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Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club



A CTCI Multiple GOLD MEDALLION and GOLD AWARDS Winning Newsletter

Convention Edition - CTCI Region 4

Thunder Roads lead to FL Friendliest Home Town




This group of members, plus Len/Linda Royston, made history for CTCI and our Chapter as we were awarded the Inaugural Winner of the Ron McCloud Memorial Award for most miles driven to a CTCI Convention in a Modern Classic / Retro Thunderbird!



The Annual Picnic was another success at the Cardwell's.



These three are relaxing after a climb to look at one of the waterfalls on the N C Waterfall Tour II.

Look inside this issue for more stories/pictures.



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Chapter #116 Meeting Date

When? Thursday, November 16, 2023;
Where? Olive Garden in Bearden ; 7206 Kingston Pike
Time? 7:00pm for meeting, Come early for Dinner

November Birthdays

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Sandra Quillin | 2 |
| Jerry Satterfield | 5 |
| Alice Oberender | 6 |
| Theresa Bayer | 9 |
| Jerry Henley | 11 |
| Rusty Kean | 19 |
| Sharon Jurkonie | 20 |
| Patsy Cox | 24 |

Birthdays / Anniversaries

For Bird Lovers



December Birthdays

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Nathalie Teske | 1 |
| Lisa Green | 3 |
| Jeff Morgan | 16 |
| Steve Pribanich | 19 |
| Jim Brown | 25 |
| Bill Bock | 25 |

November Anniversaries

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| George & Pat Cagle | 4 |
| Errol & Karen Sue Keith | 4 |
| Bill & Sharon Jurkonie | 10 (2001) |
| Shawn & Joanne Tallant | 11 (1978) |
| Lanny and Patsy Cox | 15 (1980) |
| Eric and Sally Klemish | 23 (1974) |
| Tom & Katie Holvey | 26 (1981) |

**Congratulations to
 Shawn/Joanne Tallant
 on their
 45th Anniversary.**

December Anniversaries

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Hal & Suzanne Kloberdanz | 22 (1972) |
| Nolan & Laura Sharbel | 26 (1971) |
| Trey & Sahra Ratledge | 30 |



"The President's Corner"

Boy, our weather sure changed in a hurry - mid-80's to mid-50's overnight. And below-freezing temps! I had to jump into overdrive to make sure the boat and the 5th wheel would be safe. Talk about scrambling, I was running all over the place to get things done. But don't put those T-birds away yet. We have more coming.

We had a couple of great events over the last 2 months. The first was the Waterfalls Drive. This time the weather cooperated with us. No rain, no wind, no power outages. Thanks to the Rawes and the Roystons for their efforts to put on a great trip.

Also, we just returned from the CTCI convention in The Villages, Florida. We had 8 T-birds and one Ford in a caravan down to Florida. Many of us won awards for our cars; and, as a club, we won the new "Ron McCloud Memorial Award" for the highest round-trip mileage to a CTCI convention. Read more about the trip in this issue.

And September 10, we had our annual picnic and club meeting hosted by the Cardwells. We had a large turnout and lots of good BBQ and desserts. Thanks Peggy and Jerry.

November 10 is the annual Veteran's Day Parade in downtown Knoxville. So far, we have 13 cars in the parade. Our cars are always a fan favorite. If you can't be there, you can watch it live on tv or youtube later..

We have our next meeting on Nov 16th at the Olive Garden in Bearden. Hope to see you there. We will have elections for new officers and a preview of 2024 events.

Have a great Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.

Frank Navratil



www.SmokyMountainThunderbirds.org



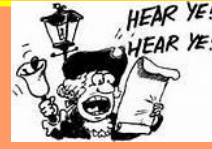
EDITORS CORNER

THE BIRD WORD publication is issued near the end of the EVEN-numbered month by The Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club. Send articles and items of interest to the Editor, Bill Long, at the email address on the front page.



Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2023



Recorded by
Mendi Edwards
[Edited for space.]

President, Frank Navratil called the meeting to order held at the Club picnic at Jerry and Peggy Cardwell's home at 2:30 pm. He welcomed 36 attendees. Frank also welcomed new members, Alex and Diane Alenitsch, from Crossville, TN.

Membership Report: Mendi Edwards submitted that there was a new member added, Lisa Green, making the current membership 65; total participants = 113.

Perry Anthony Award: Frank Navratil passed the Perry Anthony Award book, in Jim Norgaard's absence, which was signed by all members present.

Minutes: Minutes from the July 2023 meeting were posted on the SMCTC website, in *The Bird Word*. There were no comments or questions regarding the minutes. Bill Long moved and Sharon Jurkonie seconded that the minutes of the July 2023 meeting be approved. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer, Rick Rawe, reported on the balance in the checking account and the Money Market. Donna Long moved and Mark Edwards seconded that the Treasurer report be accepted. Motion passed.

Newsletter Report: Bill Long, Editor of *The Bird Word*, shared that Tech News/tips, articles and write ups for the newsletter are always needed! He also mentioned that he would appreciate some pictures from those that are going on the Falls Tour.

CTCI Upcoming Regional Convention: Bob Bly reported that the Registrations are coming in. Bill Long added that the Ford Johnson award is given to the Club that collectively traveled the most miles in their Early Classics to attend a Convention. There is now a new award for the Club whose members collectively drive their Modern Classics for the most miles to a Convention. This award will be named in honor of Ron McCloud of the Rebel Classic CTC of upper East Tennessee. Ron made the proposal to get a vote by the members on the issue of CTCI accepting the Modern Classics at our Convention in 2018. He was lost to COVID in 2020.

Sunshine Report: A sympathy card was sent to Jim Norgaard at the passing of his brother in Iowa and a card was sent to Denise Trulli, who had knee surgery.

