



# Classic Thunderbird Club of Kansas City

Chapter 47 of the Classic Thunderbird Club International

**Our 47th Anniversary**

November 2023



<i>President</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Newsletter</i>
John Smith 816 468-6851	Jim Wiggin 913 432-2287	Mary Jane Wiggin 913 432-2287	Elizabeth Cook 913 631-0423

## CHILI SUPPER

**WHEN: SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18,2023**

**TIME: 4:30 TO 8:30 (WILL EAT AROUND 5:00)**

Westwood City Hall 4700 RAINBOW  
4700 Rainbow, Westwood, KS

**FOOD NEEDED TO SHARE: NEED 4 PEOPLE TO BRING CHILI**

**OTHER FOOD NEEDED: CRACKERS & CHEESE, VEGGIES & DIP, FRUIT PLATE OR DESSERT. TABLE SERVICE & DRINK PROVIDED.**

**EMAIL OR TEXT MARY JANE WIGGIN AND LET HER KNOW IF YOU ARE ATTENDING AND WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO SHARE.**

**MARY JANE'S EMAIL ADDRESS IS: [MARYJANEJIMW@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MARYJANEJIMW@GMAIL.COM)  
TEXT MARY JANE AT 913-871-7373**

**JIM AND MARTHA DILLENSCHNEIDER WILL BE HOSTING THIS EVENT ☺**

**JOHN SMITH WILL BE COLLECTING 2024 DUES AT THIS EVENT, SO PLEASE BRING A CHECK PAYABLE TO CTKC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$17.50 OR CASH.**

## **FROM OUR PRESIDENT:**

Five starving members attended the October breakfast held at the Hy-Vee in Gladstone.

Liz and son Kevin were among the first members to arrive, making the long drive from Shawnee, KS. Liz announced that she and a co-worker were going to attend the CTCI Regional convention to be held in the The Villages, Florida.

Griff Griffith was in attendance, making the long drive from Mission Hills, KS. Griff announced that his beautiful Torch Red '55 was being stored in the BMA building classic car garage located in KC. He provided the members that were present a summary of the numerous classic and collectible makes and models of cars that accompany his little roadster.

Randy Bechtel was present, making the long drive from Belton, MO., thus winning the Longest Distance Driven Award!!! Randy announced to the group that he had made the trip to the meeting via motorcycle!!!!

Yours truly announced to the members in attendance that I would be serving as the Chief Judge of the upcoming CTCI convention. The convention will be the 47th in which I have served as a Judge. I will provide a summary of the convention at the upcoming November meeting.

All in all a great time was had by all. The food and conversation were terrific!

Looking forward to seeing you all at the upcoming Chili Supper!!!  
See you then,

**THE PREZ**

## **LET'S TALK ABOUT CARS**

**Liz, reporting from the Regional:**

**As you know, the Regional was held the last week of October in The Villages, Florida. President John Smith drove down and spent those first several days judging and organizing.**

**Monica Pena is a car-nut (Chevy) and we work together at the local SSA office. (That office has always had the nicest-people-on-the-planet working there.) I couldn't handle driving on strange freeways at 88, or even getting through an airport without a cell phone, but it sounded like fun to Monica and she offered to go with me.**

**Monica and I flew to Orlando on Wednesday and rented a new Mustang convertible. Yes, it looked and ran great and the top went up and down with the touch of a button. The Villages is an immense retirement community (for rich people) where the residents drive golf carts, requiring much less road and parking space. Bottles of water were always \$3 and small bottles of Coke were \$3.50. The Brownwood Hotel was plush with expensive sheets and a lovely pool, breakfast was cooked in their Wolfgang Puck kitchen by chefs wearing tall white hats--\$24. The judging and club activities were nearby at the large community center and the weather was 80s perfect. There were trailered cars from all over the country, also perfect, of course. We enjoyed a nice dinner, getting acquainted, some freebies and a fun show by the Blues Brothers tribute that evening.**

**Thursday morning, we were taken by buses to Orlando to see Dezerland before opening time. It's a 250,000-sq ft theme park with a "\$200 million auto collection of thousands of movie, celebrity, military and historical vehicles in 18 themed auto museum rooms," such as the Batmobile and James Bond cars. We had a guide who told us interesting things and let us sit in the cars for photo ops. Everything was first-rate and the cars were immaculate; our guide told us they were all started and run on a regular basis.**

**Thursday afternoon, Monica and I headed for the beach so we could play in the surf. Heading back in the dark, on little roads, Monica saw a pizza sign that wasn't part of a chain so we stopped. When the waitress brought our pizza, she said there was no charge, that each day they chose one ticket to be "free unto the Lord" and they chose us that day. Yes, that was certainly nice but there was a problem--it was the best pizza**

we had ever eaten (even pizza in Italy). We couldn't accept such a gift so we left money and ran, writing an apology when we returned home.

