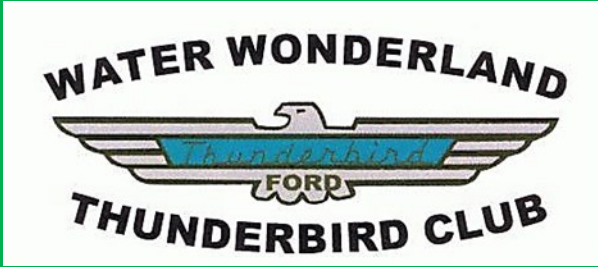


T-Bird Topics

The official publication of the

Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

Established 1981



March 2026

Volume 45 Issue 3

President's Message...

What an incredible day we had touring the **Ford Motor Company Archives** in Dearborn! While employees still work on site, the beautifully renovated space now feels like stepping into living history—an inspiring museum dedicated to preserving Ford's remarkable automotive legacy.

Be sure to look for Steve Legel's full recap and photos in this issue. A special thank you to **Steve and Iris** for organizing such a memorable behind-the-scenes experience. We truly appreciate the time and effort that went into making it happen.

And the excitement continues!

Mark your calendars for our March visit to the iconic **Michigan Central Station in Detroit**. After decades of vacancy, this Detroit landmark has been stunningly restored thanks to nearly a billion-dollar investment by Ford Motor Company. We'll begin our self-guided tour at 1:00 PM and then head to lunch at 2:30 pm at **McShane's Irish Pub** in Corktown. **March 8, 2026**. Don't miss the flyer in this issue for all the details.

Please also check the calendar for a full lineup of upcoming events—there's something for everyone!

A quick but important reminder: if you haven't renewed your 2026 membership dues, this is your final notice before removal from the email list. We have an exciting year planned, and we truly appreciate your continued support of the club.

In the coming weeks, we'll be sharing information about our 2026 Automotive Tech Scholarship program. Currently, we proudly award two \$1,000 scholarships—one to a student from Wayne-Westland Community School District and one to a student from Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. The Board is also considering adding a third scholarship this year, potentially in Oakland County or Washtenaw County.

We'd love to hear your thoughts as we continue growing this meaningful program. Here's to an exciting year ahead!

Happy St Paddy's Day

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

See you all soon in your Thunderbird, President Barry



Visit: www.MichiganTbirds.org · WWTC · P.O. Box 51027 · Livonia, MI 48151 · 586.703.4435

Club Events 2026

March 8th - Michigan Central Train Station Tour see flyer

April 19th - Milbury Classic Car & Truck Museum, Milbury, Ohio.

May tbd - Spring Dust Off

June 14th - Bakers Car Show

July 19th - WWTC Club Picnic

August 9th - Pre- Woodward Dream Cruise

September 13th All T-Bird Day

October 18th - Hines Park Cider Cruise

November 7th - 2027 Planning Meeting

December 6th - Annual Club Holiday Party

Event Details and Other Car Events Will be in the Newsletter

Weekly Car Shows!

Monday Nights-Belleville, Main, 5pm-7:30pm, Memorial Day-End of September

Thursday Nights- Ypsi, N River & E Cross, Depot Town, 4-8pm Mem Day -Labor Day

Thursday Nights- Romulus, Eureka & Huron River Dr, Blue Sky (ice cream) 4-7:30pm

Friday Nights- Riverview, Fort Street & Sibley, 4PM -dark (May-Oct)

Other Great Events

May 17th—T-Bird Appreciation Day

June 20-21—Motor Muster

June 20th—Down River Cruise

June 20th—Canton Car Show

June tbd—Maumee- Valley Picnic

June 6th—Back to the Bricks

June 27th—Chelsea Car Show

July 11th—Cruise US-12, Wayne

July 11th—Grosse Ile car show

August 17th—Hines Park Cruise

August 8th—Troy Traffic Jam

Sept tbd—Old Car Festival



Watch for details in upcoming issues.



Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club presents
The Michigan Central Train Station

Self Guided Tour, Sunday March 8th

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

(we will meet in the lounge to the left as you enter)

McShanes Irish Pub 2:45 pm

1460 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MI 48216-1324

“An Irish Pub & Whiskey Bar located in Detroit's oldest neighborhood featuring a huge beer garden, free safe secured parking with free shuttle service to all downtown events. An Irish-American Sports bar located in the heart of the Motor City with a huge selection of Michigan craft beer and not so traditional bar fare ranging from signature Irish Egg Rolls, Shepherds Pie to the best Wings and macaroni & cheese in the city.” Order off the menu. **Wear the GREEN!**

R.S.V.P. to joannbill801@comcast.net or text name
and number attending to 248-719-0160 by Friday March 6, 2026





Membership Renewal Form

Please complete only information that has changed

*** Renewal Information Required**

First and Last Name* _____

Birthdate: Month and Day : _____

Spouse/Partner First and Last Name* _____

Birthdate: 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: _____

Bird Talk



Happy Birthday Members!

7	Dave Campbell	16	Don Eichstaedt
4	Joe DeFranco	16	Maria Pomaville
9	Keith Bentley	19	Bill Nichols
9	Terry Bruce	26	Bob Zigarac
9	Kathi Waters	27	Brenda Manzo
10	Anthony Marschall	27	Elaine Roscoe
12	Tom Watson	29	Christine Richman
14	Tom Diebol	30	Marianne Watson
14	Mark LaPointe	31	Tim Higgins

March



In Memoriam..

Bob Jameyfield 1950-2026

Welcome! New Members

Members of *The American Road Thunderbird Club*

Car models will be published in the new directory

Something to Sell or Trade?

2002 Thunderbird Press Kit/Customer Gift Pack. Five boxes of promo material including die cast of 2002 Tbird. Hardly ever touched—in excellent condition \$400.00. Call Charlie Henry, Cmhenry57@outlook.com. 248.476.1668

Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips

The subject of this month's tech-tip is getting your Thunderbird ready for another season of cruising enjoyment! Before starting your engine follow these steps.

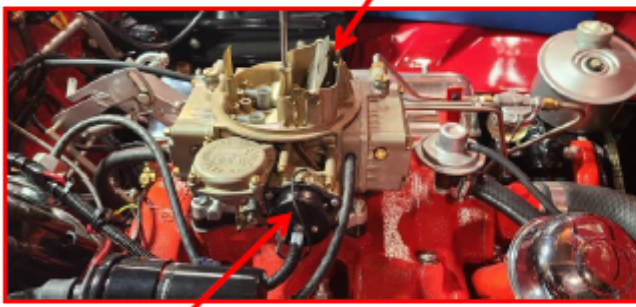
Check List Before Starting Your Engine:

- Make sure you have fresh fuel in the tank at least ½ full. Fuel from last year is still ok,
- Tires are properly inflated,
- Check your fluids: oil, antifreeze, and power steering fluid. You can check the automatic transmission fluid level after you start your engine,
- Check your battery's charge level with a voltmeter it should be approximately 12.4-to-12.6 Volts. If not, connect it to a charger until you see these voltage readings (after disconnecting the charger). If the Voltage values are still low, you may need a new battery (see November tech-tip for more information). Make sure your battery posts/cables are clean and free of corrosion.

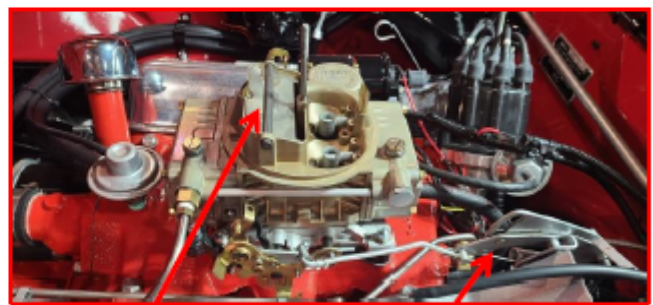
Starting Your Engine After it's Been sitting All Winter Only For Carbureted Vehicles:

