



Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio



Newsletter

May 2020

Next Meeting: All meetings cancelled until further notice

Calendar of Car Events: As of now, the below Thunderbird related events are still scheduled to take place on the dates indicated.

VTCI Events: The VTCI South Central Regional Meet is scheduled in New Orleans on June 11-13, 2020 and the VTCI International Convention is going to be held Aug 11-16 in Oregon.

Other National Thunderbird Club Events: The International Thunderbird Club (ITC) will hold its convention on September 17-20, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan, while the Classic Thunderbird Club International (CTCI) International Convention "Birds on the Bay" will be held on May 4-9, 2020 in Sarasota, Florida.

VTCI Newsletter Contest: I received an e-mail from Cliff Lieske at VTCI. He is honchoing the VTCI Newsletter Awards this year. He has asked that clubs wanting to vie for an award send him one sample of the club's newsletter that was published between April 2019 and April 2020. Entries must be submitted by May 1, 2020. I have taken the liberty of selecting and forwarding our July 2019 Newsletter to him for his committee's consideration.

Birthdays & Anniversaries in May: TSWO would like to extend our hearty birthday and anniversary wishes to the below club members. Though we may not be together to recognize your special day, our thoughts are with you.



May Birthdays

None

May Anniversaries

30th: Dave & Deb Harvey



Thoughts from the President:

Hello my fellow T-Birders. Hope this finds you all doing well.

If your response to the current situation is similar to mine, then you are undoubtedly experiencing some degree of cabin fever. I'm fundamentally an outdoor person. This time of year you'd find me outside working in the yard cleaning up after the winter months and preparing to plant flowers and veggies. Although the current virus guidelines don't preclude me from doing that there is something inside me that makes me reluctant to do so for now. Maybe it has to do with the out and about involved with having to go to Lowes to get mulch and to nurseries for plants, etc. Working in the garage with the door open is as close as I get to the outside except for the occasional walk around the house to check things out - - like picking up the bird feeder that the recent high winds blew off the tree. Something tells me my yard isn't going to be the inviting oasis as it has been in past years.

Recently I read an interesting article speculating on how introverts and extroverts are coping during this extended isolation period. We prone-to-be introverts tend to not be quite as affected by the banishment to our homes since our preference is for a greater degree of solitude than extroverts, although we do miss the occasional social interactions. However, the extroverts are probably finding this self-quarantine to be very challenging. They need frequent social interaction to recharge their batteries so to speak. I have no answer on what to do to combat the negative effects that may result from our imposed segregation from society, but I am intrigued to see what changes, if any, the introverts and extroverts may display once all is back to normal. Will the introverts seek more social interchanges after it has been denied to them for so long? Will the extroverts see the introspective benefits of the extended quiet times away from the social excitement? We'll see!!!

Final thought: It's amazing some of the stuff that pops into your head when you have so much extra time to think and reflect. Some of you have owned Thunderbirds way longer than I. Some for nearly a half century. Today as I was beginning to write this "Thoughts from the President" segment I had a sensation waft over me that I've never experienced before. I miss my Thunderbirds. It's getting close to the time of the year when I'd get them out of storage, clean 'em up, and get ready for the car show/cruise-in season. Not knowing when we will be able to cluster together in that sea of old metal at a car show made me realize how much I'm already beginning to miss the joy of detailing the cars in preparation for the season. Although showing our old birds is a source of pride for us all, I think most of you would agree that getting the cars prepped for the season is just as satisfying and rewarding. My anxiety may stem from the possibility that I'll be denied, at some level, those anticipatory sensation this year. Hopefully they will only be delayed, the situation will get better, and the disappointed feeling will pass.

It's my sincere hope and prayer that we'll all soon be enjoying a meal together at MCL and leisurely strolling around a field of cars telling our stories and marveling at the beauty and infinite variety of machines all around us.

Brett



A Tale of Two People Who Discovered Something Unexpected About Each Other After 30 Years Together (by: Dave & Deb Harvey)

Heads up - this is not so much a car story as it is a people story.

Once upon a time, in a galaxy far, far away.....no, that's not right, starting over. Once upon a beautiful summer day in 2011, Dave and Deb Harvey were driving down the street not far from their home, when they saw a line of Model T and Model A cars driving in the opposite direction, obviously on a 'mission' of some kind. One of them said to the other, "Wouldn't it be cool someday to have an old car like one of those?" The other one agreed, and life went on with no further (preposterous) conversations about old-car ownership.

