ARIZONA CLASSIC Thunderbird CLUB

ARIZONA BIRD CHATTER

VOLUME 53 NUMBER 10 November 2024

November

Our November featured Tbird is Jim Cook's 1957. He has owned this black '57 for 18 years and has driven it 43,000 miles. Jim mentions that the car was purchased from a dealer in Missouri when he lived in Nashville, TN. The car was shipped to Nashville after the purchase and he waited impatiently for the truck to arrive with the new purchase. What a great day seeing this beautiful automobile backed out of the enclosed truck. Jim doesn't have much history on the car other than the original dealer's invoice which shows the car was delivered to Wayne Akers Ford in Lake Worth, FL on November 11, 1956. It was originally Snowshoe white with Black Raven & White Interior, equipped with power brakes & steering, radio & heater. At some point (*as best as he can tell*) the car had a frame off restoration in the mid-90's and the owner at the time had it painted black. The re-paint has held up well. However, it does have some road rash, expected from the many road trips taken in the car. In the ensuing years, repairs have been needed, as one would expect. After owning the car for 10 years, the engine and transmission were pulled out and both rebuilt, the power brake unit has been rebuilt, an alternator was installed, Chris Ames water pump-spacer and aluminum radiator installed, the pinion seal in the differential replaced, brakes shoes and wheel cylinders replaced, carb, Pertronix ignition, etc. The longest road trip taken in the car was to a TBird convention.

It was held in Knoxville, TN in 2018, when a group of fellow ACTC members drove or transported their car 4,000 miles round trip. The brave...group on this trip were Ken Falkenberry & Virginia Snyder, Jim & Carter Rodgers, Mike and Jeannie Wood & Chris Ames. We had quite a time driving through OK and TX as it rained hard, most of the way. Anyone that owns one of these cars knows they are not watertight. After bailing out the car one afternoon, Jim got creative and wedged garbage bags in the dog leg pillars between the windshield & doors to catch the excess water! You have no idea how much water was emptied from these bags. Another fun feature of driving in the rain is dealing with the vacuum wipers, who seem to work best when you don't need them and stop working when you have your foot on the gas! We had a great trip & enjoyed happy hour at the end of each day's journey. Pleased the cars did not have any breakdowns on the trip (although extra parts and tools were carried along). Owning a TBird has been an adventure in learning to keep an old car running; the best part has been the friendships developed, being part of ACTC and the help members have provided, for 20 years of membership.

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President's Desk

"The Other Side of the Porthole"

Well Car Show season is finally upon us and this weekend ACTC was at the annual Beline Cruise In in Payson. Attendees included our local members Jennifer Kiley and Bret Williams who graciously arranged for our lodging and wonderful dinners on Friday and Saturday. Jennifer showed her beautiful Dusk Rose 57 Thunderbird surrounded by pink flamingos. The lil tykes wanted to feed and play with the flamingos and Jennifer finally had to put "Do not touch" signs on them. Others making the trip to the cool pines were Don and Rosemary Henderson, Chuck and Judy Thompson, Pat Fenlon and Carter and Jim Rodgers. We were pleased to sign up two new members from the Payson area being Jim Nienaber who owns a beautiful Star mist Blue 57 and Otis Wolkins who also owns a nice 57. When was the last time the club came home from an outing with two new members? Can't remember.

I have always stated that the Lil Birds have never scored well at this show and low and behold Carter and I brought home "Best Ford" trophy and I am sure it was due to Carter's detailing that made the difference.

Backing up a week Mike Wood, Frank Saccente and yours truly attended a very HOT car show in Sun City where the blue bird took first place in her division.

>>Continued on Page-06

What's in that Tbird Trunk For Sale?

- **Ford AOD transmission/bell housing. Includes linkage for shifter, throttle, cooling lines. Bell housing fits 292 & 312 $750.00**
- **Craftsman belt sander, 4"x 36" belt & 6" Disc. (extra sandpaper) $60.00**
- **Craftsman 3D sander (extra sanding Discs) $40.00**
- **Halogen shop lights(2) on stand $25.00 (Sold)**
- **Electric car jack and impact gun kit (never used) $40.00**

Contact: Bob Michele Ph#: 602-768-5710

- **Tbird 56/57 Port Hole Hardtop, needs refurb, the glass is good and most of the chrome $ Free!**

Contact Jim Rodgers Ph# 602-300-5792

- **Ford/Tbird 1957 Shop Manual, in fair condition $12.00.**

Contact: Walt Bonneau
email waltbonneau@gmail.com

- **1957 Colonial-white Tbird, D-Code in nice condition $39,000.00 or OBO. Located in Peoria, AZ**

Contact: Mike Wood Ph# 602-568-8140

More For Sale Stuff on Page-08>>

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November

Name	Date
Otis Wolkins	11/11
Jeannie Wood	11/13
Myma Foster	11/14
Tracey Mosness	11/14
Judy Thompson	11/24

Remember to Vote on November 5th or earlier!

