

New Jersey Open Road Thunderbird Club
Chapter 41 - Classic Thunderbird Club International



The Thunder Heard

October 2023

2023 Meeting Schedule	
October 15	Gene Szura
November	Mark Santimauro
December 9	Christmas Party
2024	Tentative Sch
Jan/Feb	Tom Brieva
March	Sean Dillon
April	Bruce Hardy
May	Rich Martin
June	Mel Ramos
July	Steve Schmidt
August	Picnic
Sept	Marco Totaro

The next meeting is October 15. Gene & Diane Szura are the hosts RSVP 201-991-8459 or mauszura@verizon.net

If you cannot host your meeting as scheduled, it is your responsibility to get someone to switch with.
 Please let Arlene 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](#)



September was a quiet month, except for Labor day week end with Lead East and Dead Man's Curve. Members that attended either one stated they were a lot of fun and the weather was the best ever.

Our Sept. meeting was well attended. Members were reminded to please tell meeting host to RSVP the hosts in all future meetings. I read a thank you letter from the MLF foundation for our participation in the car show.

Nominations were accepted for the election of President and CTCI rep. No one opposed the incumbents I accepted the President (for the 16 year in a row ! 2007 to 2023) Thank you. Donna Jessie will remain CTCI Rep. Although the official vote will be at the October meeting.

I am looking forward to the Fall cruise chaired by Mike and Theresa Perrillo

Keep safe, see you in October
Pat LeStrange



Gene Szura's 57



Vice President's Message



Fall will officially arrive on Saturday, September, 23rd., goodbye summer. Weather this summer was crazy. A lot of rain, very hot. Was really not a great for cruise nights. A lot of car shows had to be rescheduled. We did get our tbird out as much as possible. We still have the month of October left. So enjoy what you can with your cars, before you know it we will be putting our cars to sleep for the winter. We did have great weather for Lead East and Dead Mans Curve. Whatever show you attended, hope you had fun.

Steve Handy was visiting Joan this week and said she is doing good. Keep praying for her, they are helping. I have not heard of any other member problems, thank god. Walter is still having some back problems. He said he has not heard from anyone. Please reach out to Walter and let him know we still care and have not forgotten him and miss him. Hope all that had problems this year are feeling better.

Pat said that pictures of the picnic are on the web site. Take a look at them, they are great. Hope all of you enjoy our website, Pat works very hard on it.

Next up is our Fall cruise. Mike Perillo is setting the cruise up. We will get back to you with all details soon.

We had nomination of Officers this last meeting. Running for Office are President and CTCI Rep. Pat LeStrange was nominated for President and accepted the nomination.

Donna Jesse was nominated for CTCI Rep. If there are anymore nomination, please notify Pat. We will be voting on are Officers at our October meeting.

The big Tbird Club is running a cruise on October 8th. Breakfast will be served, crumb cake from B & W Bakery in Hackensack. The best crumb cake around. Coffee, etc. sounds like a fun day with your tbird, must have a partner with you. For more info contact Mark Santimauro (mrscratchoff@yahoo.com) by 10/1.

FYI CTCI is now accepting retro birds !!!
Remember in the next two newsletters we will be discussing, yes you guessed it, the CHRISTMAS PARTY!!!

Next meeting hosted by Diane and Gene Szura, October 15th, 2:00, Delizias, Boonton, NJ. PLEASE NOTIFY THEM ONE WAY OR ANOTHER IF YOU ARE ATTENDING OR NOT. thank you. We also have a date for November meeting. November 19th, 2:00, Anthony Franco's on Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne, NJ. Hosted by Mark and Joyce Santimauro.

Happy Fall and Halloween, see you soon, Arlene

September Meeting

We had a well attended meeting. It was a nice sunny day but only 5 Tbirds attended. Not a lot of formal items to be discussed so the business meeting was not long. Food was good, always nice to get together. Thanks to Paul Dorn and Julie for hosting

Highlights of the Business Meeting

The secretary was not attending so the minutes of the last meeting were not read. The Treasurer's report was made and accepted.

Pat reported that he updated the web page for the picnic and that there were changes to the club store.

Arlene reported on the picnic and thanked everyone for helping out.

Members were reminded to RSVP regarding the meetings, including regrets
Nominations for President and CTCI rep were taken. Pat was nominated for President (accepted) and Donna for rep.

Mark spoke about a cruise put on by the big bird club. (see Arlene's article). No cost

Tom Mirro reported on the Tbird reunion in Dearborn, MI.