Friday morning, the bus took us to Warren Wubker's estate to see his 50's collection. Just one bus went at a time, enabling us to better see each car and, especially, to visit with Mr. Wubker. In his lovely brick garage with a vintage soda fountain and retail store fronts, he had more than a dozen 50s cars of all U.S. makes, each one absolutely perfect with a sign telling about it and the number still existing (many said 3 or 4). Wubker drives each one at least every month and really knows and treasures them; he knew the answers to all our collectible and mechanical questions. There was a tiny new green Porsche next to a door so I asked him (6'4") if he could really get into it. He replied, "Easily, but I can't get into that '55 T-Bird." His chopped '50's Mercury was probably the best chopped-Mercury ever, and several of us thought the prettiest car of all was the huge '58 Cadillac convertible--rose-colored, with a rose convertible top and rose upholstery. His garage is THE Class Act.

After that, the bus took us to a boat trip across Lake Dora and then boating through little old canals so we could see natural Florida with native flora and fauna--yes, alligators.

There was a good swap meet Saturday morning in the Community Center, then we drove ourselves to Don Garlits' museum. There was a covered area with tables and benches and the club gave us boxed lunches to eat while Don Garlits (born 1932) spent more than half an hour telling his life story and visiting with us. He has two immense buildings totally full of race cars and trophies, flathead Ford engines and cars and many more cars.

With our brains still boggled, we drove to the National Parts Depot, where many of us buy parts. I hadn't realized they sell brands besides Ford, and also had locations in North Carolina, Michigan and California. Adjoining the large building for the business, they have another probably 200' building full of old cars, many of them with 20 miles or less--never titled, brand new. A motley assortment of many brands and many models, again telling us they were all driven. There was also a considerable Kodak collection.

CTCI really did it right. We had two wonderful buses that took us from our hotel to the convention center, as well as to places that were distant or had limited parking, always giving us bottled water, treats and friendly chatter. We had the right amount of time at each event and each place welcomed us with open arms, doing their best to give us an intelligent visit. We never saw a glitch the entire time and, of course, we

were surrounded by good T-Bird people.

At the crack of dawn on Sunday, Monica and I headed for the beach. She found another place not part of a chain and we had a wonderful breakfast. When we had to turn the Mustang in at noon, we took an Uber to explore. (We explored every day.) There were approximately a jillion people at the Orlando airport but Monica got us through. Although she lives in eastern Kansas City, she took me to the airport at 2:00 a.m. to fly out and took me home at midnight when we returned--then she went home and was at work before 8:00. A few days later, she gave me a lovely photo album of our trip. We really had a wonderful time and my Mustang neighbor, Liz Keller, took good care of my beloved cat and our two strays.

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*Kansas City Star* November 6, 2023

**The earth's fresh water is getting saltier, and people are to blame.**

Increased salt concentrations could "become an existential threat" to our fresh water supplies.

The big source of salt in the U.S. is road salt, which communities use in the winter for de-icing. From 2013-2017, road salt made up 44% of the country's entire salt consumption. The magnitude to which we have altered one of earth's natural cycles is alarming. We are salting the earth where it shouldn't be salted. Changes are an existential threat to freshwater supplies. Only around 3% of earth's water is fresh and the salt is increasingly spoiling the small inventory.

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To paraphrase Charles Darwin, *Evolve or Die* *Car and Driver* Nov 2023

"That imperative applies to cars as well as animals and plants. Take the automotive species known as Corvette: In a bid to stay relevant, it branched off of its evolutionary tree for 2020 when the C8 generation sprouted an engine behind the seats and turned into something not unlike an Italian supercar. The C8 deepened its Ferrari-ness with the Z06 and its naturally aspirated flat-plane-crank V-8, an engine that yawps like it escaped from a Maranello dyno cell. Now comes the next evolution of the C8, the 2024 E-Ray, with a hybrid powertrain, all-wheel drive, and standard all-season tires that bring it ever closer to being a four-season supercar. And don't worry about it trading away performance in the name of saving fuel; it's fast. Very, very fast.

