



# Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio Newsletter



May 2024

([www.thunderbirds-sw-ohio.com](http://www.thunderbirds-sw-ohio.com))

May 12th

## MEETING MINUTES

**Call to Order:** President Scott McGaha dropped his President's gavel at 6:47 PM on Thursday, April 11th, at MCL to call the meeting to order. He greeted the 19 members and 1 guest who were present and explained the absences of some members.

**Attendees:** Those in attendance tonight included President Scott McGaha, Vice-President Mike Hall, Secretary Dave Harvey, Past President Roger & Treasurer Lisa Hamm, Mark & Jackie Allen, Brett & Peg Andrews, Larry & Jo Doelker, Adam Gulden, Jeff Almond (Jeff was introduced to our club by Adam, and he joined our chapter and paid his dues before the meeting ended), Ron Heinz, Paul Loschi, Dave & Susan Menke, Ron & Linda Prater, and Tom Tirey.

**Approval of Minutes:** Since the minutes from the March meeting had been published in the April newsletter (sent out by email at the end of last week), President Scott asked for a motion to open the floor for discussion of those minutes. The motion was made by Ron Prater and was seconded by Adam Gulden. President Scott then asked if there were any questions, concerns, corrections, comments, or anything else regarding the March minutes as posted in the most recent newsletter. There being no questions, concerns, corrections, comments, or concerns about the minutes, President Scott called for a vote to approve the minutes, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Membership Update/Discussion:** President Scott called on our newest member (who was a guest at the start of the meeting), Jeff Almond, to introduce himself to the group, and tell us a little bit about himself and his T-bird, which turns out to be a '91. Jeff was warmly welcomed to the club, and thanks go to Adam Gulden for bringing Jeff into the club. Another roster update for Brett to do! According to President Scott, this is a good problem for Brett to have.

Scott then asked if anyone had any changes to report in contact information or any other roster updates. There were none to report.

Next, President Scott asked if anyone had any Thunderbird updates (either vehicles newly acquired or recently disposed of, or work in process or recently completed). Past President Roger Hamm reported that his '78 Diamond Jubilee came home from Indianapolis recently. It had been consigned to Gateway Classic Cars several months ago, but Gateway closed down their Indianapolis showroom recently, so all cars in their showroom had to be removed.

Scott also reported that his '75 T-bird was used in a wedding last weekend in Xenia. He is negotiating for one of the professional pictures as compensation for the use of his car.

**Sunshine Committee Report:** President Scott reported our April birthdays and anniversaries (it was a sparse month for these occasions). Jay Walsh celebrated his birthday on April 4th, Ruby York celebrated her birthday on April 6th, and Owen & Carol Taylor will celebrate their anniversary later this month, on April 28th.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Lisa Hamm's report for March reflected the receipt and deposit of \$10.00 for Kyle & Necole Murphy's 2024 dues. There were no expenditures to report.

**Special Presentation:** Vice-President Mike Hall's presentation this month was on the 1963 Principality of Monaco Special Edition Thunderbird. Tom Tirey, who happens to own one of these rare cars (#1710 of 2000 made), was delighted that he had come to tonight's meeting. Tom acquired his car in 2017 and had an interesting story to tell about his recently deceased aunt and her friend, as well as how he happened to acquire the car in the first place. Tom's story was an interesting preface to the main presentation of the evening, put on by our illustrious Vice-President and Thunderbird knowledge-machine, Mike Hall. Words can't do justice to Mike's presentation, but each of his presentations is available on our web site for downloading.



Mike mentioned, as many people know, that the Principality of Monaco Special Edition was limited to a run of 2,000 cars, and they were all identical. The exterior color was Corinthian White, and the vinyl roof was done in Dark Rose Beige (the carpet, the dash, and many other interior parts used this same Dark Rose Beige). In 1962, when Ford found that Princess Grace of Monaco (the former actress Grace Kelly) was planning to return to acting after having retired due to her marriage to Rainier III, Prince of Monaco, in 1956, Ford executives saw this as a wonderful marketing opportunity for Thunderbird. Ford met with the Royal Court in Monaco and consulted with Princess Grace, giving her the opportunity to choose the colors to be used for this special car. Each car was equipped with air conditioning, leather upholstery, AM/FM radio, power steering/brakes/seats/windows/locks, Landau top, swing-away steering wheel, as well as a unique dash-mounted plaque showing the crest of Monaco and what number (out of 2000) that particular car was. These are certainly special cars! Prince Rainier was given car #0001; cars #0002 - #0019 were sent out to various auto shows throughout the country and were later sold to the public. Demand for these cars was overwhelming, and dealers couldn't move them fast enough.

