



# T-Bird Topics

*The official publication of the*

Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

*Established 1981*

Novmeber 2025

Rose Beige 1965

Volume 44 Issue 11

## President's Message...



It is time to **renew** your **dues for 2026**. Mail your check to the post office box by December 31, 2025. Please find the Renewal Application on page 3. If you have attended our events or you have been following us in the newsletter or the website, you will agree we are a bunch of busy "birds" In October you had the opportunity to participate in no less than three color tours!. They were great! We also held our annual Hines Park Drive and Cider Cruise and ended up in Plymouth at the Pour House for a bite to eat.



1965 Rose Beige

Please mark your calendar for **Saturday, November 8th**. We will be gathering at the renowned Gateway Motors to hold our annual planning meeting for 2026. See the flyer on page 4 for more details.

*Special Note:* As the current elected officers of the Board of Directors are serving a two year term, there will be no elections in 2025. The Directors are appointed by the President and may be reappointed for 2026.

Get the most out of this newsletter. *Take a moment to read every page!*

See you all soon in your Thunderbird, President Barry

*Happy Thanksgiving*

# Club Events...

**November 8th (Sat)** 2026 Planning Meeting. 12:00 pm. **Gateway Motors**, 15011 Commerce Dr. S, Dearborn, MI 48120. Please bring your ideas for events in 2026. Menu – Sloppy Joes, drinks and condiments to be provided by club. Bring a dish to pass – Appetizer, Salad, Dessert. After the meeting enjoy the cars at Gateway Please RSVP to JoAnn [joannbill801@comcast.net](mailto:joannbill801@comcast.net) or phone/text 248-719-0160 by Wed. Nov 5, 2025

**December 7th (Sun)** Annual Club Holiday Party. 5:00 pm at **DeLucas Restaurant**, 27424 Warren Rd., Westland, MI 48185. Dinner - \$35.00 per person – Cash Bar - *Holiday Stuff the Box Auction*. Mail your check to WWTC, P.O. Box 51027, Livonia, MI 48151 to arrive by Monday December 1, 2025.



# Meet Dr. Steve

Dr. Steven Legel, having grown up in Detroit, is a hands-on “Car Guy”. His car collection includes “55, ‘57 , and ‘66 Ford Thunderbirds, a 1970 Dodge Challenger, a 1959 Chevrolet El Camino (in progress) and a 1960 Buick convertible, as well as the contemporary 2002 Ford Thunderbird and a 2008 Dodge Challenger SRT. A prolific author, Steve has had over 250 articles published in both dental and automotive magazines. Prior to the launch of the 2002 Ford Thunderbird Steve contributed to the Mike Lamm book, “Thunderbird: 2002” and the History Channel documentary, “American Classic Cars: Thunderbird”. Dr. Steven Legel has been a member of the Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club since 2004.



Kathryn, Steve, Dr. Steve and Iris



# Membership Renewal Form

*Please complete only information that has changed*

• **Renewal Information Required**

**First and Last Name\*** \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: Month and Day : \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse/Partner First and Last Name\*** \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: Month and Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address\*** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone C or H \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Partner \_\_\_\_\_

Membership in other club (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Body Style \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Description of your Thunderbird \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Body Style \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Description of your Thunderbird \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail payment and membership form with changes to:

**WWTC**  
**P.O. Box 51027**  
**Livonia, MI 48151**

Dues { \$25.00, with email  
\$35.00, without email

## Things We Do:

- ◆ Monthly Activities
- ◆ Sponsor club events and day cruises
- ◆ Publish a Club Newsletter
- ◆ Publish a Club Directory
- ◆ Maintain a Club Website
- ◆ Enlist Technical Advisors
- ◆ Offer a vocational scholarship

Received: Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_, check # \_\_\_\_\_, cash \_\_\_\_\_, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised: October 2025



DETROIT SHOWROOM  
www.GatewayClassicCars.com



***You're Invited***  
***WWTC 2026 Planning***  
***Meeting & Pot Luck***  
**Saturday, November 8th, 12:00 pm**  
**Gateway Motors**  
15011 Commerce Dr. S, Dearborn, MI 48120.

Please bring your ideas for events in 2026.  
Menu - Sloppy Joes, drinks and condiments to be provided by club. Bring a dish to pass - Appetizer, Salad, Dessert.  
After the meeting enjoy the cars at Gateway Please  
RSVP to JoAnn [joannbill801@comcast.net](mailto:joannbill801@comcast.net) or phone/text  
248-719-0160 by **Wed. Nov 5, 2025**



# 70th Anniversary Pin

While Supplies Last!