Unlike the growing population of hybrid supercars, such as the Ferrari 296GTB and the McLaren Artura, the E-Ray can't be plugged in, and its motor is purely a power adder rather than an efficiency enhancer. The E-Ray's genetic makeup comes courtesy of both the base Stingray and the ZO6. The Stingray donates its 495-hp pushrod 6.2-liter V-8, performance exhaust, and eight-speed dual-clutch automatic. The ZO6 lends its wider body, optional carbon-ceramic brakes, and steamroller-size tires. The hybrid system consists of a compact electric motor driving the front wheels that lives in a small space in front of the passenger cell, a 1.1-kWh battery stuffed into the tunnel that runs between the passengers, additional coolers to control battery temperature, and the software to make it all work.

The hybrid system fattens the power curve by 160 horsepower for a system total of 655 horses--just 15 shy of the ZO6's output--and spins up 125 pound-feet of torque on its own. Hybrid propulsion isn't the only first for a Corvette, though. The E-Ray is also the first Vette with all-wheel drive, as well as the first that combines carbon-ceramic brakes with all-season tires. The E-Ray comes standard wearing specially developed high-performance Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 rubber.

The E-Ray's 10.6-second, 128-mph quarter-mile dash is 0.1 second and 3 mph behind the quickest ZO6s over that distance; beyond that point, the ZO6 gradually stretches its lead. The E-Ray's 1.08-g skidpad fling and 152-foot stop from 70 mph are behind the best the ZO6 mustered, no doubt owing to the E-Ray's lesser tires and 3965-pound curb weight--roughly 300 pounds of additional mass compared with the ZO6. Both cars, according to Chevy, pull to similar top speeds: 183 mph for the E-Ray and 189 for the ZO6 with the most aggressive aero add-ons."

"To appreciate the \$104,495 Corvette E-Ray, you must overlook the \$112,295 Corvette ZO6 and the siren song of its 670-hp flat-plane-crankshaft V-8. Ignore that, and the 655-hp E-Ray delights. Its 495-hp V-8 and 160-hp electric motor complement each other like Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippett in their prime. As impressive as the E-Ray is, the ZO6's \$7800 upcharge strikes me as a small price to pay for such a big-time baller. -Greg Fink "

Lois Vaille, who's had many collector cars (even a firetruck) and lives across the street from Liz, says she hasn't been interested in Corvettes since she saw one disintegrate in an accident.

## **Say, Are You Handy With a Wrench? *Car & Driver* November 2023**

Do you think the Ford F-150 Raptor would be a great truck if only it had a better suspension? Got about \$25,000 of extra cash and a late-model Ford F-150? Well, then, Factory Five Racing has the perfect project for you. The XTE, its newest kit, transforms a stock F-150 into something you could drive down to Ensenada and enter in the next Baja 1000. We're not sure which class it would land in, but you'll have plenty of time to research that while you're figuring out what to do with a stock F-150 frame. Because you won't be needing that anymore.

Prior Factory Five offerings hewed to the time-honored kit-car practice of scavenging donor hardware from a production car to build something entirely different--like using Subaru WRX guts to create the 818 or Corvette parts to animate the GTM supercar. The XTF is different in that you start with an F-150 and end up with an F-150, albeit one with newly acquired off-road superpowers. This requires building the truck from the frame up.

When your idea of a proper suspension means 16 inches of travel up front and 20 inches at the rear, the stock Ford frame isn't wide enough or strong enough (for reference, a Raptor R manages 13.0 inches of front travel and 14.1 inches at the rear). Thus, the centerpiece of the XTF kit is an entirely new tube frame that replaces the stock ladder frame. Factory Five claims its frame weighs 100 pounds more than the Ford item but is nearly twice as strong, using 327 total feet of tubing. Installing it might not be as daunting as you'd expect, given that the 2015 and later F-150's cab is a self-contained unit--unbolt it, unplug the wiring harnesses, and pluck it out of the way with an engine hoist or lift. The cab is watertight, so an XTF intender who's short on space could leave it outside while working on the frame and suspension in the garage.