Recent Events:

August 5th, Breakfast at the Hilton.

August 22nd, Thunderbird Reunion in Dearborn. Bob Bly reported that the reunion was a great success and there will be an article submitted for the next Bird Word.

August 26th, Drive to The Farmhouse Restaurant in Etowah. Jerry was not present to report on this event.

Upcoming Events:

September 19: Waterfall Drive II hosted by the Rawes and Roystons. Linda Royston reported the tour is now full. A packet was handed out to the attendees present with details about the drive.

October 7: No Meeting Breakfast at the Hilton. Beverley Hammond, Host.

October 14: & November 8: Roads Less Traveled Tour – More info to follow. Jerry Satterfield, Host.

October 24-29 CTCI International Convention – Register now!

November 11: Veteran's Day Parade, Knoxville. [Actual Parade date is Nov. 10] (ed.) More info to follow.

New Business: Frank mentioned that the SMCTC Website has been down temporarily and Bill and Donna Long have worked through the very difficult, time-consuming task of getting the website transferred to WIX. The Domain Name remains the same; "SmokyMountainThunderbirds.org" and should be up and running on September 12.

The new banner, magnetic car signs and windshield decals were on display at the picnic. If you want a magnetic sign (\$20.00), please contact Rick Rawe. The windshield decals were passed out to the members at the meeting. These should be in the lower corner of the windshield on the driver's side. If any members are interested in getting a decal, please let Rick Rawe know.

Elections will be coming up in November. There has been one member who has come forward interested in a position. Please let Frank know if you are interested in filling the position of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Director at Large, Activities Coordinator or Newsletter Editor.

Other Business: Rusty Kean has some 1957 Thunderbird parts; valve covers, speedometer cable, driver's window, star burst hub caps, rims and an after market convertible top. Please contact Rusty if you are interested.

Club Shirts, Jackets, Hats, etc: Please contact Sylvia if you are interested in getting a new club shirt/hat with our updated logo.

Club Cards: Club cards are available. Members can contact Frank Navratil or Rick Rawe if any would like some.

Name Badges: Please contact Mendi Edwards if you need to replace or purchase club name badges.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 16 at 7:00 pm at the Olive Garden in Bearden; 5:30pm for dinner!



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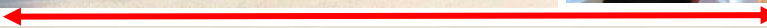
Event Report

"No Meeting" Breakfast - October 7, 2023

Approximately twenty T-Birders gathered at the Airport Hilton on Saturday, October 7 for food and conversation. Normal host Bev Hammond was scheduled to be out of town, but a broken bone kept her in Knoxville, but unable to attend the breakfast. Bill Long subbed for her.

There was a nice collection of Early and Modern Classics in the parking lot with one big sister of theirs, a 1962 Roadster. And when the waitress and her kids went to the parking lot to choose the free breakfast, the kids chose the bright red 1962! She said that red was the kids favorite color. Lucky Bob Bly was the beneficiary.

Our next scheduled meeting occurs in December but the timing of the Christmas Party may cancel it. Be sure and check the website before driving over. If that is the case, our next No-Meeting Breakfast will take place next year in February. If you are in the area on the first weekend, join us for a for a No-Meeting Breakfast. You too might just win a free meal like Bob Bly did! Watch for the announcement from Host, Beverley Hammond, and let her know of your plans.





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Event Report

CLUB PICNIC

Hosted by Peggy and Jerry Cardwell



On Sunday, September 10th, our 2023 Annual Picnic and September Meeting was again hosted by Peggy and Jerry Cardwell at their Barn-Home. There were some 36 attendees and included one newer couple driving over from the Central Time Zone in Crossville. They were the Alenitsch's, Alex and Diane. Founding member Houston Ratledge and CJ made the scene again, showing progress in his recovery.



The Burdettes from Rogersville were in their Bronze 1957 and the Navratils came in their Coral Sand 1957. Those two Early Classics complimented Peggy's Dusk Rose 1957; and most everyone else came in a Modern Classic, which presented a wide variety of colors and model years.

The meeting was finished in a record time as the food smells covered the room and soon the line formed to start filling those plates. The caterer's spread was supplemented by appetizers and desserts brought by the attendees. Jerry surprised everyone by providing ice cream from his ice cream machine.



The fellowship flowed throughout the crowd. Many discussions took place in anticipation of the upcoming Waterfalls Tour to North Carolina. Packets of information were passed out to the registered attendees and the tour was "Sold Out". Promises were made that NO RAIN was included in this year's attempt. [Results of that promise and the tour are reported elsewhere in this issue.]

{Thanks to Jerry and Peggy for a super time.}





A Event Report

NC Waterfalls Tour 11

Planned by Linda/Len Royston & Janice/Rick Rawe



It was an early fall morning as our flock of birds gathered at the IGA in Townsend, just as we had done in August of 2021. The big difference, it was not raining. Our group was ready to make a second attempt at the Waterfall Tour. Our 2021 tour was cut short by a tropical storm that dumped eight inches of rain in just a few hours on our flock as we attempted to complete our designated routes. Roads were closed and no power at our hotel. No fewer than eight warnings for tornadoes were issued on our trip; and we were hampered with fog, high water, poor visibility, and road closures.

The Roystons and the Rawes, determined to try again, offered the club another opportunity. We had 34 members who decided to take the challenge. Most of the group had made the original trek, but this time we were pleased to have new members join the flight. There is no better way to get immersed in the club than an overnight tour. Alex and Diane Alenitsch, Hal and Suzanne Klobberdanz, Jerry and Rayna Henley, Charlie Hensley and Kathy Fahey, Vivian Snellman, John and Kathy Sullivan, Tom and Denise Washburn, Donnie and Ellen Zinsmeister were all first timers to the tour; and several were new to the club.



