

Thunder Words



April 2024 ~ Volume 47, #4
Dedicated to the 55, 56, & 57 Thunderbird
Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club
Chapter 65, Classic Thunderbird Club International



Prez Says: Spring is finally here! We had a good turnout at our March 21 meeting and had several excellent suggestions for our monthly events. We still need more suggestions so bring them to the next meeting or e-mail them to me. This is your club, and we want to hear from you. At our last meeting, we also welcomed new member Joel Hutchins, who has a 1957 T-Bird. Now is the time to start preparing your T-Bird for the driving months. Hope to see everyone at the April Omaha meeting.

Martin Bierman, President

Fellowship Lunch
April 19, 2024
11:30 AM
Culver's
4940 N. 27th St.
Lincoln, NE

April Important Dates:
1 – April Fool's Day
21 – Fly A Kite Day
22 – Earth Day
28 – National Arbor
Day

Next Meeting
April 18, 2024
Kopper Kettle Kafe
9905 Sapp Brothers
Drive
Omaha, NE



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Minutes of the Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club

March 2024

President Martin Bierman called the meeting to order at 6:11 P.M. at the Trackside Bar and Grill in Waverly, NE. Members present were **Marty** and **Mary Lou Bierman**, **Jack Sanford**, **Rob** and **Vicki Kinsey**, **John Moore**, **Bob McGowan**, **Jeff Brown**, **Dick** and **Diane Heinke**, **Phil Brown**, new member **Joel Hutchins**, and your humble servant **Quentin Moeller**.

December's minutes were approved with a motion by **Rob** and a second by **John**.

Jeff Brown gave the treasurer's report.

Old Business:

Jeff made a motion to donate \$500.00 to the National Convention. **Jack** seconded it. Motion passed,

New Business:

Activities for the remaining months were brought up. Cruises, lunches, picnics, the convention, the Air Force Thunderbirds, car shows, a joint activity with the Iowa club, and Friendsgiving in November. None of these activities are planned yet, and suggestions would be welcomed. **Rob**, **Vicki**, and **Dick** were "volunteered" to research and plan some of these activities. More info will come, so be sure to read your newsletters.

FELLOWSHIP LUNCH April 20, 2024 – 11:30 am - Lincoln, NE (see page 9)

Braggs:

Bob had to have his rotator cuff repaired from a pickleball incident.

Dick got a clutch replaced.

Rob has had some problems with the hip surgery but is doing better now.

Joel is going in for bypass surgery tomorrow.

Marty and Mary Lou's #2 grandson has graduated and is now a lieutenant in the Army, serving in an armored unit. Thank you for your service.

John went on a trip to Hawaii.

Vicki was very proud of her Cornhusker's basketball season.

Quentin is going to be a great-grandfather for the first time. At the end of April, he will be honored by going on a two-day Veterans Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

CHECK YOUR NEWSLETTER FOR ALL OF THE DETAILS ON UPCOMING EVENTS.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 P.M.

Quentin made a motion to adjourn. **Jack** seconded it. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Quentin Moeller, Secretary



Bird Tech Talk

By Martin Bierman



"I'm having trouble finding a battery for my T-Bird."

Batteries for our Classic 1955-57 T-Birds are becoming more expensive, and some types are difficult to find. Below is a summary of available batteries for each T-Bird year.

1955 - The '55 T-Bird uses a 6-volt group 2N battery which measures 10x5.5x8.75. This battery is no longer produced by the major manufacturers and is only available as a reproduction original using AGM (absorbent glass mat) technology, which does not use liquid acid. The sole producer is Jim's Manufacturing in Ohio, sold by Battery Central Mall in Virginia. The battery costs nearly \$400, and there is a minimum of 4-6 weeks or longer wait. Google batterycentralmall.com for details. A group 2 battery (left photo) is available from most stores, but it is too wide and slightly longer for the battery tray and hold down. The AGM Optima-6V #9010-044 fits the battery tray but is very narrow, and one would have to fabricate a hold-down. The battery top is also red, and the case has a modern design (right photo).



