



# The Wing



Official Journal of the  
Northern California Vintage Thunderbird Club

Volume 43, Issue 5

SEP/OCT 2019

## *HORSE AND FEATHERS 2019 VERSION*



### *Current Events*

October 5<sup>th</sup> TBirds on the Wharf  
October 19<sup>th</sup> Migration (New Date) USS Hornet Alameda

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## Board of Directors

Founded on September 26, 1976, the Northern California Vintage Thunderbird Club of America, Inc. (NORCAL VTCA) unites owners and enthusiasts of ALL Ford Thunderbirds built in 1956 through 2005 in a common effort to enjoy and preserve these fine cars.

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*The above officers are here to serve the members of this club*

Our website is at

<http://norcal-vtca.org/>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings fellow Thunderbird enthusiasts.

Where did the summer go? This year has passed very quickly for myself. But I've squeezed in some car fun along the way.

Micki Grove was a great day enjoyed all the car comradery.

Yours truly got stuck on the starting line during the games.

I'm fortunate to have a couple of different cars and coffee in my area. Makes for a nice casual morning out.

We have a couple of great events upcoming

TBirds on the wharf in Santa Cruz, plus our clubs migration show. Both are great events and I hope you will attend.

Signing off for now, hope to see you in Santa Cruz

Garry



Editor note: This is a well traveled club with this issue of the Wing coming from all over the country. Garry is off in Wisconsin and submits the above that was typed on his phone. While your editor is in the mountains

of Montana near Bozeman Why Bozeman you ask..... to visit our new Great Granddaughter. You remember that TBird wedding of two years ago, well this is the result. Another future TBird caretaker.



## Note from the Editor

Russ = [oldcarr.rc@gmail.com](mailto:oldcarr.rc@gmail.com)

Thanks to Bill Kinsey for his article on 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance cars and the great photo below. I know "El Jefe" gets out on the road regularly and the delta area is a great place to cruise. Lots of good restaurants, nice roads with very little traffic.

### TECH EMAIL FOR ALL CONVERTIBLE OWNERS

Hi Russ, I found a man in Wisconsin that can refurbish convertible top limit switches. I sent him 2 of mine and they were returned in a couple weeks. They were \$35 each plus shipping. The place is called Thunderbird Ranch and his name is John R. Draxler. 7158 County Rd. B Pittsville, WI. 54466, [jdrax@tbirdranch.com](mailto:jdrax@tbirdranch.com) 715-884-6546. Still found a relay that was bad. Love these convertibles! Jim Parry

# 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Below is a schedule for 2019 year, however if you have any interesting ideas for a tour please contact Miki or Craig and they will help you get it arranged.*

October 5<sup>th</sup> - TBirds on the Wharf - Santa Cruz\*\*

OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup> – **New Date** Migration at the USS Hornet\*\*

NOVEMBER - Tree Trimming at California Auto Museum\*\*

DECEMBER - Holiday Party\*\*

\*\*Club functions (Set in stone)

\*Tentative functions

TBird Summer in the California Delta”

Photo by Emily Kinsey

Date 5/31/2019

Location: Korth's Pirates Lair Marina on the Mokelumne River, vicinity of Isleton CA



# Cars2ndChance and Project Mustang

Bill Kinsey

For the past few years I've been involved with the Cars2ndChance charitable vehicle donation program of the Clayton Valley/Concord Sunrise Rotary Club. In addition to helping promote the program, I've donated two vehicles to it and purchased two vehicles from it. In April we acquired a 1999 Mustang V6 Coupe, stablemate of the 1995 Honda Accord purchased in 2017, my daughter's daily driver.

There are two unique and interesting aspects of Cars2ndChance, the first being that it is administered and operated by Mary and Dave Kemnitz who are in the automotive repair business as owner-operators of D&H Enterprises in Concord. At their facilities they are able to inspect and document the condition of donated vehicles, and to assess whether any particular car goes for sale or salvage. Purchasers are well-informed as to what they're buying. Mary and Dave help with the title and tax deduction documentation, too.