The Zinsmeisters, who drove their '56 from Alabama, were given the honor of being first in line as theirs was the only true classic in the lineup. The rest of the flock followed in modern classics with the exception of Mark and Mendi Edwards who graciously carried the coolers for our beverages and dinner fixings in their SUV. The Sullivan's bird had an electrical issue and was not able to fly with us; but as is our club custom, it's about the people and fellowship, not what is driven.



Bob's horns are showing and it's not yet his Halloween birthday.



No one walked away hungry from Fat Buddies.





A Event Report

NC Waterfalls Tour 11



The weather and the temperature were perfect, the waterfalls had plenty of water for us to enjoy. At Dry Falls, we were able to take a short hike and walk under the falls. The next stop was White Water Falls, where we were treated to a beautiful display of falls and cascades. Then off to Gorges State Park, a pristine rain forest that has not been altered by man. An informative presentation was made at the visitor's center. We traveled on to Echo Mountain Inn just outside of Hendersonville. After check-in, we enjoyed appetizers, salad, pizza and dessert for dinner.



Dry Falls



Bridal Veil Falls



The Badinia Music Box in Lake Lure Inn lobby.

Wednesday morning, after a bountiful buffet breakfast, we traveled to Chimney Rock and Lake Lure. We visited the 1927 Lake Lure Inn and Spa. This was the location where scenes of the movie *Dirty Dancing* were filmed. We were treated to a demonstration of a German-made music box called *Badinia* which plays seven instruments. It is one of two in existence (the other is in Japan) and was built in 1890 for a yacht.



Club cars in front of Lake Lure Inn.



A Event Report

NC Waterfalls Tour 11



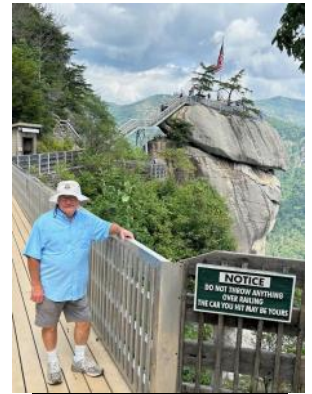
Several of our members explored Chimney Rock, a soaring 315 foot rock formation overlooking Lake Lure. You could take the trail or ride the elevator that passes through a bore in the rock. The views were breath taking from the top. Other members chose to go back to Hendersonville to visit apple orchards and the many antiques shops and boutiques.



Mike makes a mean banana split according to the Rawes.

Some enjoyed lunch at Mike's on Main, an old drug store complete with a counter and the traditional soda jerk making ice cream floats and sundaes for those who still had room after the homemade sandwiches, soups and salads.

As the day progressed, several members drove the short distance from our Inn to Jump-Off Rock. A view that is spectacular to say the least as it over looks valleys with the mountains in the back ground. Later that evening we enjoyed dinner in a private dining area at Binion's Road House.



Charlie Hensley with Chimney Rock in background.

On the final day, we enjoyed another scrumptious breakfast buffet before our trek back across the mountain. This day included Looking Glass Falls, my personal favorite, and a leisurely drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Well, leisurely refers to lack of traffic, but with all the wonderful sights of the mountains, flora, and the twists and turns, it was a challenge to stay focused on the road. We got off the Blue Ridge and had lunch at the Maggie Valley Sandwich Shop. There were several signs warning us of Elk Crossings. I was only able to spot one Elk the entire trip and it was not at the crossing. Is it illegal for an Elk to jaywalk?

After lunch the group was given a couple options for the return home. We said our good byes and flew off in different directions. After 450+ miles of touring, we reflected on how much fun and fellowship we enjoyed. Touring is really a bonding agent for the club, and I challenge those club members who do not participate in the tours to give it a try.

Submitted by Len Royston



Len and Linda Royston at Looking Glass Falls.

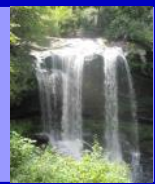




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Event Report



NC Waterfalls Tour 11

Random Shots



Photos courtesy of Hal/Suzanne Kloberdanz, Charlie Hensley/Kathy Fahey, Frank/Donna Navratil, Mark Edwards, Len/Linda Royston, Kathy Sullivan, Bob Witt and Bill Long



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Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

CTCI's Region 4 Convention was envisioned as the first of a new type of Touring Convention. Without another Convention in 2023 to document fresh restorations, CTCI encouraged the Central Florida Club and its energetic leader Ralph Cowell to add judging to the format. The logistic and financial situation at the host hotel required a number of innovative actions to accommodate the change. The availability of a nearby Community Center with space (grass covered), rooms and a moderate price tag turned out to be the answer to so many questions. The movement of the judging portion to earlier in the week made this a unique CTCI Convention and maybe a model for future ones.

One additional unique feature for this event was the passage of a CTCI By-Laws change which included the Modern Classics/Retros as equals. So the show became the first time in CTCI history where the newer 2-passenger Thunderbirds were welcomed to the affair. The Central Florida host club embraced this change and worked diligently to welcome the new members. A preliminary judging format and numerous award opportunities were designed into the plan and the show was on!

The result was a well-planned and well-orchestrated event attended by some 250 attendees from about 30 US states, Canada and Sweden. Fifty-seven cars graced the show field. Twenty percent of the attendees were first timers. Fifteen other clubs made donations to offset some of the expenses.

The Smoky Mountain Chapter decided to support the event with attendance, manpower, planning assistance and financially. Sharon and Bill Jurkonie served as Concours Chair and did most of their work before we even got to Florida. Following is a report on many of the activities of the show as well as the trip down and back as described by a variety of attendees. The result was a fun-filled several days enjoyed by fifteen of our local members. We hope you enjoy it! I know we did!

