



The Wing

Official Journal of the
Northern California Vintage Thunderbird Club



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The Bird is The Word



George Young's '63 Sahara Rose

Current Events

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year of events

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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/>

Email

tbird94101@gmail.com

Note from the Editor

My thanks to George, Rick, and Gary for sharing their Thunderbirds with us in this issue. Keep those photos and stories coming. This is your newsletter and it's a great place to show off your Thunderbird.

Still a work in progress and not yet ready for the big reveal? We love good project and here's your chance to give us all a sneak peek.

On a personal note, Julie and I are between Thunderbirds right now as our beloved '66 town landau is off to a new home. 9 years and 30k miles, what adventures we had!

Tell the story of your Thunderbird adventures, whether they're on the road, at the show, or in the shop.

tbird94101@gmail.com

2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Below would normally be the schedule of activities for the year, but circumstances have intervened otherwise as you all know.

Those circumstances are changing and here's our chance to get out and shake a T-Bird tail feather or two. We are reviewing plans for some tours in the coming months, and your suggestions welcome at tbird94101@gmail.com

SEPT
OCTOBER 1-3 Vintage Racing at Sonoma Raceway
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

**Club functions (Set in stone)

*Tentative functions

President's Message 9-2021

Hello All from the east side of Glacier National Park:

Yes we are traveling again to remote locations so we can be socially distance from everyone except the bears, mountain goats, big horn sheep and other life that is a bit on the wild side. But more of that later.

First off, I again want to ask for some help from all members for recommendations for potential tours or get togethers. It seems that this COVID problem just won't go away, but I still would like to find a way to get back with all of you. Do you have some ideas of locations that we can meet outside for a picnic, tour or some other excuse? Please let me know so I can try to make some plans for something next month or in October.

Since some of these events might come or be cancelled on short notice, please send us your email address so we can contact you if events change suddenly.

I know this is a Thunderbird club, but we recently ran into a unique historic vehicle that does have a Ford connection. A "White/Ford".

In 1936-9 the National Park Service bought a number of busses, build by the White corporation, painted them red with black fenders, and started giving tours in Glacier National Park. These vehicles were powered by a flathead 6 with 4 speed manual transmission that was not synchronized. No power steering or power assisted brakes! They were about to be retired in the 1990's as they were getting worn-out and it was difficult to find drivers that could handle the double clutching that was required on the steep and narrow roads.

Ford stepped in and donated \$6 million to update. They were put on an extended Expedition chassis with a 5.7l V-8 with automatic transmission, power everything (including brakes, steering and even windows). Now they were easy and safe to drive.



Lately plans are underway to upgrade again to a hybrid configuration with regenerative braking. Good idea since most of the runs have as much downhill as uphill. However they still remain basically the same configuration with the same seats, a canvas roll back top and that classic look. So if you ever get to Glacier, watch out for these busses and don't be fooled by that classic 1936 look.

As a side note we did see an 8 door Checker in the same livery around the park. I believe that only a few of these we made.

Hope to see you again soon and please stay safe and healthy.



Russ

Rick Lewis' 1966 Convertible



“My parents each had a similar T bird when I was growing up. I love convertibles. So I searched for a number of years for a 1966 model to find one that was fully loaded with almost every option (no passenger seat lay down) including a Q code (428) engine. I found it last year in San Luis Obispo. A guy had it for about 10 years and it just sat in his garage. He gave us a box that contained a book along with a history of the car. We have every single receipt of when the car was serviced where it lived, the original bill of sale. This gave us a wonderful history and insight. Its like a baby book.

“We bought it in May of 2020. For the past year we have been fixing lots of little things and are still at. We re-did the Air Conditioner on it as an example. Rebuilt some of the suspension. We have been trying to get the fuel gauge to properly work but no luck so far. There is a punch list of several other items we are still working on. All small thankfully.”

Really cool, thanks for sharing Rick. We look forward to seeing you and this beauty at one of our next meets.

Gary & Carolyn Rannefeld's 1963 Convertible



“At one time this car was in the car collection at the Imperial Palace Casino in Las Vegas where one of the former owners acquired it. We are about the fifth owners, as best I can tell from the documents I received with the car. Its last home was in Montgomery, Alabama, from 1996 until we acquired it in 2019. For that period of time--23 years--the car accumulated only about 2000 miles. We have put more than that mileage on the car since we've had it, and in spite of Covid. In spite of spending a lot of time in the South--that's a North Carolina inspection sticker in the front window--the car was remarkably rust-free when it arrived here.

“I flew to Montgomery in early August 2019 to look at our car. I had nearly rejected it earlier because the ad for it that had appeared in Hemmings didn't include any pictures. But the ad had just enough information to get my attention and the seller had included his phone number. So I called him. When I looked at the car, it appeared that the seller's main impediment to selling the car were his three college-age daughters who had essentially grown up with the car in the family. (When one of them and his wife learned that he had advertised the car without pictures, they both were in immediate disbelief that anyone these days would do that.) I left them with an offer--less than they were asking for the car--and flew home. It was mid-October when I finally received an email accepting my offer and we took delivery in mid-November of 2019.”

Great car, great story. Thanks for sharing, Gary. We'll keep an eye out for the three of you and you won't be hard to spot.

MECUM MONTEREY 2021 Bill Kinsey

Along with touring, car shows, and racing, vintage car auctions are among our favorite automotive events, and we attended Mecum Monterey on August 12. Lots of action and activity, the auctioneer barking at rapid pace using words that you understand but don't know, winners and losers, a constant parade of shiny and interesting vehicles, prices displayed in huge numbers, lights-color-noise, a real hoot. Such a hoot that it makes for good television, and NBC Sports Network covers Mecum auctions. I'm a regular viewer and have attended in person.

With so much going on I have a priority scheme to help me focus: #1 Thunderbirds; #2 vintage Fords generally; #3 The Unusual, which can include Studebakers, Virgil Exner cars, and vintage Italian. Everything else gets tuned out more or less.

1 We found two '57 Thunderbirds and a 1960 Lincoln 430 V8 (raise your hand if one of these powers your Thunderbird).

#2 vintage Fords generally was well represented with Mustangs and Shelys aplenty.

#3 The Unusual paid off with a '52 Studebaker crossing the block as we entered the big tent, and a two-fer of sorts in the Ford 351-powered DeTomaso Pantera (three of them).



Bill with Scott Hoke



Lincoln 430



Auctions provide an interesting gauge on the value of things because the seller is getting exactly what an interested buyer is willing to pay at the time and place of the offering. Theoretically you know right then and there what's hot and what's not. Conversely, some say that bidding wars and "auction fever" can artificially inflate prices due to the mood of the room. Good for sellers, not good for buyers and you need buyers.

So with all that and the market position of 1960s Thunderbirds in mind, I went to a guy who's seen a lot of them cross the block, John Kraman of the Mecum broadcast team. "60's Birds still represent fantastic values, but great examples will ring the bell," says John. Indeed, with lots of style and the FE power that's of interest right now, vintage Thunderbirds are a great way into the hobby.

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 1st of January, March, May, July, September and November. Submissions must be received before the 20th 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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