



# New Jersey Open Road Thunderbird Club

Chapter 41 - Classic Thunderbird Club International

## The Thunder Heard

### March 2009

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## Spring is Here

### 2009 Meeting Schedule

March 29	Eagle Rock Diner
April 25	Mike & Wendy Meehan
May	Paul & Pauline Schroll
June	Rich & Lois Martin
July	To be announced
August 2	MINI CONCOURS
September	Vince & Mary Ann Ucci
October 19	Fall Cruise
October	Henry & Judy Semmler
November	Joe & Arlene Kubat
December 5	HOLIDAY PARTY

The March Meeting will be held at :

**Eagle Rock Diner**  
**410 Eagle Rock Road**  
**West Orange, NJ 07052**  
**2 PM**

**If you cannot host your meeting as scheduled, it is your responsibility to get someone to switch with.**

Please let Joanne Seiler know at least **2 months** before your scheduled month that **YOU WILL BE HOSTING** the meeting and give the date/time/etc.



### President's Message

As each day goes by, we get closer to the car show season. Not just a time to show 'em but to get out and drive 'em.

I am getting tired of this snow no matter how pretty it is. And now, out here in Morris County we have had our 3<sup>rd</sup> "small" earthquake in as many weeks. I have moved the Bird to the safer side of the garage so nothing can fall off a shelf onto it. We have also had a couple of UFO sightings!! Some red glowing spots in the sky, although I have not personally seen them yet.

If you missed the Sweetheart Brunch, you missed a very nice event. I believe we ended up with about 28 people. The food was great as usual. There was something for everyone. Joanne made favors for the girls, Lucille handed out lottery tickets for the boys and I gave all the ladies a long stem rose.

Joanne and I threw our annual 50's dance/fund raiser at the Ridgefield Park Elks. Although this was not an NJORTC event it was attended by 10 members who all said they had a fun time. We received a lot of compliments. Maybe we will see more of you there next year – it's a nice way to shake off the winter blues.

Due to some membership drop outs, Joanne may have to adjust the meeting schedule. She really does not want to move anyone so we may opt for a third party pay-you-own location for the open months. The March meeting will be in a 3<sup>rd</sup> party location, and we will let you know as soon as possible as one is decided on.

An updated roster will be in this newsletter. I have asked for updates for the past few months, so I am pretty sure all the info is up to date. At the next meeting we will talk about the Board Meeting and iron out our plans and activities for 2009.

Happy T Birding  
Pat LeStrange

RSVP MEETING HOSTS NO LATER THEN 1 WEEK BEFORE A MEETING, YES or NO



### A few words from Alec

It looks like winter is finally wearing down and the harshest winter we have had in the past few years will be nothing but a bad memory.

I hope to see everyone at the coming shows and cruise nights. I will be on the lookout for owners of TBirds to recruit for our club. Be sure to let me know of any prospects.

The life blood of any club or organization is that everyone is willing to participate in making their club the best it can be

Happy Motoring  
Alec

### My TBird – Henry Semmler



My first memory of a two seat TBird was in 1958, when the girls next door started taking piano lessons. The teacher would park her white 56 with red interior in our shared driveway. My older brothers explained to me it's similarities with our families 56 Country Sedan with TBird V8. 56 Fords would be part of my life for the next 45 years. Most of the members of the club remember me coming to club functions in my black 56 Crown Victoria which I owned for 30 years.

I was introduced to the club in the mid 70's by my friend Gene Szura. At my first club meeting, I parked behind a 57 Ford wagon and walked into an open garage door to see a detailed rolling TBird chassis with motor installed. I was very happy to meet so many people with the same interests.

I owned a few TBirds during the late 70's and early 80's, but none were roadworthy. In 1985 I purchased, from three poor pictures, a 57 from California. It was "rust free", but had been outside without a top and not driven in years. Once in my possession I found it full of "bondo" from many accidents. (Continued on page 5)



### . Vice President's Message

Well, it's been along winter, but it will start to get better everyday (I hope). We complain how cold we are now, but in a few months we will complain it's too hot (I can't wait for that either).

We had a great Holiday Party this year. It is the first time we ever had 42 people attend. Everything worked out good.

At our meeting Saturday night we discussed a few places to have the 2009 party. It was voted on to go back to the San Carlo. We feel comfortable there. Dolce Novita (2008) was very good and we all had a great time. The 2009 party will be Saturday, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> at 5PM.

We, as a club, have already done a couple of outings, one to Harold's Deli and our Sweetheart Brunch (of course all we do is eat). Some of us will be going to the Atlantic City car show/auction on Feb 27/28<sup>th</sup>. All have a good time.

Some other things we might be doing - going to dinner/play, bowling, bus trip to Atlantic City. We are trying to do something every month.