The second interesting aspect of Cars2ndChance is that the donor can specify a charity partner to receive a portion of the sales proceeds. This allows vehicle donors the opportunity to move a car along that they no longer need, and to fund something that they care about in the process.

Our Mustang purchase was a bit of a whim as our next car project, but we knew the money was going to a good cause and that we were getting a known quantity instead of a pig in a poke. In the first six weeks we worked through a punch list of repairs and ended up with a nifty runabout. It still needs paint and a few other things, but the pony runs well on the twisty backroads and on the freeway. 205,000 miles on the odometer and the A/C still blows cold.

In addition to the financial benefit this donated Mustang generated, it served in promoting Cars2ndChance as "A Great Start to Your Next Project" at the St. Agnes Spring Car Show and Blessing in Concord on May 26. The St. Agnes show welcomes hot rods, resto-mods and other project cars for display, fellowship among owners, and a blessing by the parish priest. Project Mustang was parked next to our beloved '66 Townie, El Jefe (you might recognize a landau bar in the photo above).

One of Cars2ndChance recent accomplishments is the "Cars4Paradise" project. 42 vehicles have been received for victims of the devastating wildfires that destroyed the town of Paradise, California in November 2018. Working with its twin Rotary club in Paradise, Cars4Paradise volunteers in Concord and Clayton take physical possession of the vehicles and process the donations. Vehicles are driven from Concord to Paradise by Rotary Club of Paradise volunteers.

The donated vehicles are inspected and repaired at D&H Enterprises in Concord. Other automotive supply vendors in the area have donated parts, services, and fuel in support of the program. Vehicles unsuitable for continued use are sold for salvage, with the proceeds going to California Vocations, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to providing residential and vocational support to developmentally disabled adults, whose facilities in Paradise were destroyed by the wildfire.

If you're looking to let one go or to pick one up, with Car2ndChance you'll move on and do good all at once.





## Monterey Bay Classic Thunderbird Club

Invites All

**Classic ('55-'57) Vintage ('58-'66) & Retro ('02-'05) Thunderbirds  
To The 22nd Annual**

### Thunderbirds on the Santa Cruz Wharf

**Saturday, October 5, 2019 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Rain or Shine**

**Goody Bags, Dash Plaques, Raffle, Scavenger Hunt & Awards,  
Spectacular Ocean & Mountain Views  
Restaurants, Shopping on the Wharf & Santa Cruz Boardwalk**

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**Please complete and return to:**  
**MBCTC, PO Box 2721, Aptos, CA 95001-2721 by**  
**September 27, 2019**

**Entry fee: \$40.00 in advance - \$50 on-site  
Proceeds benefit Partnership for Children.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

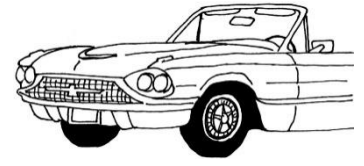
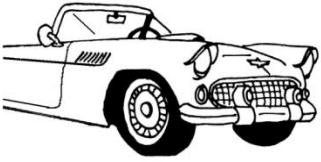
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Club Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_ **Car Info: Year** \_\_\_\_\_ **Color** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*Participants accept and assume full responsibility for any injury or loss to themselves or family or property and agree to release from any and all liability the Monterey Bay Classic Thunderbird Club and/or the City of Santa Cruz, California.

**Your cancelled check serves as registration confirmation.**



# **MIGRATION 2019**

## **ALL T-BIRDS 1955 - 2005 WELCOME**

**Peoples Choice Trophies for '55 thru '57, '58 thru'66,  
Post '66 and Retro 'Birds**



**Saturday, October 19, 2019**

**10:00 am – 3:00 pm**

**Dock of USS Hornet, Alameda, CA**

Hosted by the **Northern California Vintage Thunderbird Club**

This is our annual event, rescheduled this year due to conflicting events. Come relax and enjoy a day at the waters edge surrounded by cars and the people who love them. Meet new friends, eat good food, kick a few tires, and maybe win a trophy or a great raffle prize! Mark your calendar or to do list and plan on spending a day enjoying our cars and a great part of our national history.