To close out his presentation, Mike showed a short video of a Principality of Monaco owner being interviewed and showing off the special features of this unique Thunderbird.

Once again, special thanks to Mike for his time and effort in putting on this Principality of Monaco presentation.

Sneak peek: In commemoration of the Indianapolis 500 (held in late May), Mike's presentation next month will be on the 1961 Thunderbird Indianapolis 500 Pace Car. Be sure to come to next month's meeting, as this should be another very interesting presentation.

**Club Activities/Event Pool:** Given that the proposed club Eclipse Day event was canceled by us due to concerns over traffic, etc., and the proposed substitute joint event with the Mustang Club at the Halderman Barn Museum was canceled by the museum because of major concerns over muddy conditions, President Scott proposed that we go to breakfast at 2nd Street Market in downtown Dayton. After some discussion, it was decided that this would be our April event, with everyone meeting there around 10:00 AM or so. In addition to breakfast, Scott encouraged everyone to walk around and shop the various vendors.

As a reminder, Thunderbird Appreciation Day will be on the 3rd Sunday in May (the 19th). Although not yet tied into that date specifically, we will be holding a doughnut run around that date, either Saturday or Sunday (depending on the forecast). Scott and Brett are organizing this event.

The Troy Strawberry Festival will hold a car show, as usual, on Sunday, June 2nd. This could be a good club event if we could have several people enter their Thunderbirds.

July's event will be a Covered Bridge tour - more details to follow.

August's event will be a trip to the Garst Museum/Annie Oakley Museum on Saturday, the 10th. Jackie & Mark Allen will be organizing this event.

Also, in August (on Saturday the 24th), Mike Hall will be organizing a club outing to Hot Summer Nights in Bellefontaine, OH. The outing will consist of a parade and a car show.

September has several events that should be of interest to our members: Dayton Concours d'Elegance (September 15th); WACO Fly-In (September 21st & 22nd, with a car show on the 22nd); Fairlane & Torino Club meet (September 29th, Ron Heinz); Tipp City Mum Festival (September 28th & 29th, with a car show to kick the event off on Friday evening, the 27th).

**Old Business:** President Scott mentioned again the St. Leonard's Summer Cruise In. The Miami Valley Car Club (MVCC) had previously organized/sponsored this event but is no longer able to do so. Since there had been some interest in this shown at our last meeting, Scott will reach out to St. Leonard's and will select the date. St. Leonard's typically does the promotion of this since it's primarily for the benefit of their residents.

There was discussion about participating as a club in the Air Show parade held in Vandalia on Friday, June 21st. If we definitely want to do this, a final decision must be made at our next (May) meeting.

**New Business:** Scott cautioned everyone to be careful about email scams. There were some recent attempts to get members to fork over money to scamsters using fake emails from "President Scott." Beware!!

## Calendar of Events:

Our next club meeting will be on May 9th at our usual location, MCL Cafeteria (with dinner at 5:45 PM, followed by our meeting at 6:45 PM).

### One-time events:

Carlisle Ford Nationals, Carlisle, PA - May 31st - June 2nd.

VTCI International Convention, Grand Rapids, MI - August 7th - 11th.

### Recurring events:

Cars & Coffee at Horsepower Farm from 8:00 AM to noon (1st Saturday of each month, year around).

Cars & Coffee at Liberty Center from 8:00 AM to noon (3rd Saturday of each month from May - October).

Dayton Cars & Coffee at Austin Landing from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM (generally the 4th Saturday of each month, April - October, although it moves to the 3rd Saturdays in July and August, and to the 2nd Saturday in September, in order to coordinate with the Dayton Concours d'Elegance, which will be the next day).

