



T-Bird Topics

The official publication of the

Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

Established 1981

October 2025

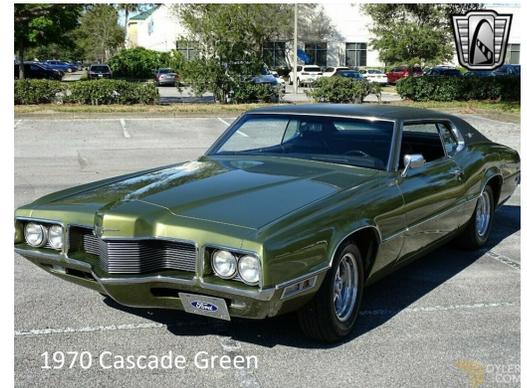
Cascade Green 1970

Volume 44 Issue 10

President's Message...



If you missed this years **All Tbird Day** then you missed another great car event featuring the Ford Thunderbird. As we celebrated our 70th Anniversary the weather co-operated, the food was great and the friendships will last forever! The **Best In Show Award** was presented to **Seymour Bray** with his beautiful 1955 Raven Black car.



It is time now to re-new your membership in our club. I hope you like the new look to the newsletter and are getting the most out of the tech articles, the stories from the past, and most of all the calendar of all of the many events we pack into every month. And there are more and exciting things to come in 2026. I want you to be a part of everything we celebrate with our classic Ford Thunderbird cars. So don't delay, print the [membership renewal page 5](#) today and mail it in! All membership renewals are due January 1, 2026.

Check out the flyer on page 3 for the **Hines Park Cider Cruise**. This year we will be cruising to beautiful historic Plymouth to a new restaurant that Nancy S and JoAnn have found for us. You won't want to miss it!

As we put our birds back in their nests, be sure to follow our calendar. We still have a few things you can do without your car.

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

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

Club Events...

October 19th (Sun) Hines Cider

Cruise. Meet at Parr Park 2:00 pm– Hines Park and Telegraph (Enter off Ann Arbor Trail) Cruise at 3:00 pm thru Hines Park to Downtown **Pourhouse**, 860 Fralick St. Plymouth for dinner. Please RSVP to JoAnn joannbill801@comcast.net or phone/text 248-719-0160 by Wed. Oct 15, 2025. ½ Gal Cider and 6 donuts will be available for members so PLEASE RSVP. See flyer on page

November 8th (Sat) 2026 Planning Meeting. 2:00 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 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.

More Events...

October 11th (Sat). End of Season Cruise to Parshallville. Meet at 9:30 am at David & Jo Lau's. Leave at 10:00 am to cider mill. Lunch at Beale Street Smokehouse BBQ, 1492 N Leroy, Fenton, MI. Special invitation by Metro Detroit Falcon Club. RSVP to toomanycars@charter.net. See flyer on page 4

October 12th (Sun) Thunderbirds on Parade—Fall Color Tour. We will travel the back roads to Zukey Lake Tavern. 5011 Girard Drive, Pinckney, MI 48169. Meet at the Meijer parking lot at 8 Mile and Haggerty at 10:45 am. RSVP to Dave Campbell at hzvqgb@charter.net or text to **248-464-1597** by October 5th with number of attendees. RAIN or SHINE.

Member Art Pope

Art Pope is a name familiar to many in the Henry Ford Heritage Association, especially those also connected to the Ford Piquette Avenue Plant Museum. Art has headed up the Window Team there since its inception in 2003 and has worked tirelessly on the project of restoring the museum's windows for over 20 years. Over 40 volunteers have served on Art's window team and all of the windows are now fully restored. In that time the Window Team has expanded to include masons who repair and replace the museum's brick and mortar as well as carpenters who maintain and replace the aging flooring in the museum. Art has also been a strong supporter of the museum beyond his volunteer time, serving on the board of trustees for decades as well. Art says that "My 20 years leading the window team at the Piquette Plant has been the highlight of my retirement years."