Our new club photographer is Joanne - congrats.

We are also happy to hear the good news that Charlie and Izabela Costa are expecting their first child. Congratulations, hope all goes well.

Have a good month and see you all at the next meeting.

Arlene



### Grill Plaques

New grille plaques are now available. These are lighter, made out of aluminum. Same size, without gold anodizing. Cost is \$30.00, but for first time plaque buyers the club is subsidizing ½ or ~\$15.00. Contact Paul Schroll if interested. Will deliver at a club meeting or make other arrangements.

# Membership News

## ANNIVERSARIES

Bill & Pat Selby March 12  
Bruce & Aileen Corbett March 30



Vince Ucci March 1  
Joanne Seiler March 5  
Rich Martin Jan 30  
Susan Gaeta March 9  
Bob Perruso March 28



Eugene Szura

## FOR SALE

1957 Bird. Body off frame resto For Ford Johnson by Frank Stubbs. P/S, P/W, P/D/B. Two tops. Auto, front & rear anti sway bars. Nice driver. Asking \$42,000. Contact Rich Martin for pics and more details.

## Milestones

Congratulations to Izabela and Charlie Costa who are due to become first time parents in May.



Savings starts on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Remember to set your clocks ahead on Saturday night.

## NJORTC 2009 OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

<u>President</u>	Pat LeStrange	201-920-7226 <a href="mailto:rolodexp@aol.com">rolodexp@aol.com</a>
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Registered Agent	Vince DeAndrea
Awards/Plaques	Dominick Tucci
Membership Chairman	Alec Johnstone
Name Badges	John Pyrros
Jackets	Joe Kubat
Grill Plaques & Hats	Frank Chabala
Club Historian	Lucille Chabala
Club Photographer	Joanne Seiler
Sunshine	Lucille Chabala
Master at Arms	Bruce Corbett
Meeting Schedules & Activities Coordinator	Joanne Seiler
Webmaster	Wendy Meehan







## CLUB EVENTS

### Harold's Deli

We had another great outing at Harold's. A good attendance, great food and plenty of it. Everyone went home with a doggie bag for another feast at home. Thanks Vince, for setting everything up. A few pics of this outing.



"small" Root Beer Float

Additional pics on Page 6 & 7

Any items you want us to publish in the newsletter must be received before the 1st of the month. They can be e-mailed directly to me. Pictures, articles, tech, etc. Paul Schroll pts1231@aol.com



### Sweetheart Brunch

Lucille again set up our yearly Sweetheart Brunch (Valentines) outing to the Bethwood. This was my first time and I couldn't believe the amount and variety of food available for the one price. Add in the champagne and mimosa's and we had a wonderful time. Cupid was there handing out roses and candy to the ladies, while the men got lottery cards. I didn't hear of any cries of delight on the cards, but I bet some body hit something. Thanks to Lucille.



Cupid handing out roses



Good company

**Be nice to strangers – they may sit on your jury**



## My TBird – continued

It had a 390 GT with auto. I replaced the two quarter panels, two rocker panels and one fender with NOS parts. Painted it Porsche Guardsmen Red and installed a red interior and put Crager SS wheels on. I never got it to handle or brake very well and it had many electrical issues. So I went in search for a good original non-molested 57.

I purchased my current BRONZE bird in 1988. The original owner put it at a consignment dealer. The dealer and owner believed they could make more money with a fresh paint job. At that time it still had the original paint and interior and 32K miles. It received a quick 2 stage paint and rechromed bumpers. That is when I saw it in Hemmings, and purchased it from the pictures the dealer send me, a copy of the build sheet and a copy of the check from the original purchase in 1958.

When it was rolling off the ramps of the trailer my workers wanted to give it a new paint job, but it was to be a driver and would get chips, so the poor quality paint would be good enough. We put in a new rear main seal, new springs and bushings, radiator, new brakes wire wheels and Vogue tires. A month later I drove it to our vacation home in Hilton Head Island. It remained there as my driver for 5 years.

In June of 1993 I towed it back to NJ during my divorce and put it into my enclosed trailer at my business. It stayed in my trailer un-used until June of 2001, then another year in our garage at home. It had not been started in 9 years.

I rejoined the club in 2002 after about a 6 year absence and got excited about the International Show that year. I was eager to get the car running to enter it in the show. I put a gas tank, fuel pump and battery in and rebuilt the carb. After the 2002 show I installed a new interior.

This last month it has been in the capable hands of Rich Martin. The trans and heads needed some attention. I drove it home and it felt great. I hope to be using the Bird a lot more now and will be installing seat belts so Judy can come along.



## TECH TIPS

### Power Steering Fluid

See Page 8 for this months Tech Tip

This article was courtesy of ThunderWords, the newsletter of Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas Metroplex Early Bird Club. Reprinted with permission.