Springfield Cars & Coffee in downtown Springfield (generally 9:00 AM to noon on the 1st Saturday of each month, April - September: exceptions are June 1st, 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM, and August 3rd, 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM).

30th Annual Hot Rod Power Tour (expecting nearly 6,000 cars) will be held from June 10th through June 14th. It will launch this year in Bowling Green, KY. Day 2 it will move to Nashville, TN. On day 3, the tour migrates to Louisville, KY. On day 4, it moves to Hebron, OH, and finally concludes on day 5 in Indianapolis, IN. Visit <https://www.motortrend.com/events/hot-rod-power-tour-2024-route-announcement/> for more details.

**Open Floor:** Brett mentioned that on April 27th there will be a car show at Horsepower Farm, and the lady who sells the Show-N-Shine calendars will be there.

**Adjournment:** There being no other business to be addressed, President Scott called for a motion for adjournment. The motion was offered by Brett Andrews and seconded by new member Jeff Almond. With a rap of the gavel, President Scott declared the meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM EST.

*Scott McGaha*  
President

**Birthdays & Anniversaries in May:** We're celebrating two birthdays and two anniversaries this month. Happiest birthday and anniversary wishes to our celebrants.



**May Birthdays**  
James Russell (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Sherry Loschi (10<sup>th</sup>)

**May Anniversaries**  
Dave & Deb Harvey (30<sup>th</sup>)  
(36 yrs)  
Jeff & Gale Conrad (30<sup>th</sup>)  
(33 yrs)



Springtime May Greetings fellow TSWO members!

As many of you know, our longtime TSWO newsletter editor, Brett Andrews, is continuously asking, begging, pleading, and even cajoling us to submit articles about our personal Thunderbird experiences for the sharing with and enjoyment of everyone in the club.

Well, here goes my first stab at it . . .

I cannot provide any documentation or other evidence to back this claim up, but I believe my brother, Todd, may be the youngest person to ever take a **1966 Thunderbird** on a solo test drive.

The year was 1968 or 1969, which means I would have been about 5 or 6 years old and my brother would have been about 3 or 4. It was a warm, summer weekend and my parents had loaded my sister (Lisa), brother, and me into the back seat of the family Olds F-85 for the 90-minute trip from Louisville to Leitchfield, KY for a weekend visit with our maternal grandparents, Mamaw and Papaw Boone. This was something we did frequently year-round. Either we made the trip down to Grayson County, or our grandparents made the trip up to Louisville for an overnight weekend visit - many, many happy childhood memories of those family visits.

On this particular weekend, my parents and grandparents decided to pack a picnic lunch to take out to Rough River Dam Resort State Park located on the northwest edge of Grayson County. I imagine it would have taken quite a bit of space to pack picnic food and supplies for 7 people, but between our family 4-door Oldsmobile and the cavernous trunk of Papaw's '66 Ford Thunderbird, 2-door hardtop in Wimbledon White with Silver Mink interior, we got 'er done.

After the picnic was over, I was feeling a little irritable, or so I've been told. My father was trying to talk me into laying down on the corner of the picnic blanket to take a little nap. But I wasn't having any of that because the sweat bees were buzzing about and I didn't want any of them landing on me while I was asleep. So, my father suggested instead that I go lay down in the back seat of Papaw's Thunderbird where the sweat bees wouldn't be able to get me. Now, my brother and sister and I *never* missed an opportunity to get in Papaw's Thunderbird because even at our tender, young ages, we thought Papaw had the *coolest car!*

We were picnicking on the grass on the high side of the park access road, with the family Olds parked along the same side of the road, facing downhill towards the lake. Papaw's Thunderbird was parked on the opposite side of the road, facing uphill. There was a storm drainage ditch dug along the nearside of the roadway to divert rainwater coming off the hill from flowing over the asphalt and leaving mud and gravel on the road after a rainstorm. It was a bit of a leap for my 5- or 6-year-old legs to make across this ditch to get onto the access road, but the goal of getting to the back seat of the Thunderbird on the other side of the road was inspiration enough for me to succeed.