Art's passion for Piquette and all things Ford might have come from his 36 years as the Executive Engineer for Ford Motor Company in Brazil. Beside The Henry Ford Heritage Association and the Piquette Museum, Art is a member of The Early Ford V-8 Club, Thunderbird International, The Lincoln Highway Association, and the Military Vehicle Preservation Association. Yes, beyond Fords, Art is passionate about preserving and restoring WWII military vehicles. You might recall Art's excellent article in the Spring 2023 issue of the Ford Legend "The Ford Jeep Story".

Of his long-time membership in the Henry Ford Heritage Association, Art will tell you "I believe I was born with Ford Blue blood in my veins. When I was 15 years old, I bought a Model A Ford ever before getting a drivers license. I drove a Model A through High School and College so when I interviewed for a job after graduation, Ford Motor Company was my first choice. Living in Dearborn for 35 years and visiting the Fair Lane Estate for many wedding receptions and other events I was eager to support the estate and other Ford properties by becoming a member of the HFHA."





Hines Park Cider Cruise

Sunday, October 19th

2:00 pm Meet at Telegraph and Hines Park Drive, Parr Park

3:00 pm Leave for Plymouth Pour House Restaurant

Order from the menu



860 Fralick Street
Plymouth, 48170

- Complimentary cider and warm doughnuts provided
- WWTC Members Only
- R.S.V.P Required to: joannbill801@comcast.net or 248-719-0160 by October 15th

METRO DETROIT FALCON CLUB

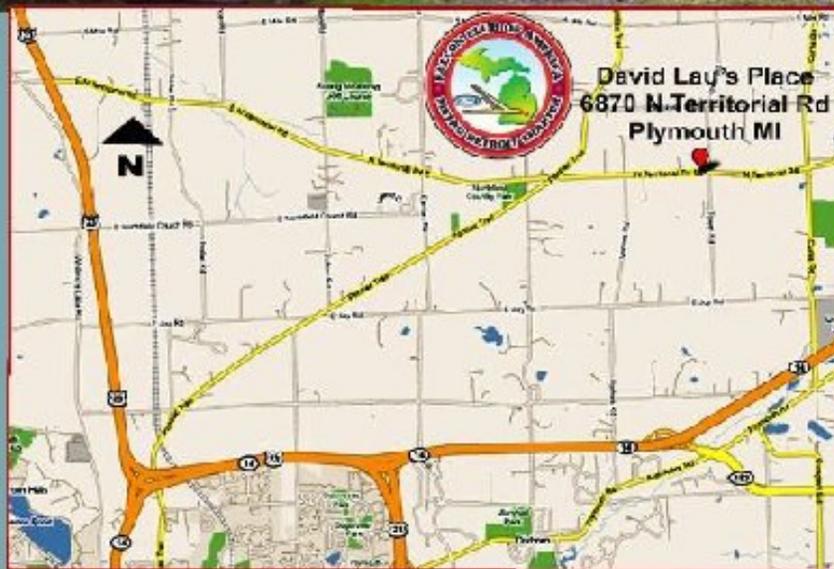
End of the season cruise to

Parshallville

HISTORIC CIDER MILL

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11th

The MDFC invites all members and guests for a final Club Event of the season. Join us for our "End of the Season Color Cruise" to the historic cider mill in Parshallville, Michigan. The plan is to meet at 9:30am at David & Jo Lau's place and leave by 10am on Saturday, October 11th (see map). After our visit for cider and donuts at the mill, the group will stop for lunch at Beale Street Smokehouse BBQ, 1492 N. Leroy, Fenton MI. We hope everyone can come out for a good time on the last club cruise before our prized "Birds" are put away for the season.



For RSVP contact David Lau at toomanycars@charter.net

This is a sanctioned "On-The-Road" Sweepstakes event.

Membership Renewal Form

If Renewal, Please complete only information in red or information that has changed

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 to:

WWTC

P.O. Box 51027

Livonia, MI 48151

Dues: \$25.00, with email address

\$35.00, without email address

NEW _____

RENEWAL _____

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

* Renewal Information Required

All Tbird Day Awards!