**\$30.00 ENTRY INCLUDES** – Pier parking, entry fee to the Hornet for one person, commemorative dash plaques for the first 50 participants, photo ops, and peoples choice car show with awards. Raffle tickets will be available throughout the day for donated items from our sponsors (we also encourage entrants to donate raffle items). Late entry on day of the show is **\$35.00**

**Because of our location, we are not allowed to barbeque that day but Lunch is available from a café on the Hornet and includes hamburgers, hotdogs and other items.**

This location is special. Wonderful views, pleasant breezes, and a special piece of our history. We're working on some private tours and extras to make the day even more fun. Please come join us for this special day.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ENTRY FORM ON OPPOSITE SIDE AND MAIL TO THE ADDRESS INDICATED BEFORE OCTOBER 14.** *Attendees will be notified of receipt of their entry and receive driving directions via mail or e-mail*

# MIGRATION / CONCOURS 2019

## ALL '55 THRU '05 T'BIRDS

Please complete the following registration form and send with a check made payable to Norcal VTCA to Miki Smith 2053 Telegraph Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204. Call 209-463-2793 with questions. Entries must be postmarked by October 14<sup>TH</sup>. (**\$30.00 Pre-registered - \$35.00 day of show**) Entry fee is non-refundable.

**Information? Call (209) 463-2793 or e-mail mikismith@outlook.com**

----- Clip & Mail -----

### MIGRATION 2019 Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Club Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver of vehicle: Under 65 \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65 \_\_\_\_\_ ( Entrance included in entry fee.)

Entrance to Museum for Additional Attendees:

# Attending under the age of 65 @ \$12.50 \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

# Attending over the age of 65 @ \$10.50 \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle Entry \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 30.00 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby waive, release, and discharge any and all claims for damages which may result in my participation in the Migration 2019. By my signature below, I release the Northern California Vintage Thunderbird Club of any and all liability of property or loss to myself or said vehicle.

## TBird on TV

Now how many of you remember the Twilight Zone? The third episode in 1962 featured a just introduced Sport Roadster. Tim Van Raam sent me a picture with Rod Serling standing in front of this Sport Roadster with an unusual hood ornament. A little research got me another picture and some other interesting notes. If you remember from an earlier article Elvis Presley had trouble with the early wire wheels and returned the TBird to the dealer. Ford delivered a number of the early Sport Roadsters without wire wheels until they could solve the problem. The car in these pictures may have been one of them. Yes that is the correct spelling of his name.

How many know he also wrote the script for the first "Planet of the Apes" movie.





## **Article written by Mike Schwartz and published by Thunderbird Specialties.**

*The 2002-05 Thunderbirds are recommended by Ford to use fuel rated at 91 octane, but what if the owner chooses not to. What could happen? Does myth, marketing or outdated information make your choices for you? I began looking into this octane rating stuff. There are 3 very important terms that must be understood before considering what octane ratings to use.*

### ***Compression Ratio. Octane Rating. Horsepower.***

*The Compression Stroke is one of the 4 strokes of all automotive gasoline engines in use today. This movement of the piston compresses the air & fuel mixture into a very small volume called the **Compression Ratio**. Gasoline-air vapor will self-combust or ignite when compressed. To help prevent this event from occurring, today's gasoline has additives in the fuel to resist this phenomena. Dependent upon the amount of additive in the fuel, the more resistance the fuel-air mixture has to combustion under compression. This measure of resistance is known as 'octane' rating. The **Compression Ratio** of a vehicle's engine determines the **Octane Rating** to use.*

*Octane is a hydrocarbon that, when burned in an engine, has a very high resistance to engine knock, or pinging.*

