Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio Newsletter

September, 2014

www.thunderbirds-sw-ohio.com

Club Picnic
Sept 7th

MEETING MINUTES:

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order on Thursday, August 14 at 7:00 p.m. by President, Beverly Knauper, who warmly welcomed everyone.

Attendees: Peg and Brett Andrews, Nancy and Julie Blake, Ruthie and Wayne Dennis, Jan and Guy Gifford, Lisa and Roger Hamm, Beverly Knauper and Jim Ross, Scott McGaha

Approval of Minutes: The July meeting minutes, as shown in the August newsletter, were not questioned by the members, and therefore were accepted as published.

Announcements: Wayne announced (with a little encouragement from Brett), that he had won "Best of Show" with his Chevy Nova in the concourse judging in Columbus, OH. (See the article later in this newsletter)

Peg read a thank-you card from Carl Geiger showing his appreciation for the card sent to him upon his brother's passing

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Lisa reported a deposit from the proceeds of the club car show and also of dues paid by the new members.

Event Planning Committee: Events are in work.

Car Show Committee: Brett said that he is sending a letter of appreciation to the President of the Sons of Italy along with an offer to help them with the show again next year. He announced that each member could take home a dash plaque from those left over. Nancy commented that she has an abundance of door prizes left which can be used next year. Brett concluded by saying that he felt the car show had been a very positive experience for those attending as well as for those from our club who worked at the event.

OLD BUSINESS:

The debriefing of the Kettering Klassic Car Show continued on, addressing what worked out well and what could be improved next year.

Beverly reminded the membership that she has scheduled a tour of the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) at The Ohio State University in Columbus on Saturday, October 25. Plans were discussed about meeting for lunch either before or after this outing. Details will be finalized at an upcoming meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Scott, very hospitably, once again invited everyone to the annual picnic at his house. Several dates were discussed, and the decision was made to plan for Sunday, September 7 at 2 p.m. It will be a true pot luck with everyone bringing whatever they desire. Scott will provide chicken wings. Scott encouraged everyone to bring their cars, saying that his neighbors loved it!

Our Christmas party will be December 11th this year. The suggestion was made to remain at MCL as we did last year, and it was warmly received. (Kudos to Ruthie & Wayne and Nancy & Julie who did such a fantastic job last year with the planning, the decorations and some special desserts.)

OPEN FLOOR: Brett commented that the domain name for our website has been renewed once again.

ADJOURN: Beverly asked for a motion to adjourn. The ladies were the first to respond this time, with Jan motioning, and Peg seconding the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Beverly Knauper, President

Next Meeting: September 11th, 7:00 pm, MCL Cafeteria, 4485 Far Hills Ave, Kettering

From the President's Nest

I don't know if you're like I am, but by March I am anticipating "car season". The end of April brings the *Show & Shine* calendar, from which I make my list of car shows for each weekend. This list resides on the refrigerator door to be consulted when we receive invitations to other activities. The recent back-to-school frenzy made me realize that the car season will soon be winding down. I looked at our refrigerator door list and was dismayed at how few of the events we attended this summer, mostly due to the weather. On the other hand, Jim and I seemed busy this year with car-related activities. Upon further reflection, I realized that most of our social interactions have been with car people, but not so much at car shows. We've enjoyed meetings, lunches, cruise-ins, cruises, tours, picnics, and Mustang 50th birthday parties. I feel privileged to have heard Jack Telnak and Gale Halderman, both retired Ford designers, talk about their work. I've forgotten most of what I've read about designing the generations of Thunderbirds, but because I heard and saw them in person, I will remember the stories Mr. Telnak and Mr. Halderman told about their long careers at Ford and what it was like being a designer then. Both seem to be very nice men who were committed to quality in their work. As I've said before, it really is all about people. The cars just bring us together. At Mr. Telnak's presentation in Cincinnati he said that on his way home he was stopping in Dayton to visit with Gale Halderman. So take advantage of all opportunities to be with people. Consider attending the Thunderbird's 60th anniversary next year in Dearborn. I'll see you soon at our club picnic. By the way, have you celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Beatles' first tour (summer 1964) of the USA?

September Birthdays

5th: Wayne Dennis
11th: Ruthie Dennis
25th: Jan Gifford
25th: Jim Ross

September Anniversaries

None

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Beverly Knauper (513) 752-8821 Vice President: Roger Hamm (937) 835-5992
Treasurer: Lisa Hamm (937) 835-5992 Secretary: Peg Andrews (937) 237-1131

Upcoming Club Events

	Event	Date(s)	Location
1.	Club Picnic	September 7th	Scott's House
2.	Lofino's Cruise –In	September 12th	Lofino's in Beavercreek
3.	Center for Automotive Research Tour	October 25th	Ohio State University
4.	Club Christmas Dinner	December 11th	MCL Cafeteria

We Met Ford Designer Gale Halderman

by Beverly Knauper

Gale Halderman and Jim

On August 3, Peg, Brett, Jim, and I journeyed to the Tipp City Community Festival to hear Gale Halderman interviewed during the church service. Gale Halderman spent 40 years designing cars for Ford. According to my "research", he had a major role in designing the one-piece bumper and grill for the 1964 Thunderbird, led the design team for the 1977 Thunderbird, was on the design team for the 1983 "aero" Thunderbird, and directed early design work for the 1988 Thunderbird. However, this year he is being celebrated as the designer of the 1964½ Mustang, which was the first Ford Mustang. One book I read stated that the introduction of the Mustang allowed the Thunderbird, with its sporty styling and relatively compact dimensions but ride and equipment of a large car, to go even more upmarket.

