

Thunder Words



July 2026, Volume 49 #7

Dedicated to the 55, 56, & 57 Thunderbird
Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club



Prez Says: We had a good turnout at our June meeting despite the one time change to a Wednesday evening. I hope everyone got the notice about the change and we didn't have members coming to an empty room on Thursday night! Please check the calendar of events in this newsletter for the car shows in July and August that are club events. Hopefully the weather will cooperate, and we can have a good turnout of cars. Start cleaning and waxing your Bird now to get ready for these shows. Also check the minutes for details about an October garage tour of the Steffens's T-Bird collection and the plans for our November Friendsgiving dinner. Let's have a good turnout at our July 16 meeting in Waverly.

Martin Bierman, President

Next Event
Ashland Stir-Up Days
Car Show
July 19, 2026
9 am - 12 pm Registration
At Lee Sapp Dealership

2026 Meeting Dates:
Waverly – March – May – July – Sept. – Dec.
19 21 16 17 17
Omaha – April - June - Aug. - Oct.
16 18 20 15
November Friendsgiving - TBD

Next
Business Meeting
July 16, 2026
6:00 PM
Waverly, NE



www.Nebraskalandtbirds.org
<https://www.facebook.com/nebraskatbirds/>
Sponsored by Lee Sapp Ford



Minutes of the Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club, June 2026



Secretary's report

President Bierman called the meeting to order at the Coffee Kettle Café in Omaha at 6:10 p.m., June 17. Eleven members and 4 T-Birds were present.

Minutes- The minutes of May's meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter with a motion by **Joel Hutchins** and second by **Jack Sanford**.

Treasurer's Report- Jeff Brown reported on the checking account balance and no bills were submitted for payment.

Old Business- No June club events were submitted to date. The Ashland Nebraska car show July 19 will be a club event. Registration begins on the main street of Ashland at 9 a.m. with a \$20 fee. **Jack Sanford** will contact Lee Sapp about saving some car spaces in front of his Ford dealership. August 9th we will do the Valley Days Car Show. A joint Nebraskaland and Hawkeye Classic Thunderbird Club meeting was proposed as a garage tour of the **Steffens's** T-Bird collection in Wiota, Iowa on October 11. More details will be provided after discussion with the Hawkeye Club. **Jack Sanford** has reserved a private room at Sean O'Casey's Pub November 21, 6 pm. for our Friendsgiving dinner. The Pub is located in Omaha at 2523 So.140th Ave. The menu is reasonable and will be provided later. The club will likely provide appetizers for the group again.

New Business- Renea Steffens reported on the status of the joint CTCI/VTCL Convention in Flagstaff, AZ September 9-12. She reported that CTCI will no longer be participating in the join event due to low number of CTCI registrations.

Bragg Box- Martin Bierman's granddaughter is getting married in August and his nephew is getting married in June. **Jack Sanford's** granddaughter graduated from UNO in social studies and has a job at one of the local high schools. He also had his brakes repaired at Brakes Plus and they are working fine now. **Joel Hutchins's** 1957 T-Bird's cooling system has been repaired, and his car is running well.

Don Indra reported that his T-Bird will be painted by the end of the year. He also said the Northeast Community College will be closing its car restoration program.

Adjournment - 7:11 p.m. with motion by **Larry Dawes** and second by **Jeff Brown**.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Bierman.