2025 All T-Bird Day

Class A 1955-1957 *Early Bird*

1st Frank Childs 57 Blue
2nd Rick Charniga 57 Red
3rd Denise & Ed Sikora 56 Peacock Blue

Class C 1958-1960 *Hard Top Square Bird*

1st Geo. & Elaine Roscoe 59 Colonial White
2nd Keith & Pam Bentley 60 Blue
3rd

Class F 1964-1966 *Convertible Flair Bird*

1st Gary Brewer 66 Red
2nd Bob & Deb Jameyfield 64 Red
3rd Barry & Nancy Burnham 64 Samoan Coral

Class H All 1967-1982 *T Bird*

1st Reno DeFrank 67 Black on Black
2nd Pat Currie 64 White
3rd Lamarr Mitchell 73 White

Class K 2002-2005 *Retro Bird*

1st Brandon Antonik 05 Bronze 50th Anniv.
2nd Gary Rellox 02 Merlot
3rd Judy McEwan/Tom Richards 02 Red/Black

Class B 1958-1960 *Convertible Square Bird*

1st David Miller 59 Pinkish
2nd David Lau 59 Baltic Blue
3rd

Class D 1961-1963

1st Buck Carver 61 Red
2nd Mark Young 62 Roadster Red
3rd Jayson Naron 63 Blue

Class G *Hard Top Flair Bird*

1st Steve & Norma Johnson 65 Honey Gold
2nd Bob Witt 64 Light Blue
3rd Dan & Pam Walsh 64 White

Class J All 1983-1997 *Super Bird*

1st Mike & Sue Bennett 97 Laser Red
2nd Mark & Sandy LaPointe 91 Red
3rd Gary Whitfield 87 Blue TIE
3rd Michael Giorolano 86 Red TIE

BEST In SHOW

Seymour Bray 55 Raven Black
Maumee Valley Thunderbird Club



70th Anniversary Pin

While Supplies Last!

\$10.00 each

Celebrating the
Thunderbird

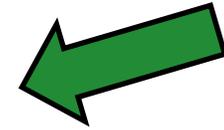


Order Today! Mail check and indicate quantity to:
Water Wonderland Thunderbird Club

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.



Tech Talk

Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips

The subject of this month's tech-tip is hoist lifting your convertible Thunderbird. Extra care should be taken when lifting convertible vehicles on a hoist for service purposes. Symmetrically spaced LH & RH contact points should be maintained. Uneven loading can sometimes affect door alignment; all 1955-1957 Thunderbirds have a robust welded frame with extra X-members to maintain body stiffness. 1955-1957 Thunderbirds hoist contact points that take full advantage of this design are shown in the attached photo.



By Rick Charniga



Use Front Tubular Cross-member To Raise Front Wheels For All 1955-1957 Thunderbirds

WATER WONDERLAND
THUNDERBIRD CLUB



Rick Charniga
Technical Director

P.O. Box 51027
Livonia, MI 48151

734.740.3556
rickcharniga@gmail.com

Send your question to my email address and I will post the question/answer in next month's newsletter.



Classic Thunderbird Maintenance Tech-Tips Cont.

Later Thunderbirds starting in 1958, were unibody design vehicles. Full frames were replaced with thicker gauge sheet metal sections at the rocker panel and rear spring hanger sections. These locations have increased structure stiffness for supporting hoist lifting. A general rule is to maintain LH & RH hoist contact point spacing under the front door pillar to the end of the rear seat roughly the length of the cockpit.



