

Thunder Words



May 10, 2020



May 2020 ~ Volume 43, #5
Dedicated to the 55, 56, & 57 Thunderbird
Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club
Chapter 65, Classic Thunderbird Club International

Editor's note: Given the uncertainties of the COVID – 19, our intention is to continue event planning in hopes that this crisis will soon be over. JES

MAY CLUB EVENT

This is the next scheduled Nebraskaland T-Bird Club Event. It is subject to cancellation.

RALLY RUN FOR FUN
Sunday, May 24
Meet at Bakers Candies
831 S. Baker St.
Greenwood, NE
3:45 PM

Prez Says

Greetings! Don't miss the club article on page 41 of the May-June Early Bird. Nice article **John!** May 17 is Thunderbird



Appreciation Day. I hear the Chinese club will not be participating this year. The Shrine car show in Lincoln is still on for July 26 as of this writing. They will have a class for '55-'57 Birds. Membership in our club has unexpected benefits. **Jack** sent an email inquiring about a bumper jack I was trying to locate. A few days later the president of the KC club called and told me to contact a T-Birder in MN who had one. He turned out to be **David Stadstad**



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of Montgomery, MN. He has many fond memories of **Nebraskaland Club** members he's met over the years. We had a great talk about birds. He's a real expert and a great guy to speak with. **Marty** is one of his best T-Bird friends. He is sending me a nice, complete jack and all accessories for a fair price. Keep your fingers crossed and we'll get together as soon as it's safe. Happy trails.

Rob Kinsey President

Minutes

The July 26th Cruisin Classic Car Show has asked us to participate. We need seven volunteers to bring their Birds to the show. Please contact Rob as soon as possible if you can make it. **RSVP by May 31, 2020.**

402-434-9053

rkinsey@krbklaw.com

See page 7 for details.

Your support would be appreciated.

Tech Talk



T-Bird Tech Talk

By Martin Bierman

“How can I start my Classic T-Bird without a key?”

Question- a Classic T-Bird owner has lost his ignition key and wants to know how to start his car without it.

Answer- Basically this owner wants to know how to “hot wire” his car since he has lost his keys. This is relatively easy as any car thief can tell you. One only needs to connect the battery terminal on the ignition switch to the ignition terminal and then momentarily touch the battery terminal to the start terminal to start the car.

So how do you do this to a Classic T-Bird? If one is familiar with the wiring color scheme and the various terminals on the back of the ignition switch one could do this with the ignition switch in place by working behind the dash. For our average T-Bird owner it is done safer and easier if the ignition switch is removed.

First remove the bezel lock nut on the front of the ignition switch by turning it counterclockwise with a large flat blade screwdriver. Then reach behind the dash and remove the



ignition switch from the dash and let it hang. Attach a jumper wire to the “Bat” terminal of the switch; this terminal will



have a yellow wire on it from the battery. Attach the other end of the jumper wire to the “Ign” (sometimes marked “coil” or “C”) terminal of the switch. This will have a red-green wire on it. This basically powers the coil and the “run” circuit exactly the same as if you turned the key to “run”. Now attach a jumper wire to the “Bat” terminal and touch it momentarily to the “St” or “Start” terminal in the middle of the switch. This has a red-blue wire on it. This is the same as turning your key to



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the “Start” position. The starter will run and start the car; once the car starts immediately remove the wire from the “St” terminal. The car should continue to run on the run circuit. To turn the car off remove the jumper wire at the “Bat” terminal.

Now that you see how easy it is to hot wire a T-Bird you need to think of measures to prevent this from happening by a car thief. Those measures will be a future topic. (Ignition switch picture courtesy of Gil’s Garage at CTCl.org)

Member Profile

My Baby Blue Bird

By
Gaylan Abood

My dream of owning a Classic Thunderbird since graduating from high school in 1957 came true with the acquisition of a 1957 T-Bird in 2015 from **Chris Speligene**. **Chris** and **Myrna** were originally from Louisiana. They live on a very nice acreage at Baker Lake on the edge of Guthrie, Oklahoma. A few years ago, we visited with them on a return trip from Texas. **Chris** retired as the plant manager for a Ford engine remanufacturer, Fred Jones Industries of Oklahoma City, so he is well acquainted with Ford engines. I first became acquainted with **Chris** in 1987 on a pheasant hunting trip to Chamberlain, South Dakota. We were hunting on a farm around Bijou Hills, which is 15 miles south of Pukwana near Academy and 25 miles southeast of Chamberlin, where we normally stay. We have renewed our acquaintanceship each year on our annual pheasant hunt to South Dakota. However, during all those years, **Chris** had never mentioned that he owned the 1957 T-Bird.