The Drive Down by Kathy Fahey

On Saturday, October 21 at 12:44 pm, one 1957 T-Bird and seven Retros departed from Vonore, all clean, bright and shiny to start their flight to the CTCI Convention in Florida. Well, all but one – Charlie Hensley's Retro won the award for the most bird poop.

Bill Long began as leader of the flock in his award-winning Azure Blue 1957 T-Bird. Each car had 7 pages of directions containing 38 turns to make over the 2 ½-day flight on the backroads to Florida. Some of the cities we passed through were Louisville, Lexington, Athens (Greece?), Cleveland, Oxford (England?), Bristol and Hoboken, none of which had a population of over 3,000. The drive was beautiful through the Chattahoochee National Forest. The roads were curvy and up and down mountains. Fall colors were close to full and the overlooks were spectacular.

We passed the "World's Largest Amish Chair", but Donna Long decided it wouldn't fit in her Edge.

Day 1 came to a close with 150 miles flown by the Birds



The Witts enjoy the views.



Watch where you park, Charlie.



A little big but probably wouldn't go with Donna's modern furniture anyway.



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Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCL Region 4 Convention

The Drive Down (Cont) by Kathy Fahey

Day 2 was a rather uneventful day – with old Birds, that is good. We drove a total of 260 miles. The scenery was beautiful and the roads became straighter, and the landscape flatter. We passed acres and acres of cotton fields. The cotton had been rolled into large, round bales (similar to hay in Tennessee), which we learned sell for around \$360. That's a lot of cotton. Also, it is illegal to grow cotton in Florida because of the boll weevils, little known fact.

We also passed extremely large groves of pecan trees – of course – we are still in Georgia.



After driving 260 miles, we gave the Birds a rest, fed them and put ourselves to sleep — but not before we celebrated with Donna Long on her 94th birthday. The other riders pitched in to have an impromptu celebration with cupcakes the Navratils had hidden in their tiny trunk. Unknown to everybody else, this was also the 66th birthday of the Azure Blue Bird in the parking lot. A full tank of Hi-test will have to do for her.

We stayed in Blackshear, GA – yes GA – still an hour away from Florida. And, one last little fact – so far we have passed 27 (give or take) Dollar General Stores. LOL

DAY 3

Believe it or not, after 1 ½ days of driving, we were still in Georgia! However, it wasn't long until we finally made FLORIDA!! The drive was through miles and miles of Loblolly Pines that are used for lumber. Music to Bob Witt's ears!

We stopped for lunch and began the last leg of our trip to the Villages. Maybe I shouldn't mention this; but when we left the restaurant, both of the restrooms were out of order. LOL

The last leg was through populated towns with lots of traffic and stop lights. Donna Long was a trooper and brought up the tail of the Birds for most of the trip. About 30 miles out, she was tired of being the tail and joined the flock. After 2 ½ days of flying, the Birds were finally able to roost at the Brownwood Hotel and Spa in the Villages. They deserve a rest, because the fun will soon begin.





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Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

The Judging Event by Bill Long

Judges training took place on Tuesday afternoon and SMCTC members were deeply involved in the process. Bill and Sharon Jurkonie were the Concours Chairs and did all the registration of, and assignment of, cars to the correct classes. Bill Long was involved in the training of the judges. Bob Bly was responsible for the Touring Class of Judging. In addition, Bob Witt, Charlie Hensley, Kathy Fahey and Frank Navratil were also judges for the show.

Wednesday morning was the start of the actual Judging. Bill Long's car, a 1957, was entered in the Concours Class. Several of the other SMCTC members were entered in the Display Class but included judging as well. Judging was concluded by mid-afternoon and the concern for the car's cleanliness was no longer an issue. We were free to enjoy the festivities. Results will be announced in the Banquet section later.

Other Wednesday activities were available for those not involved in the car show that included 1) A trolley tour of The Villages; 2) a self-drive tour of The Villages and lunch on your own; and 3) a guided tour of the Villages Eisenhower Recreation Center which has displays honoring Armed Forces members past and present.



The Activities and Tours by Bill Long

Wednesday evening was the Welcome Party. After some food and socializing with friends from across the country, the main entertainment appeared. A pair of performers did an excellent job of being Jake and Elwood, the Blues Brothers. They had the look, the sound and got the crowd into the show.



Kathy Fahey/Charlie Hensley and Bill/Donna Long warmed up the dancing floor and Vivian Snellman and member Betsy Brown from Ohio went onstage to back up the two singers. Donna Navratil got hooked up to the Congo line





A Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town 2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

The Activities and Tours (Cont) by Bill Long

Thursday was the day for the bus trip to Orlando for a tour of the Dezerland facility. In case you have not heard of it, it is an old shopping mall that someone (Michael Dezer) bought to store and display a portion of his own personal car collection. They claim to have the have the largest private collection of unusual vehicles in the world. It truly is unique and vast! Among its many items is the longest vehicle in the world. It has 26 wheels, will hold 75 passengers, has a hot tub, putting green and a Heliport. That's just a few of the items I'd like to see on my wheels—NOT! It is so long, the only place you could turn it around in on an air field!



Charlie was so busy, he had to take a call on the Bat Phone.

The collection has a Thunderbird Lounge, James Bond collection and large collection of cars used in TV and Movies. Yes, motor carts were available for people to ride around the large area. Data provided for the items in the collection was a little suspect as we noticed a 2001 Thunderbird in the Thunderbird Lounge. There obviously was no such thing and their VIN showed it was really a late model 2002 that had been painted a non-original color. Still an impressive collection.



The World's Longest Car Stats.