Hoist Lift Locations For All 1958-2005 Thunderbirds



Front Hoist Lift Location



Rear Hoist Lift Location




**WATER WONDERLAND
THUNDERBIRD CLUB**

Rick Charniga
Technical Director

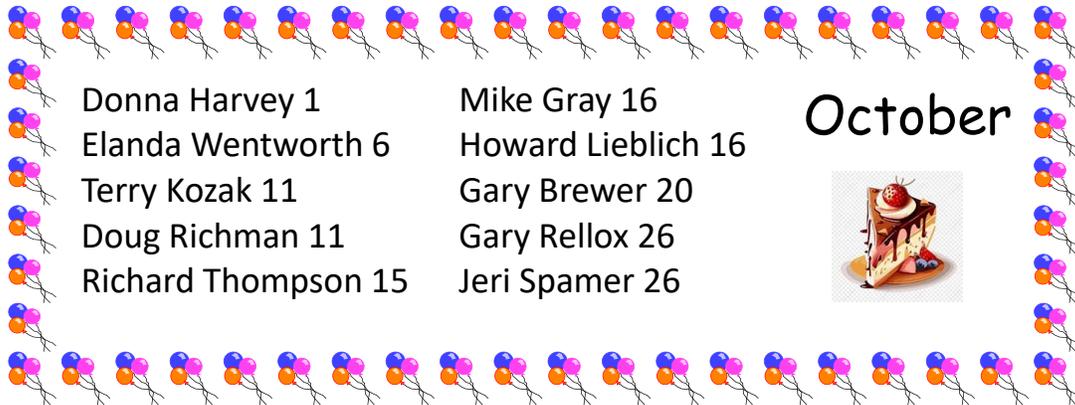
P.O. Box 51027
Livonia, MI 48151

734.740.3556
rickcharniga@gmail.com

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Bird Talk

Happy Birthday Members!



Donna Harvey 1	Mike Gray 16	October 
Elanda Wentworth 6	Howard Lieblich 16	
Terry Kozak 11	Gary Brewer 20	
Doug Richman 11	Gary Rellox 26	
Richard Thompson 15	Jeri Spamer 26	

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



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.

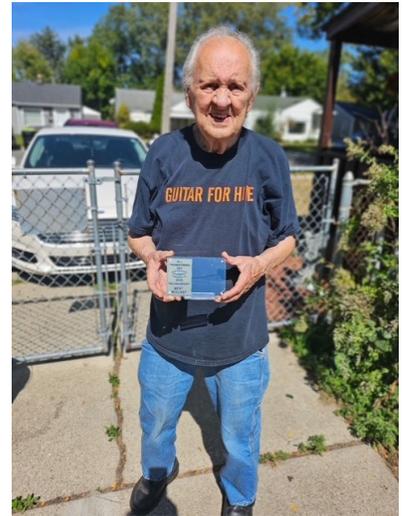
During the many years that he worked as an engineer for Chrysler, he drove many one-of-a-kind prototype automobiles and purchased several beautiful ones. However, the only one that he kept for 58 years was his beloved Ford Thunderbird. It was his dream to restore this car and keep alive a piece of their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

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

All Tbird Day 2025



Colorful car photo of our 50/50 Cash Winner Billy Tumpkin



Frank Childs Class A 1st!



Best In Show Recognition Seymour Bray



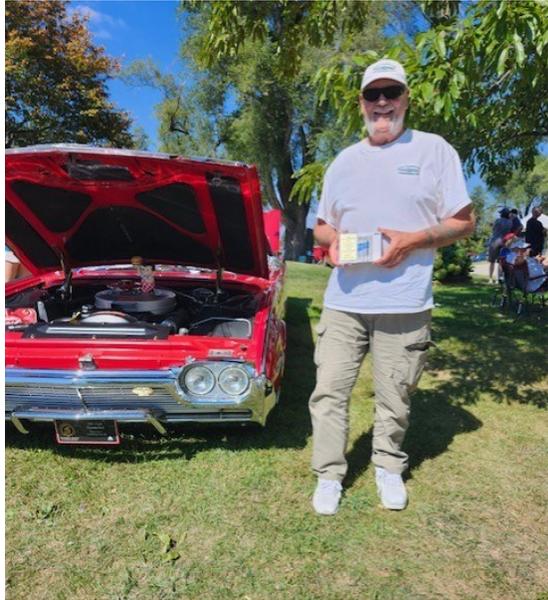
Marie Brucker recognized for 21 years of service to the WWTC Board and as Membership Chair. Congratulations!