Sarah Josepha Hall (1806-1809)
The Godmother of America's Thanksgiving Day Holiday

November

Name	Date
Steve and Debi Ulsund	11/11
Warren and Kathleen Boles	11/22
Mike and Jeannie Wood	11/25

Interesting November Facts:

The months name derives from the Roman calendar and Latin word "novem" meaning the ninth (9) month, before January & February were added after 750 BC, then it became the 11th month of the year.

Known as the month of thanksgiving as farmers and families enjoy friends and food to share. In 1822, Sarah Josepha Hale from New Hampshire found herself a single mother of 5-children, as her husband had suddenly passed away. She got creative and earned an income suitable for her family from publishing poems and songs such as "Mary Had a Little Lamb" and in 1837, she published her "Godey's Lady's Book". She went on to be the 1st lady editor of a magazine "American Ladies' Magazine". During this period of +30 years, she had written numerous letter to U.S. Presidents, Ministers and Governors requesting the last Thursday of November to be an officially U.S. holiday, "Remembering an offering to God as tribute of joy & gratitude for the years blessings." This was to align to Native Americans' existing celebration of harvest enjoyment also shared by colonist. On October 3, 1863 in the heart of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring the last Thursday of November a National Thanksgiving Day holiday. This year it is on Thursday November 28th.

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Tech Facts

Ford/Thunderbird Air Conditioning

Provided by Walt Bonneau, contributions by: Jim Cook & Don Henderson

Ford interesting enough did not offer air conditioning in the 55, 56 or 57' Tbirds. Considering that these Tbirds were marketed as a Personal Luxury Car offering available with:

Power-seats, Power-steering, Power-windows, Telescopic Steering Column, Lifeguard Safety and the very advanced "Town & Country" radio to mention some of these features. While Ford did provide for an optional "SelectAire" air conditioning system on other Ford car models. Aftermarket PolarAire systems were offered by mid-1956 for the Tbirds. Below are vintage images of both systems. If you are going to add a new retro air conditioner system you might want to consider the following system suppliers and modification tips below:

- **It is recommended; to purchase from a well known Tbird parts supplier like Concours, CASCO, Vintage Air, Etc.,**
- **Select a R134a or if available R-454B refrigerant system,**
- **Consider an Tbird experienced AC installer because you will likely be removing the front bumper and other components,**
- **It is advised that you upgrade your 12Vdc Generator to a 12Vdc Alternator. (6Vdc will require upgrading to 12Vdc),**
- **New Alternator mounting brackets and a new pulley will be required (Can be purchased as part of a kit),**
- **Consider a new high flow aluminum radiator upgrade (Most know these Tbirds typically run hot underload),**
- **Consider an upgraded five blade clutch fan plus added electric pusher fan mounted up front of the condenser. Plus, you may consider a water pump flow spacer cover (model #A432) from Paragon Industries.**
- **Be prepared to pay $3.5K to $4.0K for an installed AC system.**

There are many such Tbirds operating successfully with ***AC and***

Sample from Concours Parts
Retro Tbird R134 AC System

Ford's optional air conditioning system "**SelectAire**"
for Fairlane and Crown Victoria 1956

Dealer Installed "**PolarAire**"
system for Tbirds in 1956/57

Historical Facts

Ford/Thunderbird

Provided by Walt Bonneau, Photos contribution by Austin Eaton

The introduction of the 1955-57 Tbirds quickly attracted celebrities of both genders and other buyers who could afford these Tbirds. The desired styling statement these cars generated made some 67-69 years ago, continues to this day. It was/is the car people want to be seen in while driving down the highways or in town. The car became a favorite for Hollywood TV series and films early-on, including a few notables: "Perry Mason" (1957), "Some Like It Hot"(1959), and later more movies/TV series: "Happy Days Pinky's" (1972), "American Graffiti"(1973), Laverne & Shirley (1976), Vega$ (1978), "Farm of the Year" (2024).

A few celebrities owners really do standout, such as Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe, as well as Shelley Fabares and Annette Funicello.