Later that afternoon was a presentation by Steve Legel on the "Greying of the Hobby." It was an interesting and entertaining discussion of how the newer generation is not as interested in our old cars (or STUFF in general) as we are. His advice is to enjoy your toys yourself because your kids/grandkids most likely will not.

This was followed by a discussion on the subject of judging of the Modern Classic/Retros, now that they have become a part of CTCI. There was no conclusion reached, but a number of ideas were tossed out; and a few members were selected to put together a plan and direction. The idea is to have a new program in place in time for the 2024 International Convention.

Friday was the day for the boat tour on Lake Dora, lunch in Mt. Dora and a tour of the Warren Wubker private collection at his home on Lake Dora. The boat tour was focused on the Dora Canal and the wildlife and wetland alongside the canal. Our guide pointed out dozens of different birds, plants, trees and gators as we floated along. We spotted a rarity, the convention leader and super dynamo, Ralph Cowell not in motion!

There was a small complication to one of the buses carrying part of the tour group. It seems the bus bottomed out while crossing an old railroad rail and the door jammed, preventing anyone from getting off for about 45 minutes. Luckily, we were on the other bus, but some of the SMCTC attendees were on that bus.



An eagle at watch.

A RARE shot of Ralph Cowell taking a rest on the tour boat.





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Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

The Activities and Tours (Cont) by Bill Long

The Warren Webker private collection was a real treat. This wealthy gentleman lives in a modest fabulous estate on the edge of Lake Dora. We did not go into the home, but did view the pool and lake view on our way to the second level of his "Man Cave." We felt a little nostalgic when we saw "Thunder Road" was playing at his private "Roxy" theater. The theater and soda fountain café were on the upper level,

overlooking a simulated downtown Main Street USA with almost twenty of the nicest restored '50's era automobiles you've ever seen. They were each Amelia Island/Pebble Beach quality. The collection contained a white 1956 and a red 1962 Thunderbird Sports Roadster. The store windows on the shops were filled with authentic period-correct antique products.

Warren wandered among the guests and answered questions about each of the cars.



A look at a busy Main Street, USA as it looked then.



Bob thinks Warren has pretty good taste in cars.

As the buses returned from the tour, the Silent Auction of hundreds of Thunderbirds parts and memorabilia was ending. A session with the leadership of CTCI, began at the Community Center; and it allowed members to hear about the status of the Club and learn of its doings. Many of the Directors were there and the session provided an opportunity to get to know them and inquire about any related topic that you desired.

Saturday morning began with a swap-meet at the Community Center. Members were seen bargaining with a wide variety of parts, but the size of your trunk probably determined how serious the offer became. Shoppers and sellers alike quickly did their business so they could get ready for the driving tour.

The driving tour departed from the parking lot at the far end of the property where the Brownwood was located. Cars were divided into groups of 5-10 each and were released every two minutes, spacing out the caravans, to help them stay together. Very clear directions were given to each driver and off they went.



Charlie Hensley and Kathy led one of the mini-caravans.



A Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town 2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

The Activities and Tours (Cont) by Bill Long

The first stop on our driving tour was the "Big Daddy" Don Garlits complex. Don has a large parcel of land with the Museum of Drag-Racing and Antique car collection. A box lunch was included



and we sat on picnic tables while "Big Daddy" Don, a spry 90ish, sat on a stool and told a tale of his

life that was interesting and filled with humor. He went on for 45 minutes or more. He then stood around, taking questions and posing for pictures. Our ticket provided access to all of the buildings and the large group split up to look at all the autos and memorabilia on display. The cars parking in front of the Car Museum was quite a car show as well.



Bill and Big Daddy share some tall tales.

As soon as we were finished at Garlits', we were just a short drive from the NPD warehouse and private car collection. Rick Schmidt greeted us in the business lobby. Jim, his father and founder of the business, is a long time CTCI member with # 6; and he waited in the collection on a golf cart. They answered questions and shared stories of the cars on display, many of which were very low mileage in various levels of restoration. They were primarily Ford products, including three Lincoln Continental Mark II's from the 1950's once belonging to three of Henry Ford's grandsons. Several Thunderbirds were on display as well as trophies from several CTCI Conventions.



There was also an extensive Kodak photography equipment and supplies collection, for those of us who can remember when cameras were something that took pictures but you didn't talk into it.



Jim Schmidt and Bill share some memories of past times and common Thunderbird friends.



A Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

The Awards Banquet by Bill Long

Saturday evening was reserved for the dinner and the Awards Banquet. It began with a bagpipe playing Amazing Grace and Honor Guard presenting the colors, reminding all of us how lucky we are to be living in a great country where we are free to enjoy the car hobby that we all endorse. Host Ralph Cowell led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. A Missing Members Table, honoring those members whom we have lost since the last Convention, was placed near the front.

The dinner was a delicious B-B-Q meal of not one, but four choices of meat. The meat and fixings were lip-smacking good and everyone had their fill.

CTCI President Brian Carron began with thanks for the host club and their members. The sponsors were recognized and thanked. He then outlined a number of statistics on the convention and its attendees. Current and past CTCI leadership members were recognized. A blessing was said and we began eating.

After everyone was served, President Brian began with the Peoples Choices Awards. Our Club's Bob Witt ('02) and Frank Navratil ('05) won for their respective model year Modern Classic car. He outlined some CTCI accomplishments for this year.

He then began the Special Awards. The first of which was a newly-created award for the chapter with the most accumulated miles driven by its members to go to the Convention in a Modern Classic/Retro Bird. The new award was named in honor of our friend, Ron McCloud, from the other East Tennessee CTCI Chapter, the Rebel Classic Thunderbird Club.

Tragically, Ron was an early victim of COVID in 2020. He was known for driving his cars, especially Retros, to events all across the country. Ron's travel partner and good friend, Liz Smith, happened to be in the area and was able to attend and make the presentation to our Club President, Frank Navratil as the winner!

