and "Baby" refer to the fact that it's the only two-seater in the family tree until the 2002 model.



## **Square Bird: 1958-'60**

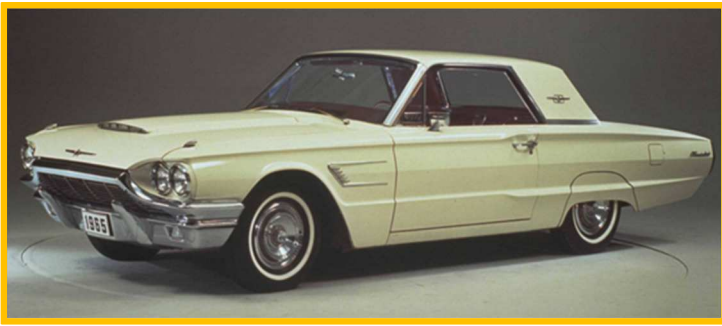
Why: Because it was boxy looking.





### **Bullet Bird: 1961-'63**

Why: It's sleek and streamlined like a projectile.



### **Flair Bird: 1964-'66**

Why: A more formal, upright design with plenty of chrome. Nicknamed for its styling and profiling.



### **Glamour Bird: 1967-'71**

Why: While predating the glam-rock era by a few years, this Thunderbird dropped the sporty façade and went fully into large luxu-boat territory.



### **Big Bird: 1972-'76**

Why: It's the biggest and heaviest Thunderbird.



### Torino Bird: 1977-'79

Why: No longer a sibling to the Continental, this Thunderbird was based on the Ford Torino.



### Box Bird: 1980-'82

Why: Square and slabby, like a hexahedron.



### Aero Bird: 1983-'88

Why: An aerodynamic shape that caused a stir in the showroom and put Ford back into relevance in NASCAR.



### Super Bird: 1989-'97

Why: Adapted from the supercharged Thunderbird Super Coupe (or SC) model available in this generation.



## Retro Bird: 2002-'05

Why: Ford was getting in on the retro trend when it brought the T-Bird back on a platform shared with the Lincoln LS and Jaguar S-Type.



## Will There Ever Be Another Ford Thunderbird?

(by: Brett Andrews)

This question has been on the minds of Thunderbird owners since Ford quit making Thunderbirds at the end of the 2005 production run of Retrobirds. However, we mustn't forget that our much-loved Thunderbird was once before put out to pasture at the end of the 1997 production year only to have it rise from the ashes like the phoenix in 2002. Why can't it happen again?

Apparently, and rightfully so, Ford wants to keep their options open, so they have filed for another trademark application for the Thunderbird name with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on January 13th, 2021. The application specifies that Ford is applying to use the trademark for "motor vehicles, namely concept motor vehicles; four-wheeled motor vehicles." However, don't jump to conclusions. This doesn't mean a new Thunderbird is on the way. Automakers often trademark names even before they have a potential vehicle in mind. They may just be reserving a name for possible future use. The name Thunderbird is important to Ford so their reapplication for trademarking the name is their way of preventing other companies from using it. Over the years Ford has renewed this trademark numerous times.

Their mention in the 2021 copyrights application of "concept motor vehicles" could also hint at plans for a concept car and not necessarily for a production model. Therefore, I'd like to recommend that you read a short article I ran across online. It was written by John Bynes and published in CarScoops online on July 8, 2023. The article titled *2028 Ford Thunderbird: Should The Iconic T-Bird Rise From The Ashes As An EV?* addresses my title question.

In the article Mr. Burns studied what direction he thought Ford would go with a future design Thunderbird. He looked at past Thunderbird designs trying to select the best and most iconic design representations which would truly mark this as a Thunderbird. His aim was to come up

with the design of an all-electrified vehicle while keeping it simple with a retro-inspired future look.

To gain a deeper understanding of Mr. Byrnes' future Thunderbird design ideas, go to the below website to read his full article and see an artist's rendition of the possible T-bird of the future.

<https://www.carscoops.com/2023/07/2028-ford-thunderbird-should-the-iconic-t-bird-rise-from-the-ashes-as-an-ev/>



To the members, families, and friends of the  
Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio,  
have a Safe and Happy



**CLUB OFFICERS**

**President: Scott McGaha (937) 271-7414**  
**Treasurer: Lisa Hamm (937) 728-0763**

**Vice President: Mike Hall (937) 599-4591**  
**Secretary: Dave Harvey (937) 470-2885**