Clark Gable's Ravin-black 1955 Tbird (292 Cid) was a one of a kind at that time. It seems that he was the first well known owner to modify his 1955 Tbird by having in 1956 a McCulloch/Paxton after market Supercharger installed *Noted as a very rare and expensive factory option in 1957*). If you look carefully, the Supercharger chrome badge was placed on the rear quarter panels above the Thunderbird badge by McCullaugh not Ford. The added supercharger added around 50 additional horsepower. This options cost was pricey at $400- $450. Adding an easy 13% to the cars already high price tag. For that period.

Continued on next page > >

Historical Facts

>>Continued from page 4

Monroe used the car in her popular movie "Some Like It Hot". She was often seen either driving the car with the hardtop off or being driven by her new husband Arthur Miller. The car was also used to drive them to their wedding. It was the only car she owned in 36 years of her life and she highlighted the car as giving her a feeling of freedom and expression, she called her Ravin-black Tbird "her dream car". Today her 56' is valued at $500K.

Actors like Annette Funicello (56'), Shelley Fabares (57') and Debbie Reynolds (56') brought additional youth acceptance to the 55-57' Tbirds during the late 1950's and early 1960's celebrity scene.

Detective/Lawyer TV shows like Perry Mason and later Vega$ gave the Tbird another order of sophistication while drawing more customers/collectors attention toward Ford's 1st & 2nd generation Thunderbird. The 1958 Thunderbird "Square Bird" model was later introduced on the Perry Mason 1958 season. In 2024; "Farm of the Year" movie filmed in Iowa, highlights an original 1955 Red Tbird. This is just a small sample of celebrities who purchased or drove 55-57' Tbirds. What an amazing iconic legacy for a car that captivated the: young, not so young, wealthy and not so wealthy as well as, thousands of collectors, admirers and car designers to this very day.

Marylin Monroe 56'

Robert Urich portrayed PI Dan Tanna's 57" Tbird on Vega$

Perry Mason TV series; this new 58' Tbird makes an appearance

Perry Mason's– Detective Paul Drake 57'

Annette Funicello 57'

Shelley Fabares 57'

Audrey Hepburn 56'

Farm of the Year Movie-2024, Richard Gere & brother seating on hood 55' Tbird in Iowa

Debbie Reynolds' 56'

Not all Tbird driving experiences were pleasant. Ouch!

Recent Events

August 29th: A small gathering of the ACTC Tbird ladies went to visit long-time Tbird club member Jeanie Wood for a luncheon at her wonderful home in Peoria. A time to share a few memories and to just enjoy one another. Her husband's customized "Angry Bird" was featured in the October, 2024 newsletter. Jeanie still has her Colonial-white 57' Tbird in the garage.

Left to right: Jeanne, Virginia, Laura, Kathy and Yvonne

October 11-12th: *>> Continued from "**Other Side of the Porthole**" on Page-02*

That same weekend Tom and Yvonne Wagner along with Jennifer Kiley and Bret Williams attended the much cooler **Car show in Pine Top** taking second and third respectively and the show was also attended by Jack and Nikki Musselmann. GREAT JOB!

Folks, if your car isn't up to par let's get her fit and ready for the car show season and enjoy those wonderful Lil Birds. Until next time remember…

"IF IT RUNS DRIVE IT"!

Jim Rodgers

October 13th, 2024 ACTC Minutes

The ACTC October meeting was cancelled due to other events. Therefore, No Minutes will be published this month.

Respectfully, submitted by Yvonne Wagner

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Future Events

November, 2024:

Note: The October ACTC Meeting was cancelled due to another event that was simply too close to our originally planned meeting date. See you ALL at the November 10th Meeting!

Sun. Nov. 10th, 2024 ACTC Meeting:
American Legion Hall
20001 N. Cave Creek Rd. Phoenix
Members arrive 8:30 am-9:00 am
Breakfast served 9:30 am Cost $17/person

Sat. Nov. 30th , 2024 Day at the Pavilions:

Indian Bend Rd, west of Rte. 101 Scottsdale
Members arrive 12:00 Noon – 2:00 pm
Bring your T-Bird or other classic car.