Fast forward 2 years, to 2013. Without any intervening discussions whatsoever about 'old cars' during those two years, an opportunity was unexpectedly presented that might possibly bring to fruition what had been discussed only once before (and only casually at that). An online-only auction was going to be held to close out a small restoration shop that had quietly existed for probably 50 years or so within walking distance of their home. After Dave visited the facility to see what vehicles would be offered, they agreed that a 1954 Oldsmobile spoke to them most clearly, and they planned their strategy. They decided on the highest bid they were comfortable making and entered a 'practice' bid on the day before bidding closed, just to be sure they understood how the process would work. When the bidding finally closed, they were the proud owners of a Glade Green over Maize Cream '54 Olds. Mission accomplished, and the two "non-car" people discovered in each other their previously unknown interests in what they call "admiring" old cars.

Fast forward 3 more years, to 2016. Dave and Deb had previously (in 2014 and 2015) visited the Mecum Spring Classic Auction in Indianapolis, at the suggestion of one of Dave's former co-workers. On both those occasions, they had gone with the intention not to buy, but merely to "spectate." When the 2016 auction brochure arrived in the mail, Deb perused it before Dave got his hands on it and found that there would be 3 Dusk Rose '57 Thunderbirds offered at that auction. Could this be an opportunity to acquire what Deb considered to be one of her dream cars? Maybe.

After arriving at the auction site, they looked over all 3 of the Dusk Rose cars, and finally decided on the one that spoke to them (it was a D-code car, 312 4V V8, originally boasting 245 HP, Ford-o-matic transmission, hardtop-only included). Once again, they planned their strategy, deciding on the maximum they were willing to pay, making sure that financing was in order in case they won, even deciding that they would not be the opening bidders but would stand back and wait until it became clear how the bidding would go.



Once bidding got under way, it was terribly nerve-wracking for them. The auction's "ring guy" was standing by, urging the bid on, while Dave and Deb worried that if they didn't execute their strategy properly, they might go home empty-handed or they might get caught up in the excitement and way over-bid. As it turned out, they were the winning bidder, but their strategy wasn't perfectly executed (we'll just leave it at that....ha, ha).

Since it's only about 100 miles or so from Indianapolis to home, Dave naively thought it should be fairly straightforward to simply drive the '57 Bird home, rather than have it hauled. Bad decision! The car had been in a collector's hands for about 15 years or so, and (apparently) had not been driven much during those many years. The upshot was that, shortly into the trip home (around Greenfield, IN), the transmission failed, and the car had to be hauled home, after all. The problem was in finding someone late on a Friday afternoon who could haul the car the remaining 75-80 miles or so home. Fortunately, they were able to find someone (although the car had to stay in Greenfield overnight, to be delivered to Dayton on Saturday morning).

Once the car was safely at home, obviously the first thing was transmission repair, as well as general roadworthiness work. Since Dave's not a hands-on "car guy" and doesn't have the skill set to deal with these things, the car spent its first 3 months or so under their ownership getting fixed up (at D & D Classic in Covington, OH) so it could be safely and reliably driven. It was then taken to various Dayton-area car shows and received some formal recognitions at those events, as well as its share of "oohs" and "aahs". It also received 1st Place Awards at two I.T.C. conventions (2017, at Ft. Wayne in the Touring class, and 2019, at Cleveland in the Modified class).

You might wonder what put the car into the Modified class at the 2019 convention, when it had been in the Touring class at the earlier convention. In order to increase the comfort and "drive-ability" of the car, Dave and Deb had taken it to Hill's Classic Cars in Racine, OH, earlier in 2019 to have air conditioning installed (including a high-output water pump and thermostat, as well as an A-432 spacer). At the same time, an alternator was substituted for the original generator and an electric fan replaced the original fan, an auxiliary electric fuel pump was added, and seat belts were installed. These modifications moved the car from Touring into the Modified category.

Side note: Dave and Deb had always been unhappy that a previous owner had substituted an all-digital 90s-era radio for the Town & Country radio that was in the car when it left the factory. This 'deficiency' was corrected at Hill's by the installation of a rebuilt Town & Country radio chassis (but with modern internals). It not only looks 'classic', but it sounds good, too.



Dave and Deb enjoy talking about their car at shows and cruise-ins, and often encourage people, especially kids, to sit in their car and have their pictures taken in it. They feel that older cars should be appreciated by everyone, and this more personal approach could encourage that appreciation even more.