Following a song about a 1965 Ford Mustang, the minister introduced Gale Halderman. Mr. Halderman spoke of his career at Ford Motor Company, which began following his graduation from the Dayton Art Institute. He first worked on 1957 Fords, but his design efforts at Ford were quite diverse throughout the years: Maverick, Falcon, trucks, Lincolns, and even tractors. When asked, Mr. Halderman stated that his greatest accomplishment was designing a new Ford program for the 1970s (what he called both "high" and "low" series of vehicles) in just eleven days. Mr. Halderman spoke of the timing for the Mustang: the market was there (Baby Boomers) but not a car to meet it. Lee Iacocca wanted a new Mustang program but Henry Ford II didn't because of the failure of the Edsel. Mr. Halderman described how he was given the assignment to design the side profile of the Mustang in one night, which he did. The following day, a decision on the back end and roof was made and the clay modelers were told what the designers wanted for the front end (without blueprints for it). Mr. Halderman said the car looked sporty and like nothing else on the road. The car was originally called a Cougar, but the name was changed near the time of production to Mustang. Mr. Halderman laughed that apparently more people liked horses than cats. The name change was so close to the beginning of production that the first car had a wooden horse covered with copper for the emblem because there was only time to make it in wood. Mr. Halderman also shared that Carroll Shelby didn't design Shelby Mustangs, but that Ford people did.

The interview ended too soon. Mr. Halderman has a collection of memorabilia at his home but unfortunately he was not forthcoming with an invitation to visit! An article by John Clor in the April 2014 *Mustang Times* states that Mr. Halderman owns a 1966 Poppy Red Mustang and a 2002 Torch Red Thunderbird. Not bad choices!

THE EXPERIENCE OF A NATIONAL CAR SHOW

by Wayne & Ruthie Dennis

As the old saying goes, there are good days and bad days. This story is about one of those good days, a really, really good one. But first let's go back to Macon, Georgia and the beginning of this story. It was the summer of 62 and a young lady was looking for her very first car. As soon as she laid eyes on this brand new little red Chevy II Nova, she immediately fell in love. A few months later she would meet a young man who would fall for the cute young lady in the little red Nova. Since that time the little red Nova, built in Norwood Ohio, has carried the couple many, many miles--somewhere near 300,000. It was regularly driven to work until 1983. And "Betsy" as she is so fondly called by our family, on occasion even carried up to five riders the 80 mile round trip to work. Never once did we dream that 52 years later we would still have the little red Nova. After many wonderful adventures in the Nova, we decided in 2010 that it was time for Betsy to get a facelift. During the restoration we took great care to keep her as original as possible except for the orange engine—it just didn't quite match that red firewall.

When we learned that the Nova Nationals Car Show would be held this year in Columbus on July 13-16, we knew we just had to go. However, it turned out that our club car show was the same week as the Nova Nationals and I had already volunteered to be a judge. So how could we do both? We decided that we would go to the Nova Nationals on Thursday morning; return home Friday night, do the club car show on Saturday, and then go back to the Nova Nationals on Saturday afternoon for the banquet that night.

At the Nationals, there were 83 cars from all over the East Coast from Florida to Canada and as far West as Iowa. The vast majority of the cars were trailered to the show. The judging took about 45 minutes per car with 11 judges covering each car including one guy crawling around under the car on a piece of carpet (smart guy). Needless to say I was so busy opening doors, turning on windshield wipers, mashing the brakes, opening ash trays, blowing the horn, flashing the lights, and answering questions that it only seemed like a few minutes to me. After multiple comments from the judges about what a nice car the Nova was I began to worry they were just being nice and didn't really mean it. When we left on Friday we had no idea what the results were going to be. We were left in absolute suspense until the banquet.

Now for the really, really good part, the little red Nova won a gold award receiving 937 points out of a possible 1,000—remember the red engine versus the orange. The Gold award is what everybody seeks. Needless to say we were really, really happy. Then came the first surprise, Betsy won best in her class. After I accepted the plaque and sat back down, all I could say was WOW. I was sitting there thinking this is absolutely super! Then they announce Best of Show. Needless to say when they called my name again, we were stunned and excited! In fact, we were so excited that we forgot to take any pictures until after the banquet was over. Also, I now know that all those nice comments were absolutely sincere which made it that much sweeter. But best of all, we got to talk with old friends, make new friends, and took away one really, really great memory!!!!!

Congratulations!!!!!!!

Wayne & Ruthie