Mike Perillo is planning our Fall cruise. No details yet.

Next meeting October 15th.

September Meeting Pics



Membership News

Happy Anniversary

Joe & Arlene Kubat 5th
 Bill & Donna Jessie 14th
 Paul & Pauline Schroll 26th
 Steve & Annette Schmidt 28th



Linda Klein 7th
 John Pyrros 18th
 Don Dobres 28th
 Darlene Anderson 28th

**GET WELL
 SON!**

Bob Heissler
 Mel Ramos

WELCOME

To Irene Douma, our newest member. Irene lives in Long Beach Township and has a 57 black Tbird that was recently restored



2023 OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

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Name Badges	John Pyrros
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Club Photographer	Paul Schroll
Sunshine	Lucille Chabala
Master at Arms	Rob Sabino
Activities Coordinator	Julie Ann Morrison
Webmaster	Pat LeStrange



Club Announcements

October Meeting

The meeting is scheduled for **10/15**. Time is our regular time, **2 PM**. Venue is Delizias Pizza in Boonton. The host is Gene Szura. Be sure to RSVP, including regrets.

Fall Cruise

A cruise is being planned for October. Date and other details have not been settled. Watch for an announcement

November Meeting

Mark Santimauro is the host. Date is **11/19**
Additional info next newsletter.



Cruise Nights

Note: Some of these cruises may be shut down for the year

Monday

Paramus-314 Paramus Rd -Taverna
Paramus-165 Rte 4 West Panera Bread
Rockaway-Red Hut Diner Rte 46 E

Tuesday

Elmwood Park-Pizza Town-89 Rte 46W
Hewitt-1926 Union Valley Rd-COSMOS

Wednesday

Carlstadt-317 Washington Ave
Wycoff-422 Cedar Hill Ave-Christian Ref Ch.

Thursday

Rockaway-Miller's Ale House-Rockaway Mall
Hackettstown-Wendy's-219 Mountain Rd

Friday

Boonton-Walmart Plaza **Last date 10/6**

Cars & Coffee

Saturday - 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the month -
Franklin Lakes-649 Franklin Ave. Crossroads
Church

Car Shows/Swap Meets

- 10/1 Oakland-360 Ramapo Valley Rd.-
Coppertree Plaza **11 AM**
- 10/1 Closter-19 Vervalen St Closter Plaza
- 10/1 Paramus-165 Rte 4 W.-Panera Bread
- 10/1 Teaneck 55 Hillside Ave
- 10/7 Morris Plains-209 Littleton Rd-Sunrise
Assisted Living
- 10/7 East Orange-13-17 Oak St. Messiah
Baptist Church
- 10/8 Westwood-Veteran's Memorial Park
- 10/8 East Rutherford-Railroad Ave
- 10/8 Creskill-100 Third St (Trunk or Treat)
- 10/8 East Hanover-175 Rte 10-Neilson Dodge
- 10/14 Lodi-Memorial Drive (Street Fair)
- 10/15 Saddle Brook-55 Mayhill St Municipal
Bldg
- 10/15 Pompton Lakes-Wanaque Ave
- 10/28 Oakland-2 Municipal Plaze Oakland
Library (Trunk or Treat)
- 10/29 Closter-Memorial Field (Trunk or Treat)



For Sale



1955 T-Bird

Goldenrod yellow clearcoat. 1989 Mustang H.O. ,
Fuel Injection, Paxton supercharger. 12 Volt.
Griffin radiator. T-5 trans, Hurst shifter. Disc
brakes (Lincoln Versailles), dual master.
Continental Kit. Flowmaster mufflers. Traction
bars. Power steering. Hard (white) and soft
(black) tops. 55 Fairlane headlight rims. 56 Merc
station wagon tail lights. Wire wheels and radials.
Custom Sound radio with 10 CD changer.
Located in New Jersey. \$ 48,000. For additional
information and pictures contact Joe Kubat 973-
900-1923



1955 T-Bird

Black, Auto, p/s, p/w, B/W interior, TC radio, continental
kit, many mechanical upgrades. White porthole
hardtop \$29,995. Call Vince, 201-973-980-4312

VINNY'S VINTAGE VEHICLES

- ALL MAKES, YEARS & MODELS
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VINCENT UCCI
973-980-4312 CALL/TEXT
VINCENTUCCI@GMAIL.COM



I want your input. Please send any items to be included by the middle of the month if possible. Email is best, snail mail ok.