Jack, Marty, Mary Lou, Gail, Renea, Scott, Jeff, Larry Neil, Don, Joel





TECH TALK

Soft Top Fold Down Instructions

1. Clean the window inside and out (every time you put it down). 2. Loosen all clamps. 3. Make sure the rear clamp handles are turned back to their "locked" position parallel to the window. 4. Lift the back of the top up slightly from the rear deck. 5. Spread a large beach towel (or similar) out on the rear deck and under the rear bow of the top. 6. Unzip the window and lay it down on the towel. 7. Fold the towel up over the window so it covers it completely. 8. Lift the front of the top from the windshield header and start lowering it. 9. Pull all of the material out from the pinch points as the top folds down (really work at this, no material in the pinch points). 10. Release the over-center braces just above the side clamps. 11. Continue to fold the top down and continue to pull ALL material out of the pinch points. 12. **Again**, inspect all pinch points and clear the material from them. 13. Lift the entire top assembly from the rear deck and swing it down behind the seat. 14. **If** you have a drop curtain you will have to move it out of the way for step 13. 15. Carefully work the top behind the seat; it will drag on the wind laces, so it takes a little maneuvering to make it fit.

Take your time and do it right. Cleaning the window gets any dust off of it so it won't get scratched. Unzipping it allows it to hang straight down without a fold. All of these are critical to keep from damaging the window and not allowing the material to get caught in the folding mechanism.

Author Unknown

Marty Bierman



DID YOU NOTICE??

Notice all the numbers 10-120 have their base toward the center of the speedometer; however, 130 & 140 have their base toward the outside.

The same on the clock and tachometer, some of the numbers are based toward the center, but the bottom

numbers are based towards the outside.



Taken from August 2025 Trail Birds of Southwest Florida, LLC and The Hawkeye July 2026.

Dear CTCI Members,

The Board would like to provide a brief update regarding recent events involving a small group of former members who have continued to make claims about CTCI and its leadership.

Earlier this year, several individuals stopped participating in Board meetings and took actions that violated CTCI's Operating Policies & Procedures (OP&P). Under those longstanding rules, certain actions result in immediate and automatic termination of membership. This is not a Board vote or a disciplinary action — it is simply how the rules apply to every member.

Two of the former members served on the OP&P/Bylaws Committee last year and were responsible for reviewing these rules. They never raised concerns about the automatic-termination provisions or the quorum definitions they now challenge. These individuals acknowledged that they had agreed among themselves not to attend the properly noticed January 5th Board meeting for the purpose of preventing a quorum and obstructing the Board's ability to conduct business. Under OP&P §2.6.7, refusing to attend a properly noticed meeting without valid cause automatically terminates membership, and their coordinated refusal triggered that provision. As a result, their memberships ended before the January 5th meeting began. The January 5th meeting was attended by all active directors, and a quorum existed under the bylaws.

To ensure full compliance, the Board placed "Governance Matters" on the agenda for the January 16th meeting and provided notice to all individuals involved. All were given the opportunity to attend, speak, and present any information they wished. None of the individuals involved attended the January 16th meeting.

At that meeting, the Board formally recorded the automatic termination that had already occurred and updated CTCI's records accordingly. Because membership is required to serve on the Board, their Board positions ended at the same time. No vote was taken to remove them; the rules themselves dictated the outcome.

Despite this, these former members have continued to present themselves as if they still hold authority within CTCI. They do not. Their memberships ended under the very rules they were responsible for reviewing, and they no longer have any role in the governance of the organization.

CTCI has filed its formal response in federal court, confirming that:

- These individuals were not members or directors when they filed their claims
- The January 5th Board meeting was properly called and conducted
- All Board actions this year were within the authority of CTCI's governing documents

CTCI continues to operate normally. The Board remains focused on protecting the organization, its finances, and its long-term stability. We will keep the membership informed as appropriate.

For those members who are interested in more detail, please go to [CTIC-Governance](#)

Thank you for your continued support of CTCI. **CTCI Board of Directors**





A "quarter anniversary, most 250th anniversary of independence in 2026.

millennial" marks a 250-year notably the United States'

The term **quarter millennial** refers to a 250-year milestone, also known as a **semi quincennial** or **sester centennial**. In the United States, this term is used to describe the **250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence**, which will be celebrated on **July 4, 2026**. This milestone follows previous major anniversaries, including the centennial in 1876, the sesquicentennial in 1926, and the bicentennial in 1976.