Eventually, my brother realized I had disappeared, and when he asked, "Where's Squatty at?" Someone told him to look across the road at Papaw's Thunderbird to see if he could find me. All four windows had been powered down to keep the car cool in the summer temperatures, and when my brother saw me sitting in the back seat, he was determined to join me. At first however, the drainage ditch proved a little more than his 3- or 4-year-old toddler frame could overcome. This made sitting in the back seat of Papaw's Thunderbird all the more enjoyable for me.

Eventually Todd somehow figured out a way across the drainage ditch and climbed into the driver's seat of the Thunderbird and proceeded to stand up in the seat and pretend to be driving me around the lake. This naturally irritated me because I was supposed to be (pretending to be) lying down in the passenger seat behind him to take a nap. I kept telling him to be quiet and get out of the car because only I was supposed to be in Papaw's Thunderbird. But he pretended to have suddenly forgotten how to understand English as he jerked on the steering wheel and did his impression of the sound made by a Ford 390 cu. in. V-8 engine. At some point, I can only assume he intended to make a right-hand turn but being only 3 or 4 at the time and not knowing his left from his right yet, instead of reaching for the turn signal stalk on the left side of the wheel, he grabbed the transmission lever on the right side and pulled down with all his toddler might. Steering column locks were eventually to become a standard feature on all American made cars, but in 1966 that was not even an available option. My brother managed to pull the car out of Park and into Neutral, and we began to move, slowly at first, downhill toward the lake - in reverse.

When I felt the car moving, I sat up in the back seat to see what was happening. I saw lots of commotion on the hillside across the road - everyone was moving about and voices were raised in alarm. I saw my father coming down off the hill toward us and felt assured he would know what to do. But, unfortunately, in his haste he misjudged the drainage ditch and his first step onto the roadway sent him sprawling onto the asphalt with a bloody knee as the outcome. His ungainly fall provided all the delay we needed to gain enough speed to squelch all hope of being rescued from anyone on the hilltop.

As I watched my family recede into the distance, my brother somehow - I know not to this day whether it was innate skill or just dumb, toddler luck - steered us in a graceful arc, in reverse, across the field on the other side of the roadway. He managed to avoid all other cars, trees, boulders, and park visitors on the other side.

Papaw's Thunderbird rolled to a gentle stop in a shallow depression in the field across the roadway, approximately 100 yards from our starting point. A recent summer rain had left some standing water in this area, which resulted in the back wheels of the car being in water up to the bottom few inches of the standard hubcaps that Papaw purchased for his Thunderbird. Despite the standing water, my grandfather was able to open the driver's side door and enter the car without getting his feet or pantlegs

wet. No water entered the inside of the car either. He started the car up and drove us back up the hill to our picnic area and awaiting family members.

Needless to say, the picnic was over by this point, and everyone was packing up to go back to my grandparent's house, and shortly thereafter my brother and sister and I were once more in the back seat of the Olds F-85 on I-65 north heading back home to Louisville. I assumed at the time the abrupt ending to the weekend festivities was due to the scare my brother gave everyone with his impromptu joyride in Papaw's Thunderbird.

It wasn't until years - no, **decades** later - sometime around 2010 or 2011, after I had purchased my own 1966 Ford Thunderbird, 2-door hardtop in Wimbledon White with light blue interior, that I was reliving that story with my mother. She confirmed the picnic was indeed over after my brother took off unexpectedly in Papaw's Thunderbird, with me as his unwilling passenger. But it was not because of our misbehavior. She said it was because as she stood there on the hillside screaming for someone to do something to save her two youngest children, she overheard her mother cry out, "Ohh n-o-o-o-o, my car-r-r-r-r!!!" Upon hearing this, my mom turned to her mother and said, "Your **car!**!?? My **kids** are in that car!" And that is why the picnic abruptly ended.

Now, in my grandmother's defense, I think she correctly assessed the situation, in the heat of the moment, and came to the realization that she had a fairly good chance of more grandchildren coming her way. And sure enough, as the 60s rolled into the 70s, two more grandchildren would come into her life, thanks to my mom's sister, Aunt June. She had a total of 6 grandchildren that she poured her love onto before her untimely death due to colon cancer at age 60 in 1975. But in that particular moment in time, as she watched her car roll toward what she no doubt believed was certain destruction, she knew her chance of owning another brand new 1966 Thunderbird, in Wimbledon white with Silver Mink interior, was not likely to happen again.