Another of the Special Awards was the Newsletter Contest winners. Bill Long was awarded a Gold Medal for our Club newsletter, *The Bird Word*.

After all the Special Awards, Brian turned over the mike to Bill Long, CTCI Concours and Convention Chair to announce the judges and car awards.

All the judges were asked to stand. That list included the following from our Club. Frank Navratil, Bob Witt, Bob Bly, Charlie Hensley and Bill Long as on-the-field judges and Team captains. Kathy Fahey got credit for her role as judging sheet auditor. Sharon and Bill Jurkonie received judging credit for their role in concours administration. There were no Judges Upgrades for our Club this year.

Next came the Display Modern Classics/Retros that had requesting judging. Region 4 Director, Jeff Burgy and Charlie Hensley presented the Awards. In the "Stock" category, Bob Witt received a 1st place for his Yellow 2002 and Frank Navratil also got a 1st place for his Red 2005. In the "Modified" category, Bill Jurkonie took a 2nd place for his green 2004 and Charlie Hensley took a 1st place for his Cashmere 2005.

The Concours Class awards came next. Our remote member, Marvin Hill did not own the car but restored and showed a 1957 Non-Original for Elio Mazzella and it won a Gold Award and a Gold Medallion. Bill Long's 1957 Non-Original picked up a Gold Award and a Gold Medallion. He was particularly pleased since he drove it to the event and the car was restored in 1990 and received its first Gold Medallion in 1991—a span of 32 years! We picked up a new member couple at the Convention who live in the Nashville area. Their names are Michael Coppola and Ann Zumwalt and their Original Inca Gold 1957 won a Gold Award, a Gold Medallion and an Excellence in Authenticity.

{Available photos are shown on the next page. Not all were captured in time for this publication}



A



Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town 2023 CTCL Region 4 Convention



Bob Witt receives a Peoples Choice award for his 2002 Modern Classic.

Just a few of the Award winners.

Photos of all the winners will be shown later.



Frank Navratil receives a Peoples Choice award for his 2005 Modern Classic.



Frank Navratil receives the Inagural Ron McCloud Memorial Award for SMCTC.



These SMCTC members, plus Len/Linda Royston, drove their Modern Classics to Florida to win the Inagural Ron McCloud Memorial Award for SMCTC.



Bill Long receiving a Gold Award for the Club newsletter.



All of the SMCTC Award winners are shown here. { New member Michael Coppola is shown on right.}

{Thanks to Len/Linda Royston, Kathy Fahey, Frank/Donna Navratil, Sharon/Bill Jurkonie and Bill Long for photos in this convention article.}



A



Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCL Region 4 Convention

The Return Home Ride by Donna Navratil

With numerous awards in our bags and many memories of friendships renewed, the Smoky Mtn Classic Thunderbird attendees headed out bright and early Sunday morning for the long ride home! The Navratils, Jurkonies, Longs, Roystons and Alyce Anthony flew out of the Brownwood Hotel in the Villages just about 9:00 am. Bob Bly and friend, Vivian Snellman, Charley Hensley and Kathy Fahey, and the Witts all headed in different directions so they did not join the rest of us on our return journey. Frank Navratil served as leader of the flock with his crack map-reader/navigator, Donna, at his side – easy to keep an eye on that red Retro-bird!

Thanks to the event planners who organized the drive to Dan Garlits' place the day before, we had a perfectly beautiful start to our drive through horse country around Ocala. No AC for the Navratils as we started out but no problem. The temps were in the 70's and the sun was shining so it was lovely driving with the windows cracked for a little breeze.

First stop of day one was a potty break outside Jacksonville. It has become apparent to us girls that these small town southern gas stations do not provide the luxury experience as those big highway truck stops! From there it was onward to Blackshear GA where, once again, we found all the restaurants to be closed on Sunday! Our choices were few; so we settled on McDonald's, only to find that post-Covid they have done away with both their salad choices and grilled chicken sandwiches! Hello McDonald's – not everyone wants their chicken fried!!

Oh well – shakes and McFlurries had to do the trick! An afternoon through small towns on county roads delivered us to the Comfort Inn in Thomson GA. As the temps began to rise throughout the afternoon, the Navratils were sure anxious to get a nice shower. To say this establishment was a little rough around the edges was an understatement! They could have used a rehab 10 years ago!! And a sign at the front desk alerted all who entered that there was a problem with the hot water! Never mind – off for a Mexican dinner. After margaritas anything would look good.



Margaritas are just the cure for a long day on the road. Even, if you have to share.



A



Event Report



Thunder Roads lead to FL's Friendliest Home Town

2023 CTCI Region 4 Convention

Monday morning was day two on the road home. Unfortunately, the water didn't warm up overnight at the Comfort Inn. Some of us took tepid showers and some of us opted out entirely. Good thing we were going home!

We all managed the tricky road changes around Athens GA like pros – roundabouts and cloverleaves, oh my! Then it was up to Commerce GA for a potty break at a Cracker Barrel – good potty but little or no shopping time for the girls. Everyone took the time to gas up here so we wouldn't get caught short on those north GA hills.

As we passed White County high school, just outside of Cleveland GA, Frank noticed Bill Long must have peeled off somewhere. Donna had been diligently searching the map for the left turn on Hwy 348 and hadn't noticed where Bill had left us. With Alyce carefully following behind us, we made a U-turn looking to find the elusive Hwy 348 once again. Only seeing a "right turn" to Hwy 348 we proceeded north once again.