For a 1955 with a 12-volt conversion the Group 56 battery fits the tray well if one cuts away the hold down rails on the lower edges. Most auto parts stores carry these batteries but are also getting harder to find and are near or higher than \$200. A Group 51 battery will also work, but it is narrower and slightly shorter than the original, and the hold-down will be too large.

1956-1957- These cars use a Group 29NF 12-volt battery or a heavy-duty Group 32 battery. A similar battery tray is used for both types of batteries, but a different hold-down is used for Group 29NF and Group 32. The Group 29NF is available from the usual stores such as NAPA, Interstate Battery, and various auto parts stores (right photo) but may not be on the shelf and may need to be ordered. Group 50 is close in size to the Group 29NF. The AGM reproduction group 29NF can also be ordered from Battery Central Mall. The Group 32 is unavailable from any source except as an original reproduction AGM battery from Battery Central Mall at over \$400 for it and the 29NF and a long wait.

The bottom line is that T-Bird batteries are becoming more expensive, and the 1955 6-volt battery choices are very limited. All T-Bird batteries are positioned in the battery tray with the positive post forward. Finally, check that the battery posts do not hit the hood if one uses a non-original battery that does not fit the tray.



CTCI UPDATES



CTCI Board Meeting Highlights

March 15, 2024

President Chuck Thompson discussed committee assignments. He explained that the membership committee will have the most members because its recommendations will impact the size of CTCI. The Committees for 2024 will be:

Executive, Investment, Nominating, Membership, Web Site

Treasurer's Report: John Kledis presented the Treasurer's report. This report was for the entire year of 2023 and will be the basis of the US Treasury 990 filing. On the Balance Sheet, CTCI showed "Club Equity" of \$1,320,526, slightly higher than the previous year. The Revenue and Expenses sheet showed that both revenue and expenses were up from the prior year. The Club's functional loss was under \$10,000. This is close to 2022 and significantly better than planned. John also explained that we should eliminate any loss in 2024 with the dues increase. Finally, John reported that we had a significant increase from the prior year in Other Income. Thus, the club is showing a year-end net income gain of \$62,948, a significant improvement over 2022's loss. Most of this gain is due to changes in the cash-cost basis of the CTCI Investment Fund and is made up of previous year's losses.

2024 Convention Update: Brian Carron presented the status of the 2024 International Convention. The International Convention will be held in Des Moines, IA, from August 20 through August 25, 2024. It was noted that the contracts for the hotel, transportation, and entertainment for the Welcome Party have been completed. The Welcome Party has been moved to a location near the hotel instead of the hotel as a cost-saving move. Also, Brian noted that the group is starting to receive some sponsorships. Brian reported that Bob Young and Marsha Hash are working on all the events. These include viewing car collections and other tours that will interest the



members. Current plans are for the registration forms to be completed and online before the end of March. Finally, it was reported that there would be a "Swap Meet," a General Membership Meeting, and a CTCI Board Meeting. Meanwhile, we wish to remind all members that hotel registration is open. Please see the CTCI website or The Early Bird to get the link for Hotel Reservations. Please register early to hold your place at the 2024 Convention Hotel.

Member Renewals: Garrett presented membership renewals through February 2024. We ended the year with 4,015 members and added 218 new members. During January and February, we gained 24 New Members. We have not converted any new members from the Test Drive Program. He reported that we are well into the 2024 Membership drive. To date, we have only received 38 notices of dropouts. Garrett outlined that we are ahead in the member renewal process. At this point, we still have 998 members pending renewal. This is not an unexpected number based on past history and is better than the same time last year when we were short 1,044. Also noted is that the Jan-Feb issue was the last issue sent to 2023 members who have NOT renewed for 2024.

Garrett also made a recommendation about adding a marketing plan that will be forwarded to the Membership Committee. With the By-Law change, CTCI needs to market directly to both '55 – '57 and '02 – '05 T-Bird owners. This is especially true for the Modern Classic—Retro owners, who, up to this point, have not thought that CTCI wanted them.