My appetite to own a Classic T-Bird was intensified after visiting with my neighbor, **Dave Freeburg**. He owns several antique autos, mostly Fords. He periodically parks them along the street,

including a “starmist” blue 1957 T-Bird. I jumped at the chance when he invited me to attend a monthly membership meeting of the **Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club** at **Marty and Mary Lou Bierman’s** home in Skyline Ranches. I enjoyed visiting with the members and learning their stories on how they acquired their T-Bird(s). Time was spent on the internet and talking with other T-Bird owners, including **John Smith** from Kansas City, who had assisted **Bob Routh** from Lincoln in his purchase and restoration of a T-Bird. **John** advised me to be patient. He said treat this as a process that will be a “continuing project.” There are desirable T-Birds that become available and you want to avoid getting into the ones that will have continuing problems with rust or other deficiencies.

As an afterthought and my desire not to leave any stone unturned, in 2014 or 2015 postings were made on Craigslist and Facebook that I was seeking a 1957 red T-Bird. This resulted in a few unsuccessful leads. However, **Jeff Speligene**, **Chris’** son, noticed the posting on Facebook and he let me know his father had a 1957 T-Bird that he might be willing to sell. However, he thought it was blue. **Chris** was getting up in age and he wanted his T-Bird to go to someone who would really enjoy driving it. The T-Bird had been sitting for 20 years in the showroom of the Eufaula Ford Dealership, owned by **Chris** and his other son **Brian**, in Eufaula, Oklahoma. Some pictures and a description of the T-Bird was sent to me, which immediately strengthened my interest. My wife, **Joyce**, and I arranged to go to Eufaula, Oklahoma, the next week. While **Chris** was at a Ford meeting in Carmel, CA he mentioned to **Al Trovinger**, a dealer of Trovinger Ford in Mobile, Alabama that he was seeking a T-Bird and **Al** had one sitting on his lot that a **Mr. Hancock**, wanted to sell. The car had been in a freak fatal accident with flying metal



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coming through the windshield killing a young boy. The owner wanted it sold to someone outside of Mobile, so they wouldn't see it and remind them of the accident. The dealer made the necessary repairs and acquired a used top. **Chris** purchased the T-Bird in Mobile, Alabama, in 1977. **Chris** drove the T-Bird from Mobile to Oklahoma.

From papers sent to me by **Chris, D. J. Walker**, 319 E. Lee, North Little Rock, Arkansas owned the T-Bird in 1975-76 prior to **Mr. Hancock** and **Chris**. The left-hand quarter panel was apparently replaced in 1976. According to service slips, there was considerable amount of work done on the T-Bird in 1975-76. A Classic Thunderbird Club International (CTCI) grill badge was installed some time prior to 1977.

The T-Bird was a model "E", which **Chris** of course emphasized, because it was very rare with only 1,441 manufactured in 1957. Consequently, the selling price for a model "E" is several thousand dollars more than the more common model "D". There were around 20,000 1957 model "D" T-Birds manufactured by Ford. The VIN of my T-Bird is **E7FH2338--**, the "E" is the model and the "7" denotes being manufactured in 1957. The "FH" denotes that it was manufactured in Dearborn, MI. CTCI is developing a registry for model "E's", which may improve the value of this model even more in the future, depending on how many may still exist. Some may have been wrecked or previously salvaged for parts. The copy of the invoice ordered from CTCI indicates the T-Bird was sold to **Bryan Packard** Motor Co. in Wellington, Kansas. According to **Dave Tulowitzky** who deciphered the invoice, the T-Bird was scheduled to be built on March 1, 1957, the 135th sold to the Kansas City sales district, and was a regular production (not ordered). **Chris** restored the T-Bird in 1992-96 with a rebuilt 312 CID V-8 motor and new paint,

along with many other necessary parts. The T-Bird was driven in a few local parades but had not been driven for several years when we went to Eufaula the first time, July 21, 2015. There were 37,500 miles registered on the speedometer, which **Chris** thought was probably the original miles. **Chris**, being a good friend, would not sell it to me until it was in perfect condition for driving. Therefore, he had the service personnel of Eufaula Ford Dealership make several repairs, including installing new brake kits, repaired speedometer cable, a new spare tire and wheel, installed window mechanisms, installed an electric windshield wiper and new wiper blades, new gaskets for door, top, and trunk, adjusted doors, replaced light bulbs, among many other things. A new gas tank was installed earlier (but never filled with gas). Over a Labor Day weekend on a trip to Texas, we went via Eufaula to drive the T-Bird. It attracted the attention of all the local residents as we drove through town and around the lake.