With our lunch stop in the GPS, we decided to go it on our own and drive US-129 north to Blairsville through the beautiful Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. Alyce was a real trooper through this curvy road which was much like The Dragon! Fortunately for us, the 2 trucks in front of us were carrying drywall and not looking to win any races! Along the way we passed a cashmere Retro bird heading south and got a glimpse of the local watering hole – Jim's Roadkill Bar, as well as some beautiful scenery! Then, what do you know? In spite of 2 U-turns at the start of this leg, we still arrived at Cook's Country Kitchen ahead of the rest of the flock! We were rewarded with the best darn fried chicken ever! Take that McDonald's!!

So, what happened back at Hwy 348 you ask? Seems Mr. Bill inadvertently indicated on the directions that it was a "left turn" when it was, indeed, a "right turn"! Needless to say, modern GPS saved the day and no one was left

to wonder "Whatever happened to Frank, Donna and Alyce?"

After a hearty and satisfying lunch, we were off again to Vonore, where these remaining birds all flew off to their respective homes.

Another CTCI convention is history

Oh, by the way, just for fun the Navratil's decided to count the Dollar Generals from The Villages in Florida to Vonore, TN. Anyone have a guess? Well, the total number was 36!! Even though it might have seemed like 136 !

DOLLAR GENERAL®



All SMCTC members in attendance except, Len/Linda Royston, Jim/Betsy Brown and Marvin Hill



CLASSIFIED ADS

PARTS FOR SALE: George Kabalka found some left-over parts from his restoration of the Snow Queen.

- One—**master cylinder**—minor surface rust from setting around; 4 - **new wheel cylinders** for the Early Birds - in sealed plastic
- Price: \$40 for the set of 4 wheel cylinders and \$40 for the master cylinder. Phone number: 865-591-4232

FREE!

Perfect for the NEW CTCL member — Over 50 years of *The Early Bird* issues 1971—2022

Contact Editor, Bill Long; "TbirdBill@yahoo.com"

FREE!

For Sale: (all 1957 parts) 3 back bumpers; Headlight rim that goes on fender; Right hand door (no window assy);
1 Tail light plastic ring; For pricing contact Jeff Cook; 423-314-5664

One pair of brand new Thunderbird fender skirt seals. Free for pickup (Dandridge)
Contact: Lanny Cox; 1109 Country Club Road; Dandridge, TN 37725; (817) 996-1606

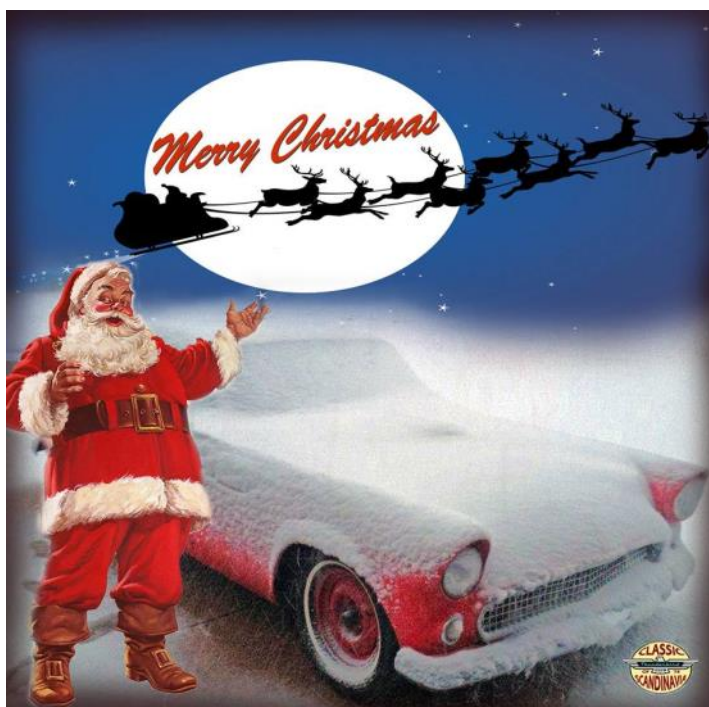


Four new in-wrappers 215/70R14 whitewall tires,
free for pickup. Located near Jamestown, TN.
I sold my Thunderbird and don't need them.

CONTACT: David Luinstra; Dluinstra@gmail.com or 931-349-7915

FREE!

If you have Thunderbird parts or other collectable "Treasures" you will like to turn into cash/trade, send your information to the Editor of this fine newsletter. Be sure to include pictures, prices and contact information to get good results.





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COMING ATTRACTIONS

KNOXVILLE VETERANS DAY PARADE: NOVEMBER 10;
LINE UP AT KNOXVILLE CONVENTION CENTER PARKING GARAGE.

CONFIRM WITH RICK RAWE 865-599-9350 OF YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND AND CHECK YOUR EMAILS/WEBSITE FOR MORE ABOUT LINE-UP TIME AND LUNCH AFTERWARDS.



Our next meeting is planned to take place:

**IMPORTANT
AGENDA ITEM:
OFFICERS ELECTION**

Date: Thursday November 16, 2023

Location: Olive Garden in Bearden

Time: Meeting at 7:00 pm, come 5:30pm-ish for dinner

**“NO MEETING” BREAKFAST
NEXT BREAKFAST IS TBD—WATCH EMAILS
9 AM: AIRPORT HILTON; ALCOA**

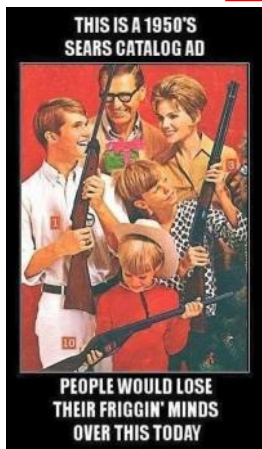
Christmas Party

— **THE FINAL “BLOW-OUT” PARTY OF THE YEAR IS TBD AT PRESS TIME.**

Date: & Location: are T-B-D; Watch your emails and check the website for updates.