*A common misconception is that gasoline with an octane rating of 87 contains 87% octane. The octane grade is not a measurement of how much octane is in the fuel but rather a measurement of how the fuel performs as compared to pure mixtures. Gasoline with an octane rating of 87 exhibits the same compression and detonation characteristics as a mixture of 87% octane and 13% heptane.*

*But Octane is very expensive, you never actually burn octane in your engine. The gasolines we use contain no octane.*

*The octane rating simply measures how closely a gasoline compares to pure octane in suppressing knock.*

*A fuel rated 93 octane will resist knock and pinging like a mixture that's 93 percent pure octane.*

*There are two different methods used to determine the octane rating of a fuel. There's "R," which stands for "research." The research octane number (RON) is determined in a lab with a test engine running at 600 rpm, which represents a low-compression, low-knock situation and comparing the results with pure octane/heptane mixtures.*

*The "M," is for "motor." The motor octane number (MON) uses a test engine, also in a lab, at a higher rpm running a preheated fuel mixture under load in a variable compression engine at higher RPMs than used in the RON method. The MON method is regarded as being a more accurate measurement and will return lower octane ratings than the RON method where knock is more likely.*

*The rating you see on pumps in the U.S. and Canada is an average of these two methods and is represented by the formula  $(R + M) / 2$ ; and the quotient is the number posted on the pump. It is also commonly referred to as the "Anti-Knock Index" (AKI). This means if the RON of a fuel is 93 and the MON is 87, the octane rating you see on the pump is 90.*

*All the octane rating tells you is how much knock protection you get. A higher-than-necessary octane rating doesn't keep your engine cleaner, make the car go any faster or make your engine last longer.*

*The **Octane Rating** of gasoline tells you how much the fuel can be compressed before it spontaneously ignites. When gas ignites by compression rather than the spark from the spark plug, it causes **knocking** in the engine. Knocking is some-thing you do not want to have happening. Engine damage can occur. Lower octane gas like "regular" 87-octane gasoline can handle the least amount of compression before igniting.*

*ALL gasoline sold in the United States & Canada have fuel additives which clean the combustion chamber. There is no increase or decrease in the amount of (nitrogen-based) cleaning additive in any given gallon or liter of gasoline. These additives are required by law. Different fuel retailers will label their fuel additives by*

*differing marketing terms, it's all the same in terms of cleaning performance.*

**Horsepower.** *People talk about horsepower when they talk about high-performance cars. A high-performance engine has a higher compression ratio and requires higher-octane fuel. The advantage of a high compression ratio is that it gives your engine a higher horsepower rating for a given engine weight.*

*The 3.9L engine in the 2002-05 Thunderbird is a high-compression engine, with a compression ratio of 10.75:1.*

*Regardless of what gasoline you put into the tank, the compression ratio is NOT going to change.*

*If you put 'regular' (87-octane) gasoline in your tank, and start your car, it will run and idle just fine. As you drive it down the road, it will run and perform just fine. As you accelerate hard for greater performance the ECM will advance the ignition timing to account for the milliseconds of expanding ignited fuel energy so that the engine can get the most efficient use of that energy to push the piston down. At the same time, the ECM is listening for spark-knock. If the ECM detects spark-knock, it will back-off of the ignition advance (slightly) until the spark-knock is no longer detected. This happens hundreds of times per second, and is indiscernible to the human ear or other senses. When the ignition timing advance is 'retarded', the engine is not operating at 'peak' performance, and therefore, you are not able to get the maximum engineered horsepower out of the engine at that moment. This is known as a performance 'degradation'.*