Getting Ready for Winter's Nap **Here are some tips for winter storage** **From Kyle Smith - Hagerty Media**

The fall colors are upon us, at least in the states where that kind of thing happens. That means the classic rides are being prepped for storage as we collectively brace for the snow to fly and the salt to hit the roads. Hagerty has covered proper winterization methods and tips for your car in a multitude of ways, but here are a few suggestions that haven't always made our lists but you should consider.

No parking brake

Opinions regarding the use of parking brakes can get oddly heated, so whether or not you should use yours regularly is a discussion for another day. The key thing here is to not set it and leave for months over the winter. If you're worried about your car rolling from its parking spot, wheel chocks are a better option because the chance that your parking brake binds or seizes up over time is too great of a risk. It's no fun finding your classic is garage-bound for an additional couple days or weeks for a brake job when all you want to do is drive in the spring.

Floor moisture

The enemy of any vintage car owner is rust, and the easiest way to keep it at bay is to keep things dry. Moisture can wreak havoc on multiple parts of a car, but it's the underside and chassis that often end up paying the price when rust takes hold. If you aren't lucky enough to have climate-controlled storage, consider laying down plastic sheeting before parking your car in its winter resting place. Whether the floor is dirt or concrete, moisture will rise up, and this plastic will help keep it from condensing on the bottom of the vehicle and take hold. The sheeting will also help keep the concrete from pulling moisture and oils from your tires, extending their life too.

UV control

Just like you want to protect the underside of your car, the top and interior need to be saved from invisible forces: UV light.

Tech Tip

Soft Top Zipper

If you are having trouble with a sticky zipper on your soft top, try lubricating it with WD-40. Apply to a rag and then wipe the zipper. This will keep the top material from getting saturated with WD-40. It is best to apply two or three light coats to avoid having an excess amount on the zipper. Other lubricating products such as a silicone based spray can also be used but use caution when applying to keep the product off of the top material. Other items to try are wax from a candle or bar soap rubbed along the zipper.

From Trail Bird News



Some garages have cave-like architecture, and therefore there's no concern about sun wearing on your paint or interior, but if you're parking a car in one spot for a long time, be sure to take into consideration where the sun hits it and what that might do. Faded and cracked interiors can be avoided with the right cover or some careful window blocking.

Deep clean

This one is simple. Vacuum and deep clean your interior. Don't leave any debris or dirt in the nooks and crannies and allow it to take hold and stain or rot your interior surfaces. This will not only help keep the materials soft and supple during cold winter months, but it will also keep any small things from growing into stains that might require more work to remove in the spring or will attract rodents or vermin. Did you eat in your car this year? Get that french fry out from underneath the seat. You aren't fooling anyone.

Top up

Not your fluids, but your convertible top, if you've got one. We've seen many a car with a nice cloth top that shrunk to the point that it is nearly unusable without extra hands helping to get the frame close enough to latch and risking a tear or two. Even if you live all summer with the top down, store your car with the top up. Most car covers are fitted to be used with the top up (you do have a car cover right?) and this yearly top-up time is also the perfect opportunity to lube all the pivot points before the long winter season.

Record your winter priorities

Planning to work on your ride at all over winter? Now is the time to make your to-do list and set your priorities while you can still do a last drive and any diagnostics that might require moving the car. Also think about how the car is placed into storage. Need to work on the engine but you backed into the garage, so now you have to walk around the car every time you need tools? Set yourself up for success and avoid that mistake by thinking through what you plan on doing and when.



Pickles - Brian Crane

THE MYSTERY OF THE EARLY 1955 PRODUCTION

Some time ago a CTCI member brought to my attention an article in a national publication concerning the restoration of an early 1955 Thunderbird. In the article, the owner stated that his car with the VIN number of 100075 was one of the first ten Thunderbirds produced. The owner arrived at this figure because he was told that one out of seven Fords coming off the assembly line was a Thunderbird. Since I have heard comments like this in the past, I thought I'd try to explain the early stages of the 1955 Thunderbird production.



The 1955 Thunderbirds were built at the Rouge Plant in Dearborn, Michigan. Production of the Thunderbirds began on September 9, 1954 with serial numbers running in numerical order starting with 100005. Thunderbirds with VIN numbers 100001, 100002, 100003, and 100004 were built prior to the September 9 start-up date. The first three were prototypes used for publicity and are believed to have been destroyed by Ford Motor Company. The Thunderbird with VIN number 100004 was sold and was last known to be in Pennsylvania (see cover of May/June 1974 Early Bird).