Rules for Gift Exchange: This year’s rules have been submitted to the North Pole for approval. If not approved by party time, it will be a free-for-all as usual!

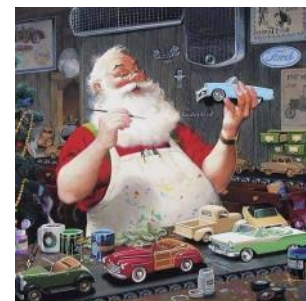
Watch your emails for more details and directions.



And just think how much SAFER we felt in those days



OOPS!





Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club...

is a not-for-profit organization based in the greater Knoxville, TN, area. There were a total of 53,166 Early Classic ('55, '56, '57) Thunderbirds and 68,098 Modern Classics ('02, '03, '04, '05) produced with a high percentage still registered and enjoyed by their owners and the public at large.

As the primary focus of the club is the restoration, preservation, and enjoyment of the Classic 2-passenger Thunderbirds; both the Early Classic ('55-'57) and the Modern Classic ('02-'05). Our events include tours, parades, public displays, technical sessions, and participation in CTCI Regional and International Thunderbird Concours events.

Please mail this completed membership form to:

Frank Navratil
221 Chickasaw Lane
Loudon, TN 37774



Frank Navratil, President
Jim Norgaard, Vice President
Mendi Edwards, Secretary
Rick Rawe, Treasurer
Mendi Edwards, Membership
248-953-0202

Club meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every other month beginning with January (odd months) at various locations in the Knoxville area. Meeting starts at 7pm. Come early for dinner on your own. Call Mendi Edwards at 248-953-0202 for details.

Visitors Welcome!

www.smokymountainthunderbirds.org

1-18 web

Interested in meeting some folks with the same love of the 2-passenger Thunderbirds that you have?



Wanna Have some "FUN-FUN-FUN!"

In the Smoky Mountain area of East Tennessee?



Join these fun-loving 2-passenger Thunderbird owners in the

Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club

Contact Mendi at 248-953-0202

**SMOKY MOUNTAIN CLASSIC
THUNDERBIRD CLUB (SMCTC)**

Membership Form
(Revised 1/2019) web

Thank you for joining the Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club. Included in your membership is a subscription to the club newsletter, 'THE BIRD WORD' with articles highlighting our events and news about the Thunderbird. Please return this form with your payment. And, don't forget to renew your membership in the Classic Thunderbird Club Intl. (CTCI)

SMCTC Yearly Dues are \$20.00

Please print legibly:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/St/Zip: _____

Please include this contact information:

Home #: _____ Business #: _____ Cell #: _____

E-Mail: _____ (Print legibly)

Make check payable to: Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club (SMCTC)
Mail to: Rick Rawe: 920 Westmoreland Blvd.; Knoxville, TN 37919
Phone: 865-539-6022

Classic Thunderbird International (CTCI) # _____. Please provide your CTCI # for insurance purposes. Please contact Mendi Edwards at 248-953-0202 or obtain an application form online at "www.CTCL.org".

| Birthday info. | Member | Spouse/Other |
|----------------|--------|--------------|
| Name | | |
| Month/Day | | |

Anniversary: Month/Day _____ Year (optional) _____

Veteran: _____ (Y or N) _____ Branch of Service _____

T-Bird Information:

| Yr | Yrs. Owned | Ext. Color | Int. Color | Stock | Modified | Custom | Data Plate (2 Lines) |
|----|------------|------------|------------|-------|----------|--------|----------------------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Thank you for your membership.

Office use only: Ck. # _____ Date: _____



**C.T.C.I. is America's
Premier
Thunderbird club**



OUR HISTORY

Classic Thunderbird Club International is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of the 2-passenger Classic Ford Thunderbirds of 1955-1957 and 2002-2005. Originally founded in Oakland, CA in 1961. We currently have approximately 4,000 members worldwide and 88 local chapter clubs.



| CARS BUILT | |
|------------|--------|
| 1955 | 16,155 |
| 1956 | 15,631 |
| 1957 | 21,380 |

This is the first Thunderbird to come off the assembly line. It was built on September 9, 1954.

OUR ACTIVITIES

Our members stay in touch and stay informed about all things Thunderbird through local chapter events and through our award-winning magazine,

"The Early Bird"

C.T.C.I. sanctions National and Regional conventions each year and our local chapter clubs embark on their own local club outings to interesting and scenic places in their local areas. And, of course, driving our beautiful "Classics" is highly encouraged and is one of the many joys of club membership.

OUR TECHNICAL HELP

The point of our club is to share knowledge and assistance while enjoying the ownership of our dream cars. As a member of C.T.C.I. you'll get to know some of the most knowledgeable people in the world who are all happy to share their knowledge and experience. Our member cars run the gamut from daily drivers to fully restored show cars. Our semi-monthly Early Bird magazine includes regular articles, pictures and tech tips that help you keep your machine rolling down the highway.



A Total of 68,095 Retro Birds Produced 2002 – 2005

JOIN US !

Fill out the attached card for a free issue of our "Early Bird" magazine and information about joining our club, visit www.ctci.org, or call us at 816-421-8273.



YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER CONTACT IS:

Smoky Mountain Classic Thunderbird Club

Contact Mendi at 248-953-0202



<https://www.ctci.org>

TELL ME MORE

Sign me up for my free issue of Early Bird and information about C.T.C.I.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

MY CAR

1955 1956 1957

2002 2003 2004 2005

Color: _____

When Did You Buy It? _____

Do You Belong To A Local Club?

Name of Club: _____

Classic Thunderbird Club International
P.O. Box 2053
Mission, KS. 66201

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