- Remember the oil hasn't circulated for some time and fuel hasn't flowed either. In a small container mix about a cup of gasoline and a couple of ounces of lubricant (I use transmission fluid it works well and burns clean). The faster your engine starts to get oil and fuel flowing the better for minimizing engine wear. Pour about a 1/4 cup into the carburetor before setting the choke. Pump the gas pedal (this sets the choke) a couple of times and turn the key. Your engine should start immediately if not, check the ignition system and repeat these steps. Do not flood the engine!
- The photos below show a cold engine that hasn't been started since last fall. Also, this engine is equipped with an electric choke which I highly recommend as a replacement for your hot air choke which can be troublesome after many years of usage.

Choke is controlled by a thermostatic spring. Electric current induces a slow controlled heat to open the choke.



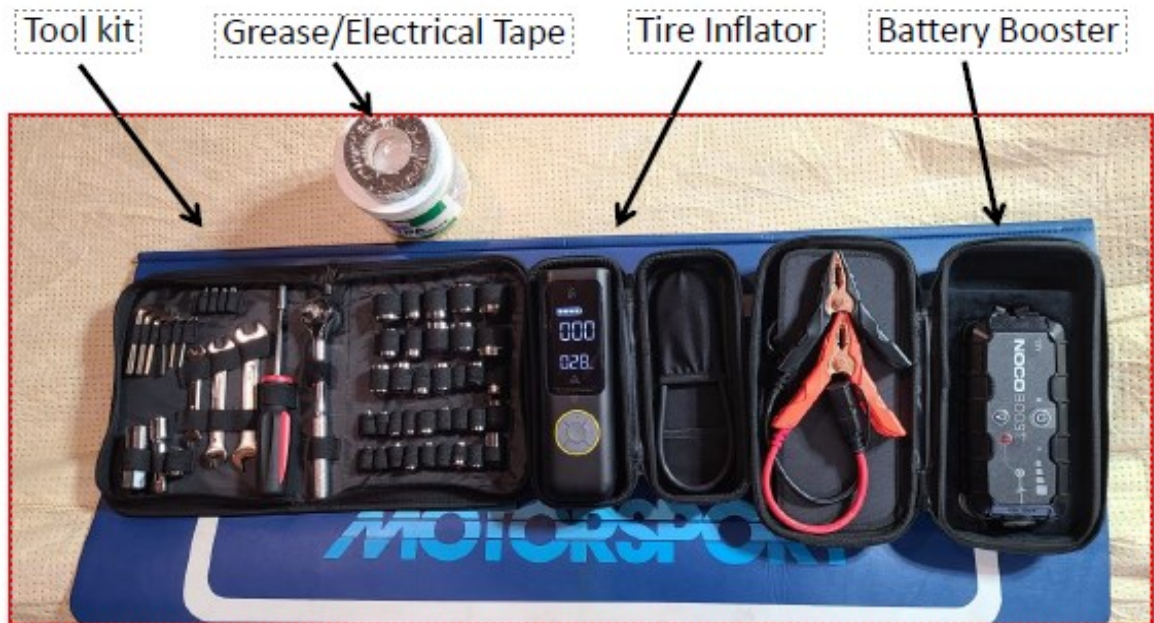
Choke cover can be loosened to make adjustments if necessary.



Choke is set by slightly opening the throttle make sure to check that it's working properly before starting the engine.

Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips Cont.

The photo below shows my emergency kit that I keep in the trunk when I'm out cruising in my Thunderbird. It doesn't cover every contingency of mechanical breakdown however, it comes close. These items are high quality and packed in their own small cases. I feel more secure knowing I have them with me.



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.

WATER WONDERLAND
THUNDERBIRD CLUB



Rick Charniga
Technical Director

P.O. Box 51027
Livonia, MI 48151

734.740.3556
rickcharniga@gmail.com

* Next month's tech-tip is installing a back-up electric fuel pump for your Thunderbird.