Sat. Dec. 7th , 2024 ACTC Christmas Luncheon @ American/Italian Club

7509 N. 12 th St. Phoenix
11:30 am – 2:30 pm Italian Buffet/Cash Bar
$30.00/person (paid in advance)

Sat. Jan. 11th , 2025 ACTC "Cruise-in to Gateway Classic Cars"

23305 N. 23rd Ave. Phoenix
Arrive 8:30 am – 9:00 am
9:00 am – 12:00 noon coffee/donuts served, tour Gateway facility, hang out and enjoy the company and the cars.
FOLLOWED BY A SHORT 2 MILE CRUISE TO:
ACTC January meeting / luncheon
Barrio Brewing Company @ Deer Valley Airport
7th Ave. & Deer Valley Rd. Phoenix
12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Price TBD

Continued on Next Page>>>

PLEASE NOTE !

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Future Events

MARCH, 2025

Midnight at the Oasis's, Yuma, AZ, Car Show, March 01-03 Event

Event is now Sold Out!

www.midnightattheoasis.net

APRIL, 2025

Ford Fest 2025 at Gateway Classic Cars Scottsdale, AZ April 5th 2025. This is a Nationwide Ford Fest Car Show.

https://facebook.com/events/s/ford-fest-

PLEASE NOTE !

All dates and events listed above are tentative

What's in that Tbird Trunk For Sale?

>>Continued from Page-02

TWO LIKE NEW PIRELLI TIRES SIZE 235/50R17 $100.00 FOR THE PAIR
FITS 2002 TO 2005 RETRO BIRDS
Contact: Frank Saccente
602 725 7237

SET OF FOUR SHOW QUALITY FACTORY 1957 THUNDERBIRD HUB CAPS $160.00
Contact: Frank Saccente
602 725 7237

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Other News

ACTC Board of Directors/Officers Nomination is Open

Topic #1:

October is the assigned month for nominations of officers of ACTC. November is the month for voting for those nominated. Please contact any board member to either nominate a person or volunteer yourself for one of the following positions:

- President,
- Vice President,
- Secretary,
- Treasurer,
- Member at large,
- Ways & Means (This position has been open for two-years and needs a nomination).

It is critical for the viability of ACTC that the members participate in the running of the club.

Contact: President Jim Rodgers 602 300-5792 iAMJR1@cox.net

Vice President Bob Michele 602 768-5710 rmich1957@gmail.com

Secretary Yvonne Wagner 602 448-2962 tywagner56@msn.com

Treasurer Chuck Thompson 480 773-0222 cthompson57@cox.net

Member @ Large Bob Michele 602 768-5710 rmich1957@gmail.com

Topic #2:

The current Board of Directors are proposing that starting in 2025 ACTC will not conduct meetings during June, July & August. There will be one newsletter in July. The Board feels that with the heat during these months, vacations and snowbirds out of town, putting together meetings or events is difficult at best.

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Other News, Events & Misc.

Welcome New Member (s)

- **Otis & Judy Wolkins**
  Payson, AZ 85547

Request for Newsletter Submissions:

Contact Walt Bonneau: waltbonneau@gmail.com

All ACTC and ICTC members may submit a request to have an Event, Topic Request, Club Suggestions or Misc. (Thunderbird Related) contribution for publication consideration in the ACTC Newsletter.

T-Bird Stuff

Note: *All submissions due by the 20th of each previous month to meet the publication deadline.*

New Membership Request;

See Judy Thompson

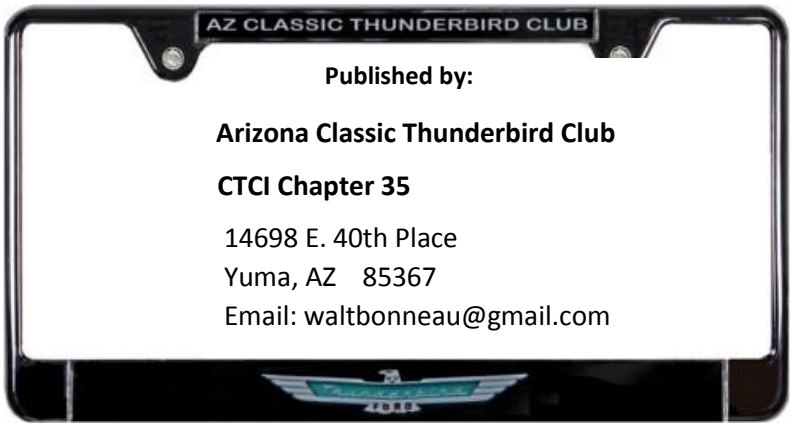
New Advertisers Welcomed;

See Walt Bonneau /Chuck Thompson

Remember All meetings are smoke and cell phone free!

NO SMOKING

Arizona Bird Chatter



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