**\$10.00** each

Celebrating the

**Thunderbird**

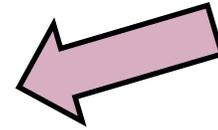


**Order Today!** Mail check and indicate quantity to:  
Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

P.O. Box 51027

Livonia, MI 48151

Pin size 1.25" w ◦ Supporting our scholarship program ◦ 586-703-4435



## Who Owned Your Car?

Curious? Vehicle title history records are available by mail for \$15.00, or \$16 if certified. To request a copy of your vehicle's record, complete the [Record Lookup Request form](#) online and return with payment made out to State of Michigan to the address on the form. You can also email me at [barry.burnham@me.com](mailto:barry.burnham@me.com) and request a form to mail in.



## Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips

The subject of this month's tech-tip is storing your Thunderbird for the winter months. Living in Michigan, we all know winters can be harsh. If you have the luxury of heated storage for your collector vehicles there's not much to worry about.

- Make sure you have fresh fuel in the tank at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  full,
- Tires are properly inflated,
- This is also, a good time to check your battery's condition along with the vehicles charging system using a Volt meter. The attached photos show the surface voltage of a typical lead-acid automotive battery fully charged with the charging source disconnected (engine stopped) and, with the engine running the voltage increases indicating the charging system is returning energy to the battery. If after charging, the battery voltage steadily decreases below 12.4- to-12.6 Volts, this may indicate the battery can't store the charge and needs to be replaced.



**A Charged Battery 12.6 V (Engine Stopped)**



**Engine Running Voltage Increases Charging System Ok**

- Next, always disconnect the battery ground post first to prevent an accidental short circuit. Connect a battery tender to keep it charged until needed again. Avoid exposing the battery to extreme cold.

## ***Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips Cont.***

- Add some fragrance to your interior and trunk areas to repel mice (bar soap works well),
- Open doors to the secondary catch to relieve pressure on the door weather-stripping,
- If your car is going to be stored for an extended period (greater than six months), it's a good idea to add some fuel stabilizer to the fuel tank,
- Cover your car with a quality car cover,
- Since most engine wear occurs at start-up, water condensing in the exhaust system, refrain from starting your car in cold air unless it's necessary.
- If you have some nuisance leaks, put a drip pan under the source so you can identify what it is. If it's transmission fluid, below is a product I highly recommend (I'm a big fan of Lucas products)!



Add fragrance to the interior and trunk



Send your question to my email address and I will post the question/answer in next month's newsletter. Also any suggestions you have for future tech-tips.

# Bird Talk

## Happy Birthday Members!

4 Rick charniga  
5 Dan Mitchell  
6 Steve Deak  
7 Tina DeWitt  
12 Chris Mannino  
13 Renee Daquano  
13 Sandy LaPointe  
14 Bob DeWitt  
15 Nancy Burnham

16 Marget DeFrank  
20 Donna Harvey  
22 Tom Milligan  
23 Jeff Bladow  
25 Steve Johnson  
25 Michelle Soule  
28 Lynette Gray  
28 Joyce Thomas  
30 Andrea Champagne

November



## Welcome! New Members

**Kimberly Alger**, kalger440@hotmail.com

**Patrick & Julia Derbin**, Email: pjderbin@aol.com

**Dennis & Margie Grace**, Email: dgrace008@comcast.net

**John Hartmann & Millie Guy**, Email: hartmannj1954@gmail.com

**Paul & Marcia Slatin**, Email: pslatin@yahoo.com

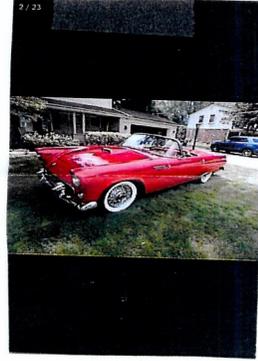
**Billy & Dorothy Tumpkin**, Email: billyqtumpkin@gmail.com

Car models will be published in the new directory

## Member to Member

**1955 Ford Thunderbird** Torch Red, 292 V8 with a 4 Barrel Car, 3 Speed manual Transmission

w/ overdrive. Kelsey-Hayes chromed wire wheels. Runs well. **Asking \$25,000.00 Call Bruce 248.302.5697**



## Make a Connection—Member to Member



A Labor of Love 



The story of the 1956 Thunderbird:

This car was the first car purchased in 1956 by a young 20-year-old immigrant from Italy. While he was going to high school and later to college, he worked many parttime jobs and when he graduated, he had saved enough money to purchase the "first love of his life" the 1956 Thunderbird convertible and has been the sole owner for 58 years.