Office Activity: Garrett presented the Office Activity Report. He noted that the office was spending the bulk of its effort on the member renewal process. In addition to the time assisting the Treasurer with year-end reporting, the office is working on updating the "New Member" packets. Also, the Office is working with the 2024 Convention Committee to provide support for contracts and bookkeeping.

2023 Convention: Brian Carron reported to the Board on the CTCI Awards related to the Concours judging at the 2023 Regional Convention. New plaques have been created for Gold Mediation, Excellence in Authenticity, and Preservation Award (separate from recognition awards already presented). Those plaques have been completed and will be sent out to individual award winners in the next week.

Investment Committee: President Chuck Thompson announced that Bill Phelps and Gaylan Abood are moving off the Investment Committee. He thanked both for their service and assistance during their time as initial committee members. Chuck also announced the addition of Jim Cook to the Investment Committee. Jim was previously on the Committee and agreed to rejoin the group.

In a related announcement, Chuck reported that, based upon the investment committee recommendation and CTCI Board approval, the relationship with Meritage (as investment broker) has been terminated. Also following that recommendation, going forward the CTCI Investment would be "self-managed", with trades being directed by the Investment



Committee. Garrett Shropshire was asked to provide a "conservative fixed income" investment recommendation to the investment committee.

2025 Convention: Chuck Thompson presented the need for a Chapter to sponsor the 2025 Regional Convention. While some chapters have expressed an interest in sponsoring a convention, up to this point no Chapter has presented a formal proposal. Any chapters who wish to sponsor a Regional Convention in 2025 should reach out to Chuck. Please note, to allow proper planning time, interested Chapters should let Chuck know before August 1.

Director Election: Chuck Thompson reminded all members of the upcoming Director election that will be held later this year. The election will cover Regions 2, 4, 6, and a Director-at-Large position. Each interested member should think about creating a bio. Per the CTCI Bylaws, Candidate bios have to be received by the CTCI office prior to August 1, 2024, and will be published in the September-October Issue of The Early Bird. If you have any interest, please see your Regional Director or contact Chuck for details.

Newsletter Contest: Marsha Hash wanted to remind all members of the Newsletter Contest. Each chapter newsletter editor is encouraged to submit their newsletter for judging. Editors are requested to select their single best issue from January 1, 2024, to September 1, 2024, and email or mail 5 copies of that one issue to Marsha Hash. Newsletter Editors can read more about the contest online or in the May-June issue of The Early Bird.

Thunderbird Appreciation Day: Chuck Thompson also wanted to remind all members of Thunderbird Appreciation Day. This year it will be held on May 19th. He encouraged all members to contact their local club to find activities in their area. Most importantly he asked all members to get out and enjoy celebrating with other T-Bird enthusiasts.

Short Term Membership: A suggestion was made and approved by the CTCI board to allow non-members who wished to sell their Thunderbird a method to accomplish that. The Board approved a "short term member" plan to allow 60-day membership and thus allows the "short term member" to be able to pay and place a classified notice about an available Thunderbird. This will help our current members since it would allow our CTCI members the "first look" at available Thunderbirds as well as additional marketing opportunities to the car buyer.

Co-Branding: Brian Caron and Bob Bly discussed their upcoming meeting with the other three Thunderbird organizations (VTCI, ITC, and Thunderbird Nest). This meeting will be used to discuss areas where the organizations might work together cooperatively, including some possible co-branded events.

Member Comments: As with every Board meeting, the Board reviewed all member comments about CTCI operations submitted over the past two months. Most of these were related to the CTCI website. Chuck plans to have the Website Committee meet to



discuss these in detail and develop recommendations to improve. The next Board meeting is set for May 17, 2024.

On Behalf of the Board, Chuck Thompson, President



2024 International Convention

Celebrating 70 Years of Thunderbird Fun

Hotel Reservations: Call 888-236-2427 or use the link below.

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1701122189009&key=GRP>

We are excited to invite you to the 2024 CTCI International Convention, August 20-25 in West Des Moines, Iowa! International CTCI Conventions are special. If you have not attended one, please come and see us, make new friendships, and renew old ones.