When production of the 1955 Thunderbird began on September 9, 1954, they were the only vehicles being built at the Rouge Plant until October 25 when the Ford passenger car production began. Therefore, starting with VIN number 100005, all of the very early Thunderbirds were in numerical order. The numbers were not intermixed with the passenger cars until October 25, 1954. This puts between 900-1,000 Thunderbirds with serial numbers in sequence before passenger car production began.

It is hard to pinpoint the last Thunderbird built before the numbers were intermixed with the passenger cars because of the confusion with the date codes verses serial numbers. On many occasions the actual day of production was earlier or later than the scheduled build date stamped on the data plate so the dates are not always in order with the serial numbers. However, there are usually no more than 6-10 days out of sequence at any given time. My records show a handful of Thunderbirds in the 100400 range that had a data plate date stamped later than October 25 while they were actually built as early as October 12. If we could determine the VIN number of the first 1955 passenger car built at the Rouge Plant, it would solve the mystery of the last consecutive Thunderbird built before intermixing the numbers.

For years I have read in reference books that the passenger car production started on October 12, 1954. However, this date did not fit in with my collection of VIN numbers. I had too many Thunderbird VIN numbers with no room left for any passenger cars. A few years ago when Betty and I visited the Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn, we found documents stating that the passenger car production began at the Rouge Plant on Monday, October 25. Other Ford assembly plants started production earlier in October. My opinion is that Ford was focused on getting the new Thunderbird into the market place, possibly causing a delay at the Rouge Plant for the passenger car.

The 1955 Thunderbird production ran until September 16, 1955 while the 1955 passenger car production ended on August 30, 1955. Therefore, only Thunderbirds were being assembled at the start and finish of the 1955 model year run.

The following chart of Thunderbird Production Figures was in the Early Bird about 40 years ago. At that time, the author stated that the accuracy of the figures was unknown. I refer to this chart quite a bit, and from the data I have collected, it seems to me that the figures are probably accurate. I hope you enjoy looking over the chart to find out approximately what number your Thunderbird was in the production figure.

**Chart not attached.
From Trail Bird News**

1950s MEMORY LANE

Mergatroyd ? Do you remember that word?

Would you believe the spell-checker did not recognize the word, Mergatroyd

Heavens to Mergatroyd!

The other day a not so elderly (I say 75) lady said something to her son about driving a Jalopy; and he looked at her quizzically and said, "What the heck is a Jalopy?" He had never heard of the word jalopy! She knew she was old ...But not that old.

Well, I hope you are Hunky Dory when you read this and chuckle.

Here are some old expressions that have become obsolete because of the inexorable march of technology.

These phrases included: Don't touch that dial; Carbon copy; You sound like a broken record; and Hung out to dry.

Back in the olden days we had a lot of moxie . We'd put on our best bib and tucker, to straighten up and fly right.

Heavens to Betsy!

Gee whillikers!

Jumping Jehoshaphat!

Holy Moley!

We were in like Flynn and living the life of Riley ; and even a regular guy couldn't accuse us of being a knucklehead, a nincompoop or a pill. Not for all the tea in China!

Back in the olden days, life used to be swell, but when's the last time anything was swell? Swell has gone the way of beehives, pageboys and the D.A.; of spats, knickers, fedoras, poodle skirts, saddle shoes, and pedal pushers.

Oh, my aching back! Kilroy was here, but he isn't anymore.

We wake up from what surely has been just a short nap, and before we can say, "Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle!" Or, "This is a fine kettle of fish!" We discover that the words we grew up with, the words that seemed omnipresent, as oxygen, have vanished with scarcely a notice from our tongues and our pens and our keyboards.

Poof, go the words of our youth, the words we've left behind. We blink, and they're gone. Where have all those great phrases gone?

Long gone: Pshaw, The milkman did it. Hey! It's your nickel. Don't forget to pull the chain. Knee high to a grasshopper.

Well, Fiddlesticks! Going like sixty. I'll see you in the funny papers. Don't take any wooden nickels. Wake up and smell the roses.

It turns out there are more of these lost words and expressions than Carter has liver pills.

This can be disturbing stuff! (Carter's Little Liver Pills are gone too!)

Leaves us to wonder where Superman will find a phone booth.

See ya later, alligator!

Okidoki .

From Al Cirinelli - don't blame me (ed)