2026 Calendar of Events

July 4 – National Holiday – A Day to put that T-Bird in one of the many parades.

July 11 – Fremont Car Show 8-4 PM - Registration \$25 (www.johncfremontdays.org) – CCB pages 39-116

July 16 – 6:00 PM Bus. Mtg. Track Side Bar and Grill – 13901 Guildford 7, Waverly, NE

July 19 – Ashland Stir Up Days – 9-3 PM – Registration \$20 (visitashland.org) – CCB pages 41-123

August 9 – Valley Days Car Show – 9-3 PM Registration \$20 (valleydays.net) – CCB page 44

August 30th – Vintage Wheels at the Fort – 10 – 2 PM – Free Registration – Vintage Vehicles 1900 – 1970 only
30th & Fort Street, Omaha, NE.

September 9-13 – VTCI Thunderbird International Convention* - Flagstaff, AZ

September 18 – Fast Cars & Freedom benefit for the Museum of Speed – Victory Lane, Omaha – See flyer pages 9 & 10
Special Guest Al Unser, Jr. – Single ticket - \$150.00

October 11 – Joint Event with the Hawkeye Club – Wiola, IA – Save the date – Details to follow

November 21 – Friendsgiving Dinner – Sean O'Casey's Pub - Save the Date – Details to follow

The July event at the **Ashland Stir Up Days** needs to be a RSVP type. We need a count to save enough places in front of Lee's Ford Dealership, 1602 Silver ST. At this writing Lee Sapp has not been contacted as he is on vacation. We have our Business Meeting on July 16th, and this date will be the cut-off date for replies. Contact Jack at jesanford@cox.net – text - 402-578-3743.

Thunderbirds at the June Meeting



Joel Hutchins' 1957



Scott and Renea Steffens' 1993



Jack's '56 and Marty & Mary Lou's '55



Third Generation Thunderbird

The **third generation of the Ford Thunderbird** is a [personal luxury car](#) produced by [Ford](#) for the 1961 to 1963 model years. It featured new and much sleeker styling (done by Bill Boyer) than the [second generation models](#). Sales were strong, if not quite up to record-breaking 1960, at 73,051 including 10,516 convertibles. A new, larger 390 cu in (6.4 L) [FE-series V8](#) was the only engine available (in 1961). The Thunderbird was 1961's [Indianapolis 500 pace car](#), and featured prominently in [US President John F. Kennedy's](#) inaugural parade, probably aided by the appointment of Ford executive [Robert McNamara](#) as [Secretary of Defense](#).

1961

The Thunderbird for 1961 introduced several firsts for the automotive market. The most distinctive feature of the 1961 to 1963 Thunderbirds was the highly touted 'Swing Away' steering wheel. With the steering-column-installed transmission gear selector in the park position the steering wheel would slide approximately 18 inches (460 mm) to the right allowing the driver to exit the vehicle easily. To prevent accidents, this disabled the gear selector until the steering wheel was returned to the center position. Other innovations include a floating rear view mirror, directly attached to the inside of the windshield. Several standard features, such as power steering and power brakes, back up lights, and bucket seats, were costly options on most other automobiles of the time. Model options included air conditioning, power windows, power seats, AM radio, fender skirts, and white wall tires. In luxury and performance, the third generation Thunderbird briefly saw competition from the [Studebaker Avanti](#), before its production ended in 1963. The [Chrysler 300G](#) was also a powerful [personal luxury car](#) rival during 1961.

For 1961 the listed retail price, before optional equipment, was US\$4,170 (\$44,927 in 2025 dollars). A total of 62,535 were built.



Thunderbird hardtop



Thunderbird convertible



1961
Ford

1961 Ford Thunderbird convertible interior with "Swing-Away" steering wheel

1962

1962 Ford Thunderbird Landau coupe

The 1962 model year saw strong sales figures of 78,011 units (including 9,884 convertibles).