Oh, and did I mention I was always her favorite?

*Scott*



## Cruisin' with the Birds to the Second Street Market



With the relatively short notice of the cancellation of the Mustang Appreciation Day Cruise-in at the Gale Halderman Barn Museum in Brandt, Ohio on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, Scott proposed a trip to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Market in Dayton for breakfast, shopping, and listening to some live music. So, on that sunny Saturday morning twelve club members (Scott McGaha, Dave Harvey, Lisa & Roger Hamm, Brett & Peg Andrews, Mark & Jackie Allen, Larry & Jo Doelker, Dave Menke, and Paul Loschi, and six Thunderbirds gathered at this popular weekend spot. With a beautiful day

expected, the place soon became crowded. As expected, members visited the various booths, sampled many tasty goodies, and windowed shopped to their hearts content. It wasn't long before our group moved several tables together with some of us enjoying breakfast or pastries and fresh brewed coffee as we exchanged stories and listened to the music performed by a young man and woman. After a few hours, we reached the end of our time together as members were off to other activities for the day. See more pictures on our website. Sorry we didn't capture photos of all our attendees.





# A Little-Known Glamour Bird

(By: Mike Hall & Brett Andrews)



At our March 15, 2024 club meeting Mike Hall once again gave a riveting presentation. As was his February presentation on the stainless-steel 1960 Thunderbird, so too this presentation was about a little known, but very elegant looking 1967 GlamourBird known as the Thunderbird "Apollo". Just like our article on the stainless steel 1960 Thunderbird published

in our April Newsletter, this writing uses Mike's briefing materials as a baseline and embellishes upon it with supplemental information obtained from various online sources. Again, due to newsletter space constraints all the photos in Mike's original PowerPoint presentation could not be included. However, his original briefing slides, and the accompanying video, can be viewed on our club website under "Items of Interest".

On to the genesis of the Apollo. In 1966 Abercrombie and Fitch wanted to increase traffic through the showrooms in their five "flagship" stores in Miami, West Palm Beach, Chicago, San Francisco, and New York, so they commissioned Ford Motor Company to make a "concept" car that would help accomplish that objective. Serendipitously, at this same time, Ford was looking to upscale the first year (1967) of their 5<sup>th</sup> generation Thunderbird, the GlamourBird, in an attempt to increase the attraction gap between it and the rest of Ford's full-size lineup such as the 1965 LTD.

To satisfy the Abercrombie and Fitch request, Ford sent five fully equipped '67 Thunderbirds, all painted an exclusive Apollo Blue with a metallic blue vinyl roof, to their long-time customizer, the Dearborn Steel



Tubing Company. Four of the cars were Q-code 428-powered and one was a Z-code 390 (the Chicago car). They were all loaded with just about every available Thunderbird option. The speculated estimated cost for the conversion was \$15,000 per unit which would be about \$137,000 in 2022 dollars.

Modifications to the interior included (1) a custom-built full-length center console which contained a radio-

telephone, a Philco color TV, and dual reading lamps, (2) a power adjustable headrest and footrest for the front seat passenger, and (3) folding tray tables fitted on the back of the front seats for the rear passengers. A men's electric shaver was also included in the package. The seats were covered with a special dark blue leather.



The Apollo's exterior sported some unique features such as (1) a sunroof that Ford wanted to showcase, their first since 1960, which would not be available to T-Bird buyers until the 1969 model, (2) exterior emblems and badging that was gold plated (i.e. grille mounted Thunderbird, side roof scroll, scripts, etc.), (3) trunk lid mounted radio and TV antennas, (4) a quartz fog light, (5) custom-made wheel covers, (6) cornering lights, and (7) a front-end mounted road ice detector.



It was the intent of Abercrombie and Fitch to resell the Apollos after they had completed their show-car duties, so they were built more as custom cars than concepts cars complete with VIN and titles. They believed since there were no powertrain modifications, transfer of the factory warranty to the next buyer should be easy.