### Sweetheart Brunch (Bethwood)



Dessert Table – only about ¼ of it



August 18-20 CTCL Regional – Vancouver, BC  
**Book rooms by February 28<sup>th</sup> \$30 increase 3/1**  
 Rock River Casino Resort , Richmond BC  
 866-748-3718 Rates \$139 and \$239





## CAR SHOWS/SWAP MEETS

Feb 26-Mar 1 Atlantic City

April 17-19 Englishtown

May 23 Rhinebeck, NY

May 17 Upper Saddle River (Pearson Education)

May 29-31 E. Durham, NY Contact Joe Kubat

June 5-7 Carlisle, PA - All Ford Meet

June 13 Pompton Plains - North Jersey TBird Show,

June 14 Canterbury, NH-put on by the New England Vintage TBird Club (I have contact info)

July 3-6 CTCI Regional – Tulsa, OK

### More Harolds



Quite a plateful Vince



## Sweetheart Brunch



He looks happy



What  
cardiologist



Cupid smoooozing





### More Harolds



Did she eat the whole thing????



### More Bethwood



### February Meeting

This was hosted by Bob and Arlene Perruso. The hospitality and food was super. Many thanks to Bob and Arlene. The turnout was one of the biggest.

Some highlights of the meeting:

The treasurer's report was read and accepted.

The reading of the last meetings minutes were waived.

Joanne Seiler suggested putting together a new membership packet to be given to prospective new members. She passed out a sample.

Discussed 2009 Holiday party. Decided to go back to San Carlo. Date – December 5<sup>th</sup>

Lois Martin reported on CTCI Board Meeting

Fall Cruise is scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>

Pat LeStrange listed events for 2009

Meadowlands Race Track event not being held this year.

Arlene Kubat suggested an Atlantic City day trip.

Sandra Pyrros suggested having a Dinner and Theater night this spring. Plays suggested are West Side Story, Jersey Boys. Approx. cost \$195 which includes dinner, bus and play.

Bergen Pac shows were mentioned by Bob Belli Phil, Guidone reported that Doe Meadow has been reserved for the Mini Concours, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Pat LeStrange reported on the NJORTC Board meeting Paul Schroll showed club plaques that he had made up on his own. They were accepted. Cost is \$30, for 1st time members the club will pay ½ or \$15.

Lucille has resigned as club photographer – Joanne Seiler will be new club photographer



## Tech Tip: Power Steering Fluid

The power steering systems for the 1955-1957 Thunderbirds were designed to run on Type A transmission fluid. Since Type A transmission fluid is no longer available, many Thunderbird owners and their mechanics have used power steering fluids in their Thunderbird steering systems. Power steering fluid will work in your car's system, but by using regular power steering fluid your system is subject to developing leaks. This is due to the fact that power steering fluid is "thinner" than Type A transmission fluid. The "thinner" fluid is able to leak out of the seals, central valve, and cylinder. The solution to this problem is to once again use transmission fluid in your Thunderbird's power steering system. Though Type A transmission fluid is no longer available, Type F or FA transmission fluid is available and is an acceptable substitute.



Since Ken Smizinski has supplied this important maintenance tip, I asked him what a Thunderbird owner should do if he has been using standard power steering fluid in his Thunderbird. Ken recommends that to insure that the system has not been damaged or compromised, the power steering system should be drained completely, inspected, and refilled using the above recommended transmission fluids. Since draining the system completely introduces air into the system which can render your system inoperable if not removed completely, this complete change in fluid should only be done by a qualified mechanic! This is not a job for someone like me, your typical "dangerous" do-it-yourselfer. Make sure you know your own "mechanical" limitations. A Bird, and its owner, are a terrible thing to waste!!!

As an alternative to complete replacement, the less preferable option is to start using the above transmission fluids as you need them. Remove as much of the power steering fluid as you can from the reservoir and replace it with the appropriate transmission fluid. As you run low on fluid continue to add transmission fluid. Power steering fluid can be mixed with transmission fluid. If your lucky, you will eventually have enough transmission fluid in your system to stop any leaks caused by using power steering fluid. This fluid change over, however, will not fix any leaks in your system caused from old, hard seals, worn out pumps, and other problems associated with an aging system. If your car, however, has a new power steering system, yet you have leaks, this tip may solve your problem. Good luck, and remember your own "mechanical" limitations!!!

Source: CTCC Tech-Tip Manual 1993-1997

[Reprinted from Classic Thunderbird Club of Chicago](#)



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Ucci	Vince		973-890-9198		F973-575-6702	vucci@copy-cat.com	162 Kingwood Dr.	Little Falls	NJ	07424
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						NOT PAID FOR 2009				



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Sandra Rue  
Columbus, NJ



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Requests received after drawing will be returned.