The \$24,990 kit is intended for 2015-20 F-150 four-by-fours with the 5.0-liter V-8 or the turbocharged 3.5-liter V-6 (newer trucks have changes that make Factory Five's kit incompatible). You'll need the crew cab with the 5.5-foot bed and 26-gallon fuel tank. And yes, the ideal prerunner truck would likely be a two-wheel-drive regular cab with the V-8, but Factory Five wanted to design the kit around a truck people actually buy. Indeed, this first finished XTF is based on an everyday 3.5-liter EcoBoost Lariat, which once upon a time left the line in Dearborn as a nice family truck. It's a little different now."

**(TWO PAGES NOT COPIED.)** "If you've got the requisite mechanical skills, the XTF kit is an intriguing value proposition: For about the price of a Raptor, you might build a truck with far wilder looks and

capability while maintaining stock Ford interior amenities and powertrain reliability. (Hiring someone to build it will likely add nearly \$20K). And when it comes time to register, insure, or finance the truck, it's just an F-150 with a factory VIN rather than a homebuilt kit car. Of course, Raptors are also upgraded under the hood. But easy mods are there for the taking--this EcoBoost truck included a low-restriction intake and exhaust that gave it a Ford GT soundtrack, and Factory Five is already building a supercharged V-8 truck to see what happens when 700 or so horsepower join the party."

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**2022 Cadillac CT5-V Blackwing    *Car and Driver*    November 2023**  
**668hp supercharged V-8, manual transmissions**

The CT5-V Blackwing is one-of-a-kind phenomenal, with the best parts of a buttoned-up luxury sedan and a rowdy pony car. There's the positive six-speed manual and the bombastic V-8 that can--depending on how you use it--start conversations or cut them off mid-sentence, and we especially appreciate the extra rasp when starting this engine cold. Yet the modest 19-inch wheels and magnetorheological dampers contribute to an uncannily smooth and comfortable ride quality. This is the kind of shape-shifting, do-it-all masterpiece that makes for an ideal daily driver. That may sound hyperbolic, but at our annual Lightning Lap competition at Virginia International Raceway, the CT5-V Blackwing turned a time within a half-second of the C8 Corvette's, while its huge trunk and adult-friendly back seat made it an easy choice for a family getaway.

"With lap times near Corvette range, plenty of interior stretch-out space, and luxury-grade ride quality, the Blackwing feels like at least two cars in one, which makes its \$84,990 base price seem, if not a bargain, at least reasonable."

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**The GAZOO Racing-Developed GR Corolla and Yaris Are Transforming the Way Toyota Builds Performance Cars    *Car and Driver*    November 2023**

"Propelled into being for the 2023 model year by former CEO and all-around car guy Akio Toyoda, the GR Corolla is the handiwork of Toyota's performance and motor sports division, Gazoo Racing. With all-wheel drive, a 300-hp turbo inline-three, and a close-ratio six-speed manual, this effervescent sport compact materialized as a larger, North American-focused compatriot of the GR Yaris, which forms the basis for Gazoo's top-tier World Rally Championship (WRC) race car. The four-door GR Corolla's exuberance at a \$36,995 starting price quickly earned it a 10Best award, plus a place among Toyota's best homegrown performance machines next to the two-door Yaris.



Perhaps fittingly, both cars are produced at the same facility that previously built the \$350,000 Lexus LFA. (Assembly of Toyota's CR86 and GR Supra models falls to their respective development partners, Subaru and BMW.)

Japan's Little Midori Hell - The Toyota Technical Center Shimoyama, located in the lush mountains near the company's Toyota City headquarters, began partial operations in 2019 and played a significant role in the development of the GR Corolla. Built at a cost of more than \$2 billion, the 1608-acre site encompasses various test tracks. The headliner is its country-road handling course, a 2.2-mile roller coaster of a track inspired by Germany's famed Nurburgring Nordschleife. Split into two lanes and incorporating pavement undulations for ride-quality testing, the course climbs, falls, and bends across 246 feet of elevation change and around some 32 corners. With blind switchbacks, sharp rises that can launch cars into the air, and fast, driving sweepers, it's a challenging playground for chassis engineers. Towering catch fences keep vehicles on track in the event of an accident, for both driver safety and protection of the surrounding landscape, much of which remains untouched for environmental conservation."