When you arrive at the host hotel, Convention check-in to receive your packet will be available Tuesday, Aug. 20, and Wednesday, Aug. 21, from 9 AM to 5 PM in the hotel lobby. On Tuesday, a car wash area is available as well as the hotel bar and restaurant. The Sheraton is a John Q. Hammonds property design with a large atrium and offers cooked-to-order breakfast each day. The Concours judging field is just outside the south door. For the first 50 registrants that arrive Tuesday and stay through Saturday, there will be a drawing for one lucky member to be upgraded to a suite for the entire Convention, no extra charge....so register soon.

Some of the fun events and tours we have planned for you are unique to our area and we hope you will enjoy them. Wednesday afternoon, Aug. 21, there will be a bus tour to Winterset, Iowa to visit John Wayne's Birthplace and Museum. That evening, from 5:30 to about 7:30, our Welcome Party will be held at the Tavern Restaurant across the street from our hotel. Thanks to one of our major Sponsors, Marvin Hill of Hills



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Automotive Classic Car Restoration and Parts, there will be no charge for the salad, pizza, and pasta buffet. There will also be live entertainment: Richie Lee & the Fabulous 50s band. Soft drinks, beer, and wine are available at the cash bar. THANK YOU, Marvin, for your generosity for the evening's meal and entertainment!

Thursday, the 22nd, from 9:00 to 11:30 AM will be Judges Training. All attendees are welcome to sit in and learn, but please be sure to mark this on your registration to ensure we have enough training material and seats. The Hotel shuttle will also be available to take you to Jordan Creek Mall for shopping, but please be back in time for the afternoon Tours to the Dennis Albaugh Automobile Collection that is not open to the public, however, we have permission to attend and will be contributing to his favorite charity. His collection contains mostly Chevrolets - he has at least one Chevy convertible every year from 1913 through 1976, plus several rare COPO Camaros and one of every color 1957 Chevy convertibles--17 in all, and many Corvettes. He has doubled the space since we toured it in 2013 at the Regional. Karl Kustoms encompasses 45,000 square feet and has turned out many National Award-winning Street Rods. They do everything onsite except chrome...have their own engine building area, high-tech paint booths, upholstery department, race car and truck departments plus auto and racing accessories. They are nationally known in Street Rod and Racing circles. You will enjoy both of these places. Thursday evening is dinner on your own.

Friday the 23rd, the Owners and Judges Meeting starts at 8:00 AM. All owners having a car judged must be there to receive your instructions and judging paperwork. Judges will meet their teams and judging will start at 9:30 AM. Cars will need to stay on the show field until all cars are judged and the Chief Judge dismisses the cars. For those not involved in the Judging, there is a lunch and shopping tour. Lunch will be on the 33rd floor of the Ruan Center in Downtown Des Moines, overlooking the Iowa State Capital Building. After lunch, you will bus to the East Village in Downtown for a couple hours of shopping then return to the Hotel around 3:30 PM. Dinner is on your own.

Saturday the 24th there will be a Swap Meet in the Trailer Parking area across the street from the Hotel from 7 - 9 AM. From 9:30 - 11:30 AM there will be a CTCI Board Meeting and CTCI Membership Meeting. This is your chance to meet your Board of Directors and ask questions at the Membership Meeting. At 12:30, there is a Driving Tour to the American Dream Machines specialty car dealership in downtown Des Moines. We will have Tour leaders for small groups, plus written directions. This event qualifies for the 10 points for the Touring Class, and all participants are welcome...just sign up on your registration so we know how many cars are coming. We will leave about 2 PM for the drive back to the hotel.

For the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening, cocktail/social hour will start at 5:30 PM. Dinner is served at 6:30 PM, and the Awards Program starts at 7:15 PM.

Sunday the 25th---Goodbye's and wishes for safe travels to your homes.

We hope you will honor us with your attendance....and have a GREAT experience!!

The May/June Early Bird will contain a section devoted to Convention information and the Events>2024 Convention page of the website will be updated with all the latest developments as they occur.