Vintage Thunderbird Club International, Inc.

Lawrence (Larry) S. Graham
Director VTCI North Central Region
3621 West 97th Street
Overland Park, Kansas 66206-2126
913-219-7245
telligraham.kc@outlook.com

February 5, 2026

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. The following is information learned from a recent VTCI Board meeting held through video conferencing services.

On the positive side our new club president, Tom Przedwojewski, is working on getting the VTCI organization strengthened. The quest to find “volunteers” to fill empty and positions held by long-term people simply ready to retire has been somewhat successful. Renea Steffens has been selected to fill the position of Executive Secretary and all the supporting documentation has been forwarded to her by Jack Wake. Our thanks to Jake for carrying the load of Secretary for so many years. Older members may recall that Jack stepped into this role after the death of Beverly Wake and has continued thru the terms of past-presidents Rod Wake and Bob McNeill. The Scoop and website will soon reflect this change, but should anyone have issues with renewals of other like-business requiring the aid of the Executive Secretary the new contact will be vtcisecretaryrenea@gmail.com or the North Central Regional membership can contact me and I’ll forward the information request. As Renea has been a co-director of the VTCI Country Store, she resigned from this co-directorship and thus Scott Steffens becomes the Director of the Country Store. We also had nomination forms submitted for the open office of VTCI Vice-President. Being the only submittal for this office, Rick Grindel with Board approval becomes the acting Vice-President of the organization. Rick is retired Navy and thus notes that “I can follow orders and get the project accomplished.” We suspect that is why President Tom was happy to welcome Rick to the Board during our last conference. More details of these new officers will be in upcoming “Scoop” issues but, in the meantime, feel free to utilize their services.

Open positions still exist in the VTCI administration line-up. The club needs a Concours Director and the current thinking is to modify the old Publication Director position into three separate identities - one for the Scoop magazine (a team headed by editor Larry Mead), another for Facebook (social media) postings, and a third for the Website. If you or any of your chapter members may have expertise in any of these areas, or desire to learn about these areas, please consider volunteering to help out the organization. This is our club and it will only be what we make of it. Your consideration will be appreciated.

Some of you may be aware that the Classic Thunderbird Club International (CTCI) is undergoing some issues among their Board. It is currently unknown if these internal issues of CTCI may/or may not affect the joint 2026 Event scheduled for September 8th-12th in Flagstaff, Arizona. The planning group is in process of coordinating with the hotel to see if we can reduce the guaranteed room count to minimize problems if attendance does not meet previous predictions. We will attempt to keep all informed as we learn more on this unexpected situation which is beyond VTCI control.

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.



70th Anniversary Pin

While Supplies Last!

\$10.00 each

Celebrating the

Thunderbird

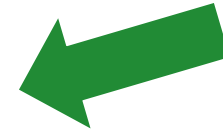


Order Today! Mail check and indicate quantity to:
Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

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 and request a form to mail in.



Have you checked out our brand new website?

Michigantbirds.org

Please let me know what you think too!





Ford Engineering
Laboratory (FEL) Tour

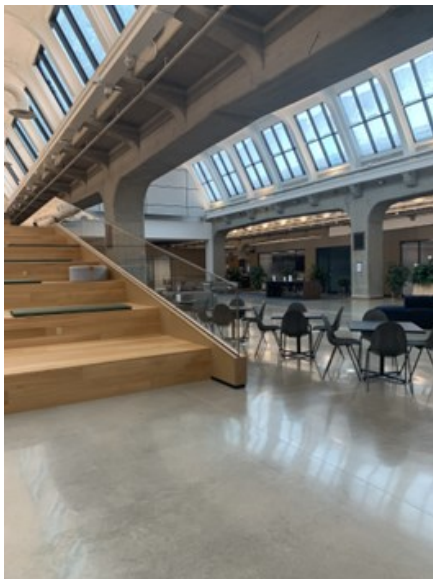


The Ford Motor Archive is housed in the 1920's era
Ford Engineering Lab building



The Ford Script logo is plentiful in the Dearborn properties. The outline of this logo is filled with shiny Hot Wheels cars...all Ford products!