A high-performance option for 1962 added "Tri power" – three 2-barrel carburetors – to a higher-compression version of the 390 engine. It used 406 heads as well as the same carburetors that were found on the high-performance 406-powered [Ford Galaxie](#), but with a modified version of the intake manifold to allow for proper air flow under the engine.



This special engine code ([VIN](#) engine code M) option was quietly discontinued halfway through the mid 1963 production run.

Also introduced in 1962 was the [Landau](#) model, with a [vinyl roof](#) and simulated S-bars on the rear pillars. This was the beginning of the 1960s/1970s fashion for vinyl roof treatments, and a vinyl roof remained a popular Thunderbird feature for the next 20 years.

In addition, the 1962 model year saw the introduction of the Thunderbird Sports Roadster, a limited production version of the convertible which added 48 spoke Kelsey-Hayes designed wire wheels, special badges to the front fenders and a passenger side grab bar to the front dashboard. The most striking addition to the Sports Roadster was a fiberglass tonneau cover which covered the back seat of the car and created a two-seater appearance. 1,427 Sports Roadsters were produced in 1962, including 120 models with the special M Code option. Early models suffered from problems related to their specially designed wire wheels. The problem was quickly corrected when [Elvis Presley](#) was involved in an accident in which one of the Kelsey-Hayes wheels collapsed during hard turning.



1963

1963 Ford Thunderbird Landau

Changes for 1963 were relatively remote driver's side mirror vacuum assisted door locks and as options.

That year's sale numbers were units. The Landau became the after the standard hardtop, at simulated wood grain interior landau top. In addition, a Limited of [Monaco](#) Landau model was roof with Corinthian White



mild. An AM radio and a became standard, while an [AM/FM radio](#) were added

somewhat down, at 63,313 second most important model 12,193 sold. Landaus added trim to go along with the Edition "Principality introduced. This Maroon vinyl exterior body with a white

leather interior, dark red carpeting with rosewood dashboard applique instead of the stainless-steel insert was personalized with a plaque displaying the owner's name and the car's limited production number, was limited to and sold only 2,000 units. Only 5,913 convertibles and 455 Sports Roadsters sold, indicating a decline in convertible popularity at the time.

Production totals

Year	Production ^[11]
1961	73,051
1962	78,011
1963	63,313
Total	214,375





FAST CARS
& Freedom

AN EVENING BENEFITING THE
MUSEUM OF AMERICAN SPEED

Join us at Victory Lane in Omaha for an evening of great food, exciting auctions, unforgettable experiences, and

plenty of automotive excitement – all in support of the
Museum of American Speed!

At the event you will be surrounded with the sights, sounds,
and spirit of America's rich automotive heritage.

Featuring Special Celebrity guest: Two-Time Indianapolis
Winner, **Al Unser, Jr.**

Event Date: September 18th, 2026

Event Location: 20121 Oak St., Omaha, NE 68130

Time: 6pm–10pm

Doors open at 5pm for VIP Guests!

Get your Tickets Today!





On this day, July 4th, 1776:

Thirteen colonies make a break from Britain

The 13 American colonies throw off British rule as Philadelphia's Continental Congress announces a new nation made up of united states. The anniversary of this Declaration of Independence, ratified one year into the Revolutionary War, will continue to be celebrated in the US as Independence Day.

Notable celebration

The first organized Independence Day celebrations were held in Philadelphia and Boston in 1777. In Philadelphia the festivities included fireworks and bell ringing. In honor of the 13 colonies, a fleet of ships fired 13-cannon salutes, and a cannon was fired from each of 13 galleys. In Boston the day was celebrated with fireworks and shells fired over the city's commons.

Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club

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Member Birthdays

July

John Henderson- 13

Rob Kinsey - 16

Ruth Henderson - 19

Clarence Johnson - 22

If you want to be recognized,
please send your birthdate to
jesanford@cox.net.