Bob Young, on behalf of the 2024 International Convention Steering Committee



2024 Calendar of Events

April 18 – Business Meeting – Kopper Kettle Kafe – 6 PM, 9905 Sapp Brothers Dr. Omaha, NE

April 20 Fellowship Lunch – 11:30 AM - Culver's – 4940 No. 27th St. – Lincoln, NE

April 25 – Kayla's memorial – See page 12.

May 11 - Skills and Grills – Car – Truck – Tractor Show – Gretna High School – Register 9-11 am

May 19 - Thunderbird Appreciation Day

August 7 - 11– VTCI 2024 International Convention – Grand Rapids Airport, MI

August 20 -25 – 2024 International Concours Convention – Des Moines, IA (see pages 7 & 8)

APRIL CLUB EVENT FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

April 20, 2024 – 11:30 am

Lincoln, NE

We will meet at Culver's drive-through on north 27th St in Lincoln, 4940 N. 27th St. If you are coming from out of town, take the 27th St exit off I-80 and head south towards town. Culver's will be on your left. If you are coming in on Hwy 6/Cornhusker Hwy from Omaha, stay on Cornhusker to 27th, turn to the right onto N. 27th, and continue north until you get to Culver's. It will be on your right.



RETIREMENT STORIES

Q. “I hope this helps to straighten out some wives who complain about having their retired husbands at home. “After thirty-five years of seeing my husband increasingly tired, I only wait for the day when he can come home for good. God willing, he can last three more years until he is 65 and live to enjoy a rest. It will be a happy day when I can have him home and take care of him. In my book a husband deserves a rest after working most of his life. My greatest pleasure would be having him free, at home, working on his cars, or fishing and hunting. “Maybe I sound corny, but those are my feelings. After the years he has worked to put bread on my table, who am I – or any other wife – to kick because he makes a little extra work? –Mrs. H.H.

A. “They ought to put you in a museum and label you “Good Wife. Circa 2024.” They don’t make many like you anymore.

An opposing view.

Q. “Do you have any sympathy for the wife of a retired man?

“My husband has been retired for ten months now, and I am living my life in a birdcage. I can’t go bargain hunting in the stores, which I love. I can’t drive the car anymore because my husband says he wants it. He doesn’t really because he sits at home all day. And while he sits, he wants me to sit with him. I’m nothing but a sparrow in a gilded cage. And nobody ever told me that after I had nursed four children into maturity, I would then have to nurse a retired husband into old age.

“My advice to the wives of men who are about to retire is to join every organization in sight, have somewhere to go every day, and have the courage to insist that the sky will fall if they aren’t allowed to go.” Mrs. H.F.N.

A. Thank you, ma’am.



FOR SALE

Tom Woodman has the following doors for sale.

2 – 1957 doors asking \$150 each

1 – 1957 door asking \$100 (repairable)

2 – 1955 -56 doors asking \$100 each obo.

Tom can be reached at 402-464-0569.



Tom swears the doors for sale are not from this car!



You are invited to a special gathering in honor of our beloved Kayla Sanford, who passed away on February 1, 2024. Kayla's vibrant spirit and joyous heart touched us all, and while we miss her dearly, we are eager to celebrate the wonderful life she lived and the beautiful memories she created with us.

Date: April 25, 2024

Time: 4:00 PM

Place: John A. Gentleman Mortuary

14151 Pacific Street

Omaha, NE 68154

In keeping with the spirit of celebration, we also invite you to a casual buffet dinner immediately following the event. It will be a time for us to enjoy each other's company and reminisce about Kayla's joy in our lives.

Please RSVP to Jack at jesanford@cox.net by April 15th to assist us in planning the dinner and ensure a joyous gathering for everyone.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank You,

The Jack E. Sanford Family

**Member Birthday
April**

Dave Freeburg - 1

Gaylan Abood - 4

Joe Failla - 7

John Krecek - 12

Connie Heier - 16

Crystal Swensen - 23

Bernie Heier - 27

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

Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club

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- Treasurer Jeff Brown - 402-572-1995
- Secretary Quentin Moeller - 303-204-1761
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