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**On campus with the auto union    The Week    November 3, 2023**

"The autoworkers' union has fewer autoworkers than you'd think, said Andrea Hsu in NPR.org. Roughly 100,000 of the 383,000 members of the United Autoworkers Union live and work far from any car manufacturing plant. They're academics, including 'graduate students who work as teaching and research assistants, clerical and technology workers adjunct professors and postdocs.' The UAW, which is striking over contract negotiations with the Big 3 Detroit automakers, has long looked outside the auto industry for its membership; its full name is the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America. In recent years, 'academic workers have been joining the UAW, helping the union maintain its numbers as its share of autoworkers has dwindled.' The university of California system alone has more UAW members than Stellantis, the car company. Some students have joined protests in solidarity with their autoworker brethren.

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**The bottom line    The Week    November 3, 2023**

The share of subprime auto borrowers at least 60 days past due on their loans rose to 6.11 percent in September, the highest in data going back to 1994. For those with the worst credit, interest rates on car loans are about 14.18 percent and 21.38 percent for new and used cars, respectively.    Bloomberg

**Yahoo, online:**

**"Lucid says it's luxury sports sedan, Air Sapphire, goes 0-60 in 1.89 seconds with a top speed of 205 and does 427 miles on a single charge. But in recent videos on the You Tube channel, "Ultimate Drive Race Replay," Model S Plaid was seen absolutely smoking the Lucid Air in a series of tests.**

**Tesla's Plaid goes to 60 in 2.1 seconds with top speed of 200 mph and 370 miles on a charge. The Air Sapphire offers unsurpassing performance, agility and versatility for \$249,000. Tesla's Plaid is \$89,990.**

**Saudi Arabia's stake in Lucid dropped in value more than \$50 billion as the EV startup struggles. Saudia Arabia's sovereign fund has a 60% stake in Lucid Motors. After Lucid went public in 2021, Saudi's 60% ownership stake in Lucid was valued at more than \$55 billion, said *Bloomberg*. That stake is now worth \$5.4 billion. In a previous quarter, the company reported a net loss of about \$764 million, which suggests the startup is losing \$500,000 for every car it sells."**

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**Mexico - A side Door Into the US *Bloomberg Businessweek* November 6, 2023**

**"This year, Mexico eclipsed China as the biggest exporter of goods to the US. But that doesn't tell the whole story of how its economic relationship with the colossus next door--and the rest of the world--is changing. Since 2017, the value of Mexico's imports from China has been growing faster than that of Mexican exports to the US.**

**The reason for this growth is that many of the manufacturers opening plants in Mexico's border states these days are Chinese companies, selling everything, whether car parts or furniture, with a focus on the US market. The Mexican Association of Private Industrial Parks surveyed its members earlier this year and learned that they expect that over the next two years, 1 in 5 of the new businesses setting up shop will be Chinese.**

**In April, TDI Manufacturing Mexico, an offshoot of Zhejiang Yinlun Machinery Co., a Chinese supplier of cooling systems for cars and heavy machinery, opened a 152,000-**

square-foot facility in Hofusan Industrial Park, near Monterrey, where all the tenants are Chinese."

## **Poland - Battery Powerhouse**

When Poland's government announced last year that the country would be building its own brand of electric vehicles, called Izera, it was a clear signal that a nation that once boasted several of its own marques had bigger ambitions than being a production hub for Western European automakers. State-owned ElectroMobility Poland signed an agreement with China's Geely Holding Group Co. in 2022 to supply the technology for the project. Production of a hatchback model and an SUV is scheduled to begin at the end of 2025 at a plant located in the coal mining heartland of Silesia.

Poland already has well-established links to the European auto industry, and giants such as Volkswagen AG and Mercedes-Benz Group AG are setting up plants to manufacture EVs in the country. But foreign investment has surged in recent years, with a significant portion of the \$125.1 billion in greenfield investment it has attracted since 2017 coming from further afield.

Poland sits behind only China in global battery production rankings, hosting the likes of LG Chem, Northvolt, SK Innovation and Umicore. Shipments of made-in-Poland lithium-ion batteries totaled 38 billion zloty (\$9.1 billion) last year, equivalent to 2.4% of all exports, according to official data.

The proliferation of battery plants has been accompanied by a jump in imports of raw materials, such as graphite, from China. The value of China's exports to Poland has risen 112% since 2017, to \$38.2 billion last year. The dependence on Chinese inputs is widely seen as a potential vulnerability for Europe's nascent EV industry, which is also under assault from a tide of imports of generally lower-priced Chinese plug-in cars.