Final part of this story - about a year or so after the acquisition of their '57 T-bird, Dave and Deb also acquired a '64 T-bird convertible (late 2017). Many of you have heard about this car but haven't seen it yet. This is because it took a long time to get it scheduled in for necessary "road-worthiness" work and top repair. D & D couldn't work on it during the 2017-2018 winter, and were unable to schedule it anytime during 2018, so the car languished in the garage (the top was stuck in the down position, so it really couldn't be taken out if there was any chance of foul weather - besides, the "road-worthiness" was still very suspect). When Dave and Deb took their '57 to Hill's in the spring of 2019 for its improvements/enhancements, they discovered a '64 T-bird in Hill's shop that was having its top worked

on. This was a surprise to both of them as they had always thought that Hill's only works on Early Birds. A deal was struck to the effect that when they picked up their '57 after its work had been completed, they would leave their '64 to have its work done. Good news? That work is now done. Bad news? The car is "quarantined" in Racine (well, not exactly, its owners are hunkered down in Dayton, along with all of you good souls). As things stand right now, who knows when Dave and Deb will be reunited with their '64? (:<)

Anyway, to get back to the introduction to this article (which said that "this is not so much a car story as it is a people story,") who could know that these two people, who had never been known to have any interest in cars other than simply as a means to get from Point A to Point B, would discover a common "hidden interest" in each other that has resulted in great enjoyment of some older cars? That "Wouldn't it be cool someday..." finally was realized, and they have found another fun activity to share with each other.



Although we may still find ourselves in isolation this Memorial Day, that does not mean we can't take a few moments to remember those who sacrificed all so we could live in a free country. Memorial Day is different than Veterans Day in that Memorial Day was created to honor those men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Veterans Day recognizes and celebrates all persons alive or dead who have or are now serving in the military. Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971.

The first unofficial Decoration Day was initiated by John A. Logan, leader of an organization for Northern Civil War veterans, who called for a nationwide day of remembrance which was held on May 30, 1868. It was designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land.

Did you know? Each year on Memorial Day a national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time.

Brett Remembers Gale



You all have likely seen the local and/or national announcements of the recent passing of Gale Halderman, the original designer of the Ford Mustang and read the many accounts of his auto design career. Having met him several times, listened to his presentations, and viewed his design artwork, I came to realize Gale was a happy and humble man with a genius for car design. How I remember my very first new car - a Rangoon Red 1964½ Mustang convertible that I cherished. One of Peg's fond memories was riding in her friend's powder blue mustang convertible. We owe such memories to Gale. Knowing him was a true joy.

CLUB OFFICERS

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A Thank You From Jim

Below is the card we received from Jim Lenz which was addressed to the Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio thanking us for the floral arrangement we sent upon the passing of his wife, Kaye. Because of COVID 19 I know many of us, though wanting to attend the visitation or memorial service for Kaye, felt it necessary to opt on the side of caution. I know our hearts and sympathies were with Jim during this sad occasion. Included below is a photo of the "Tree of Life" flowers our club sent. The roses were peach in color. When this pandemic is over and we're back to normal, we hope to see you back with us Jim. Your Friends at TSWO.

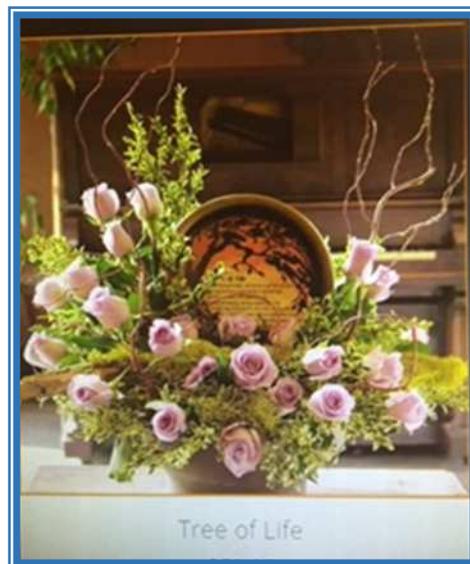
IN OUR TIME OF LOSS YOU HAVE GIVEN US

peace and healing

THROUGH YOUR COMFORTING WORDS



WE ARE FOREVER GRATEFUL



Dear Thunderbird Club members,

Thank you so much for thinking of me during the loss of my dear wife Kaye. The planter and tree of life plate are beautiful. It meant a lot to me during this difficult time.

Jim Lenz