A cash deal was made with **Chris** and arrangements were made to transport the T-Bird to Nebraska in an enclosed trailer by Passport Transport. For a month, we anxiously waited for its arrival, which it did on October 21, 2015. The car was titled in the State of Nebraska and registered with a one-time "Historical License Plate", number 1-921. Fortunately, there were some nice fall days for driving our T-Bird before winter snows necessitated garaging the T-Bird until spring of 2016. After the arrival of the T-Bird, some items were installed like a chrome oil filler cap, Holley air cleaner assembly, left step door plate, center horn emblem, seat belts, auxiliary gauges for oil pressure, temperature and voltage, a six-



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blade fan for better cooling, new master cylinder, new fuel pump (later an electric fuel pump was added), new radial tires with wide white walls, and some other cosmetic improvements. **Josh Van Der Hart** of Advanced Auto in Elkhorn has assisted in much of the mechanical work. The main engine bearing and transmission seals were leaking oil so in 2017, the motor was rebuilt by Willard Auto Machine. Part of the engine came from **Phil Brown**. The transmission was rebuilt at the same time. When spring arrives, the top comes off for some enjoyable cruising in the sun.



GAYLAN ABOOD

Lives in Indian Creek Villa

Elkhorn, Nebraska

1957 Starmist Blue

White Interior

White Hard Top

Powered by 312 V8

Electronic Distributor

Automatic Transmission

Original Wheel Covers

Radial Whitewall Tires

Restored in 1996

Bought in

Eufaula, Oklahoma

Owned for five years



Gaylan & Joyce



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Old Business

Logo patches are going fast. This money-making endeavor has brought in \$158.00 for the club to date. There are only 15 logo patches remaining. See **Jack** to get yours.



These embroidered 2 x 3 ½ inch logos can be sewn on or glued with fabric glue onto shirts, jackets, caps, dashboards, etc.

Logo Prices

1 logo – \$ 5	6 logos – \$26
2 logos – \$ 9	7 logos – \$31
3 logos – \$13	8 logos – \$35
4 logos – \$18	9 logos – \$39
5 logos – \$22	10 logos – \$43

The **Member Profile** feature has received four stories. Still plenty of time to send yours in. jesanford@cox.net

New Business

No March or April Meetings

CTCI EVENTS

The International CTCI convention has been rescheduled for 2021. Details pages 5 & 64 M/J Early Bird.

Your 2020 membership cards are attached to the May June Early Bird.

John La Duke's Aviary article on page 41 M/J Early Bird.

Great job, John.

Nebraskaland T-Bird Club Events

Check out the **Early Bird May-June** issue for **Nebraskaland T-Bird Club** article

May ~ Sunday May 24, 2020

RALLY RUN FOR FUN

Sunday, May 24

Meet at Bakers Candies

831 S. Baker St.

Greenwood, NE

Park in the North Lot

3:45 PM Meet - Depart 4:00 PM

The run is 57 miles and we will be looking for three objects.

The Run will end at the Waverly Track Side Café.

Reservations for a dinner-meeting at the Track Side is scheduled.

There is a strong possibility that this Club Event will be cancelled.

June Event

A touring event is being planned for June. The Abood's are working on the details. Depends on the Covid 19 guidelines.



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2020 Cruis'n Classics Auto Show

July 26, 2020

1050 Saltillo Road, Roca, NE
Hi-Way 77 & Saltillo Road
South of Lincoln

Registration: 8 AM to 11 AM

Show: 11 AM – 4 PM

Awards: 3:30 PM

Pre-Register by Friday, July 17th

\$15.00

Day of Show Sunday, July 26th

\$20.00

E-mail cruisnclassics@gmail.com

Phone: Bob Black 402-430-0699

The sheltering and social distancing is still in effect until the end of May. Restaurants are at half capacity. Only groups of 10 or less can mingle and then only with spacing. As much as we would like to see you, we will not put anyone's health at risk to do so. Even when the guidelines are relaxed, we anticipate that older citizens will be told to continue social distancing. In the meantime, please be safe. We want to see everyone's smiling face when we can meet again.

President, Bob Witt's E-mail, April 29, 2020

"The majority of the Board would like for all voting to be electronic, but at a recent meeting agreed that any member that does not have an email address can call the office and request a paper ballot. A ballot request must be made, or it will not be mailed. A notice concerning this will be printed in the Early Bird."

Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club

President	Rob Kinsey	402-434-9053	rkinsey@krbkaw.com
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Area Events

Tangier Show & Shine

May 31, 2020

All proceeds go to the Shriners Hospitals for Children and are tax deductible.

\$15.00 Pre-Registration Fee

\$20.00 Day of the Show

Registration from 9-11:30 a.m.

Show is 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Awards at 3 p.m.

Tangier Shrine Center

2823 South 84th Street

Omaha, Nebraska

Open to public – Free Admission

Dash Plaques for the first 100 registered

Pre-Registration guarantees you

(1) A place in the show

(2) A dash plaque

Pre- Registration Contact

Don Streeter @ 402-393-6684



Shriners Hospitals
for Children®



2nd Annual SAC Museum Car Show June 20-21, 2020

Registration is \$25.00 per vehicle.

Each vehicle must have a completed form online.

Each entry of a vehicle gets two passes to the Museum for the duration of the show.

Cars must remain at the museum for the duration of our two-day event, June 20-21.

Register at
www.SacMuseum.org

Find website
Find Coming Events
Find Car Show
Follow Instructions



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