***Now, here is where all of this is important to the owner of a 2002-2005 Thunderbird.***

*If you decide that you don't want to pay an additional ~50¢/gallon or liter at the pump and opt to fill the tank with 'regular' (87-octane) fuel, you're going to save about \$9.00 per fill-up. If you drive your Thunderbird as a cruiser, you're going to realize little to no difference in the performance of your car. You will not gain or lose any MPG/MPL because there is no difference in energy content of premium fuel versus regular fuel. Now, if you drive your car like you stole it, accelerate hard from a stop, and put your foot into it when you are accelerating on the highway, you may be able to notice, or I should more accurately say "measure", a minor horsepower reduction as opposed to the same driving-style with a tank of 91-octane. Why? - Because the ECM is detecting spark-knock and retarding the ignition advance to eliminate it, which takes away from the maximum-engineered engine performance potential. So, if you don't drive your Thunderbird hard, you may/can opt for 87-octane fuel.*

***Ford has included this information in your operator's manual:***

*"Your vehicle is designed to use 91 "Premium" unleaded gasoline with an (R+M)/2 octane rating of 91 or higher for optimum performance. The use of gasolines with lower octane ratings may degrade performance. We do not recommend the use of gasolines labeled as "Premium" in high altitude areas that are sold with octane ratings of less than 91. Do not be concerned if your engine sometimes knocks lightly. However, if it knocks heavily under most driving conditions while you are using fuel with the recommended octane rating, see your dealer or a qualified service technician to prevent any engine damage."*

*Two keywords are in this statement from Ford, "optimum" and "may". The choice of octane levels is yours to make accordingly to your driving habits plus what you now know about gasoline.*

*(editor note) I use mid-level (87%) octane in both the 2005 and 1963 TBirds. Since the 1963 does not have a computer it was set up with mixture and spark advance to run smoothly without pinging. I have noticed no loss of performance in the way we drive. No pinging and about 16-17 mpg on the highway. Naturally less in town. After reading this I also switched the 2005 to mid-level octane rating and see no difference in performance in the way we drive. I would be interested in hearing from others on this subject.*

# Need Help and Information?

## Our Technical Advisors

*This list is under review. If you would like to be added or removed please contact Russ Carr.*

### **Craig Cuslidge**

1958-1966 Concours Detail  
1960 sunroofs  
1965 General/Restorations  
209-463-2793

### **Bill Edwards**

1958-1966 General/Mechanical/Convertibles  
510-223-2365

### **Mike Press**

1958-1966 Concours Details/Parts/Services  
1961-1963 General/Restoration  
510-558-4037

### **Russ Carr**

1961-1963 General Coupe and Convertible repair  
408-568-3782

### **Concours Manuals**

Available from Mike Press for \$15.00 plus \$2.00 shipping. Rules plus single series sections available for \$7.00 plus \$2.00 shipping. Contact Mike at 510-558-4037 to order.

### **Good Guys List**

A list of service providers that have done particularly good work on members cars – Available free to members from Mike Press (510) 558-4037, mjprgp@infionline.net. Also, contact Mike if you would like to add to the list.

## General Information

### **Membership**

To become a member, please send annual dues to the Treasurer. (\$25.00 if Wing to be delivered electronically and \$30.00 if to be delivered by USPS).

### **Change of Address**

Please send address change notices to the Secretary

### **Correspondence**

General correspondence should be sent to the club President. Submissions to The Wing should be sent to the Editor (see Publication Deadline below).

### **Nametags**

Order through Craig Cuslidge at 209-463-2793.

### **Advertising**

Send all advertising with payment to The Wing Editor. See advertising pages for rates.

### **Publication Deadline**

The Wing is published bi-monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, March, May, July, September and November. Submissions must be received before the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue(s) for which they are intended. E-mail submissions must be in .doc or .docx format and pictures in .jpg format. Hard copy submissions gladly accepted.

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Dr. Gordon † & Nell Richmond #25  
Craig Cuslidge #15



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Northern California  
Vintage Thunderbird Club



Final scene in Thelma and Louise used a scrapped hardtop with the top cut off. NOT the real convertible



**INSIDE**  
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**OCT 19<sup>TH</sup> MIGRATION**