Of the five Apollos produced, the one destined for San Francisco was destroyed in transit. The remaining four went on display in their respective stores for the 1967 holiday shopping season and were sold off around the end of the year. It has been reported that both Florida cars have been accounted for, and the New York car may have surfaced, but has yet to be confirmed. The Chicago car, the one with the 390 V-8, appeared in 1989 with a relatively recent repaint at the Kruse Auburn auction, where it was bought for \$5,800. The owner ended up parking it. For another 10 years it stayed largely unused in his garage until a relative asked about it. The owner told him he could have the car if he got it running and out of his garage. Wow, what a freebee!



## Do You Know the Difference?

(by: Brett Andrews)

While on the internet recently, I stumbled across something I didn't know and should have. As a retired Vietnam veteran with 22 years in the active-duty Air Force and a total of 42 years in the Department of Defense, I'm embarrassed to admit I wasn't totally aware of the difference in the four special military holidays we celebrate each year. I have reminded folks on several occasions in our club newsletter of the purpose of Memorial Day, which occurs on the last Monday in May, and Veteran's Day which is celebrated on November 11<sup>th</sup>. In a recent newsletter I highlighted Vietnam Veterans Day which is celebrated on March 29<sup>th</sup>. However, I've never addressed Armed Forces Day which falls on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May and is the culmination of Armed Forces week which begins on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in May. I had heard of Armed Forces Day, but never really paid much mind until I read the below article which educated me on the differences in three of these four special days. Since we will be observing Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day this month, I thought it appropriate to share with you some insights on those differences. To do so, I have reprinted a short article as it appeared in the below included web link. The wording has

not been changed in any way; only the format has been modified for inclusion in our newsletter and highlights have been added for emphasis.

## “Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Armed Forces Day: What's the Difference?”

[Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Armed Forces Day: What's the Difference?](#)



[Day, and Armed Forces Day: What's the Difference?](#) (marineparents.com)

While Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Armed Forces Day acknowledge the service and sacrifices of our military members, it's essential to understand the difference between these important days.

Veterans are often thanked for their service on Memorial Day and during the holiday weekend when we should be honoring our fallen heroes who died in service to our country. Some veterans will politely acknowledge your appreciation and continue with their day. Some will gently remind you that today is not about them. Some may show frustration for your not understanding the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

*"As a Marine veteran, while it's unacceptable to be rude, it is acceptable to correct somebody so that they understand the difference. Veterans are thanked for their service frequently, but for one day every year, we should focus on those who sacrificed everything for this country." -- David Ogden, Marine Veteran*

### Memorial Day

Memorial Day honors Americans who died while in military service. It's a day that allows us to remember our fallen heroes. This federal holiday was formerly known as Decoration Day and was first enacted to honor Union and Confederate soldiers after the Civil War. At the end of World War I, it was extended to honor Americans who have died in all wars.

### Veterans Day

Veterans Day is a public holiday observed each year on November 11, the anniversary of the end of World War I. It is a day for honoring military veterans, that is, persons who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Veterans Day replaced Armistice Day in 1954.

### Armed Forces Day

Thanks to President Harry S. Truman, we also have Armed Forces Day, a military day of recognition that occurs on the third Saturday in May. While this is a lesser-known day, this is the day to honor those currently serving in the U.S. military."

**Armed Forces Day: May 18<sup>th</sup>**



**Memorial Day: May 27<sup>th</sup>**

In Memory of America's Armed Forces

*For all who gave their yesterdays, a thank you today - on this Memorial Day.*



# What's Happening



Join us in celebrating [Thunderbird Appreciation Day](#), as we parade our classic T-birds through our local communities to multiple shops on our ever-popular "Donut Run". Plans for this event will be finalized at our 9 May meeting and route maps will be provided via e-mail.



Come enjoy the festivities with your fellow T-bird enthusiast at this year's VTCI International Convention being held in Grand Rapids, Michigan at the Grand Rapids Double Tree Hotel. In addition to all the beautiful cars, trips are planned to the Gilmore Car Museum, Meijer Sculpture Gardens, and the Gerald Ford Museum. See the VTCI website at [www.vintagethunderbirdclub.net](http://www.vintagethunderbirdclub.net) for further information and registration forms.



## Mother's Day

To all the TSWO mothers,  
may you be blessed on this your most special day



### CLUB OFFICERS

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