David Miller
Class B
1st Place





George & Elaine Roscoe Class C 1st Place



Buck Carver Class D 1st Place



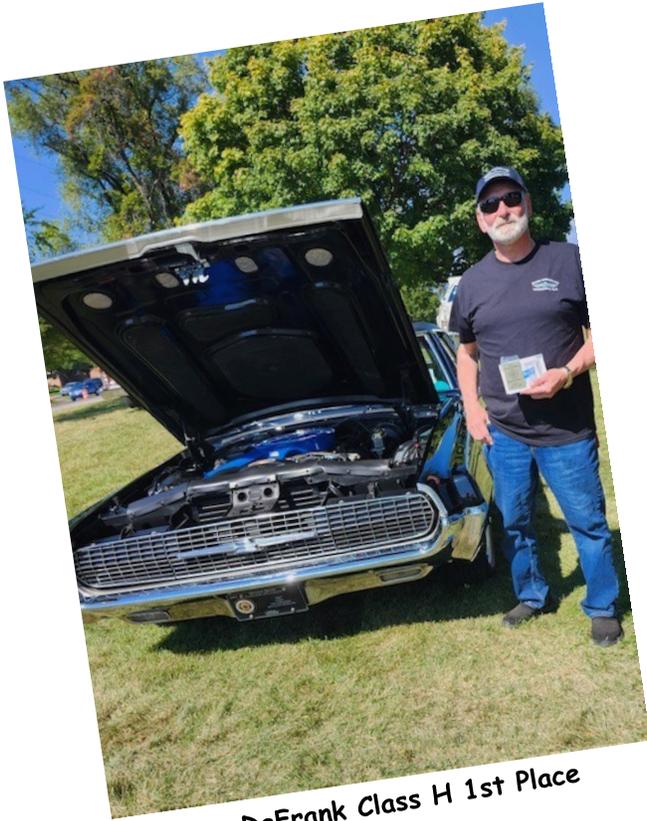
Gary Brewer Class F 1st Place



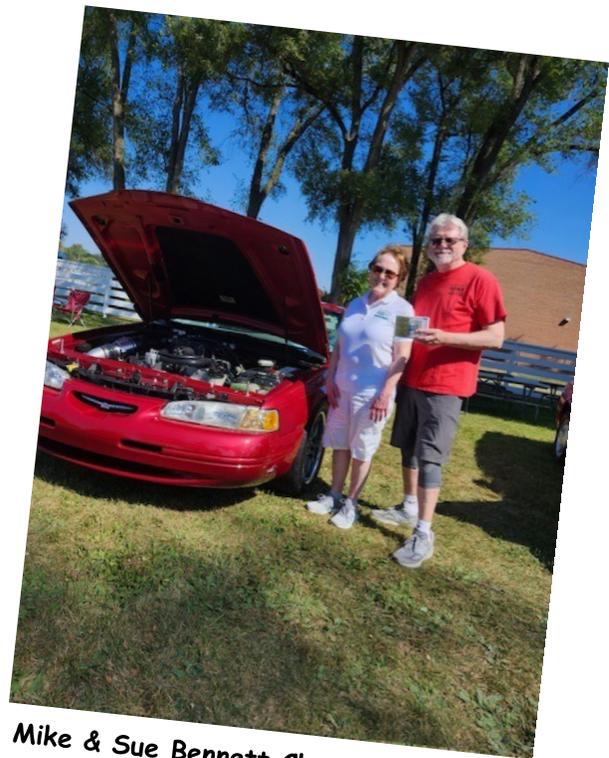
Steve & Norma Johnson Class G 1st Place



Still More Winners!



Reno DeFrank Class H 1st Place



Mike & Sue Bennett Class J 1st Place



**Brandon Antonik Class K
1st Place**

More All Third Day Memories



More ATD!



Thank You to our sponsors and especially
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General Manager Michael Sabitini and Catie Carnaghi
for being our
Top Sponsor

*Lincoln of Troy
1950 W Maple Road Troy, MI 48084

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JoAnn Rodriguez, Immediate Past President, ex officio
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Larry Seyfarth, Advisor
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larryseyfarth@yahoo.com

Don't Wait Any Longer!
Pick an event, get your Tbird
ready and join us!

We Want You!



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.