Author Steve Legel and photographer Iris Isham



The large open space once housed the bustling Engineering and design staff. The full length rows of skylights provided abundant natural light. Henry Ford would often have the drafting tables and projects moved aside for evening square dancing. The heavy steel beams along both walls supported the trolley that would move engines and equipment about the bay. Now modernized providing areas for collaborative study.



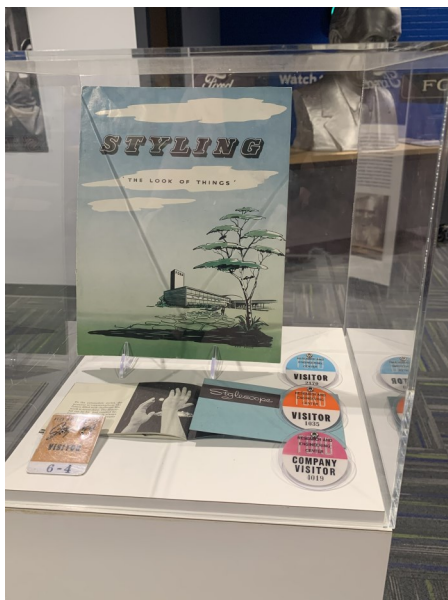
The Ford Motor Archive event space is large enough that visitors can enjoy the rotating displays without being crowded. Full length photos of Henry Ford's early assembly line, Highland Park one day's production and the Ford Rouge power plant are on the walls



Freddie Ford. The bigger than life robot that toured auto shows in the 1970's Push buttons and Freddie will tell you about the latest Ford products of the day



Attendees were treated to a vast display of Thunderbird memorabilia housed at the Archives. Internal communications, dealer sales brochures, dealer salesmen's guides, and many other interesting objects



Engineering artifacts were on display, one was this styling guide



The empathy belly vest, allowed interior designers to "experience" the impact of pregnancy while developing design. Prior to the 1960's auto manufacturers paid little attention to the needs of female occupants.



These silhouettes were used to configure seating positions and sizes for full size scale drawings



Now antique, these artifacts illustrate early exploration into computer aided design, manufacture and engineering (CAD, CAM, CAE)



Not only paper goods, but nameplates and ornaments are collected in the Ford Motor Archives



Our Hostess, Ciera Casteel and author Steve Legel, examine Thunderbird items in the Archive



Photo illustrates the depth and breadth of the collection. This area with rows and rows of shelving house paper ephemera. Each item is assigned a locater number and description.



End of a great tour of the Ford Archives! Now off to Buddy's Pizzeria.

Executive Board

Barry Burnham, President
586-703-4435
barry.burnham@me.com

Keith Bentley, Vice President
734-812-5404
klbentley01@yahoo.com

Nancy Burnham, Secretary
586-747-6805
nburnham1152@gmail.com

Pam Bentley, Treasurer
734-812-4781
pcbentley21@yahoo.com

Directors

Rick Charniga, Technical Director
734-740-3556
rickcharniga@gmail.com

David Lau, Technical Director
734-358-6071
toomanycars@charter.net

Denise Sikora, Membership Director
313-719-1588
56tbird@sbcglobal.net

Standing Committees

Nancy Seyfarth, Event Coordinator
313-436-8327
nancyouseyfarth@gmail.com

JoAnn Rodriguez, Event Reservations
248-719-0160
joannbill801@comcast.net

David Campbell, Transition Team
248-464-1597
hzvggg@charter.net

Larry Seyfarth, Advisor
313-436-8327
larryseyfarth@yahoo.com

Don't Wait Any Longer!

Pick an event, get your Tbird ready and join us!



Happy St. Patrick's Day



Barry Burnham, Newsletter
586-703-4435
barry.burnham@me.com