As a young 20-year-old driving a sports car, he was the envy of many and unfortunately was challenged to race from pretty much all that he met: a race that by the way, he always won.

It was during this time that he met and married the 'second love of his life' and many more wonderful memories were made. One of the most precious was driving his pregnant wife to the hospital where his first child was born.

During the many years that he worked as an engineer for Chrysler, he drove many one-of-a-kind prototype automobiles and purchased several beautiful ones. However, the only one that he kept for 58 years was his beloved Ford Thunderbird. It was his dream to restore this car and keep alive a piece of their family history. Email: Roger DeLuca: [claradeluca@yahoo.com](mailto:claradeluca@yahoo.com)

"This car, as shown in the pictures, is available for sale by the family. Although disassembled each part was personally labeled by the owner."

# Cruise Ends in the Pour House





\*\*\*Not pictured but in attendance -  
Carol Kovalak and her guest Bill

# ATD Sponsors



Thank You to our sponsors and especially

## Lincoln of Troy

General Manager Michael Sabitini and  
Catie Carnaghi for being our

**Top Sponsor**



Keith & Pam Bentley



## *Vintage Thunderbird Club International, Inc.*



**Lawrence (Larry) S. Graham**  
**Director VTCI North Central Region**  
**3621 West 97<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Overland Park, Kansas 66206-2126**  
**913-219-7245**  
[tellagraham.lc@outlook.com](mailto:tellagraham.lc@outlook.com)

October 24, 2025

Hello to the North Central Region VTCI Members and Chapter Clubs:

As your regional director and, other than possibly "The Thunderbird Scoop", one of your sources of news from VTCI I wanted to again forward some recent information to you to share with your membership.

Although only a few of the VTCI North Central Regional chapter club members made it to the inaugural VTCI International and CTCI Regional Combined Event in Grapevine, Texas, many have possibly heard about the event from friends within either Thunderbird organization. This was a highly successful event up until the Saturday night awards Banquet when the VTCI awards presentations and acknowledgement of the judged cars went seriously wrong. Discussions commenced immediately following the conclusion of the Banquet and have continued to this date. Our new VTCI President Tom Przedwojewski announced the resignation of the VTCI Concours Director shortly following the 2025 International. All VTCI judging sheets were acquired for review by a subcommittee of the Board prior to being returned to the owners. This review has just recently been completed and the VTCI President is returning the judging sheets to all owners accompanied by an explanation letter discussing what occurred and the corrective measures taken. More details of this will be in upcoming "Scoop" issues but improvements known to be coming include an instructional video for both judges and owners explaining the evaluation process and a new feature in the "Scoop" discussing VTCI's concours rules and judging standards.

The CTCI domination of the Awards Banquet and perceived disregard to VTCI Thunderbirds on the show-field was due solely to the failure of getting the VTCI judging results and owner's names to the people managing the slide show. Please don't judge the inaugural combined event, the other club, or the convention hosts for mistakes that occurred within VTCI.

The Board realizes the time, effort, and expense it takes to prepare your Thunderbird and attend events and we truly appreciate your commitment to the hobby. It is hoped that the actions being taken will help restore confidence in VTCI. As always, should you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

# Executive Board

**Barry Burnham, President**  
586-703-4435  
[barry.burnham@me.com](mailto:barry.burnham@me.com)

**Keith Bentley, Vice President**  
734-812-5404  
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**JoAnn Rodriguez, Immediate Past President, ex officio**  
248-719-0160  
[joannbill801@comcast.net](mailto:joannbill801@comcast.net)

**Nancy Burnham, Secretary**  
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**Pam Bentley, Treasurer**  
734-812-4781  
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# Directors

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**David Lau, Technical Director**  
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**Larry Seyfarth, Advisor**  
313-436-8327  
[larryseyfarth@yahoo.com](mailto:larryseyfarth@yahoo.com)



Our **70th Anniversary** lapel pins have arrived. JoAnn and I will have them now at all of our events. You may get a reminder if you pre-ordered your pin.

