



Established 1981  
Chapter of the Vintage Thunderbird Club International  
[www.MichiganTBirds.org](http://www.MichiganTBirds.org)

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### Presidents Report April 2019

Flowers are blooming, trees are budding and it's time to get the T-Bird shined up for the 2019 season.

The March and April events were well attended. Our March (Roush Automotive Collection), thank you to David Savage and April (Stahl's Collection) thank you to George Roscoe and John & Barb O'Brien for planning these events.

Our "Spring Dust Off" Road Trip is scheduled for Saturday May 18 meeting at 9:30 at David & Jo Lau's home, 6870 N. Territorial Rd., Plymouth and cruising at 10:00. Plan for a full day of beautiful Michigan country roads with stops along the way and of course lunch at a popular spot near Irish Hills.

The year 2020 will be the 65th Anniversary of the Thunderbird. Nancy Seyfarth and JoAnn Rodriguez have begun making plans for this event but we need your help in planning this 65th event. We are forming a committee to further this wonderful event and all ideas will be considered. Please call Nancy (313) 4368327 or JoAnn (248-719-0160) with any suggestions or volunteer to join us on the committee.

Also, our All T-Bird Day is in need of items for our Goodie Bags. Please see JoAnn for a "Letter of Introduction" for this event which can be presented to your local auto repair shop or any car related business. Also, when cleaning out the garage or basement and find "car related items" that you no longer are interested in why not donate them to the club for the "Give Away Table" or "Stuff the Box." Contact JoAnn with these items.

Help us add some spice to our newsletter. Share with us a story of your car and how you got it, show us before and after pictures, and repairs in progress. We would like to hear about Road Trips, even a car cartoon or a joke. Submit your article to JoAnn – [joannbill801@comcast.net](mailto:joannbill801@comcast.net).

Have a wonderful Easter and enjoy the spring.

JoAnn Rodriguez, President

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## 2019 Schedule of Events:

Jan 26 (Sat) – Speaker St. Paul's Church

Feb 23 (Sat) – Tour Detroit Public Library

March 30 (Sat) - Roush Industries

April 6 (Sat) – Stahl Mfg.

May 18 (Sat) – Spring Dust Off Road Trip

June 23 (Sun) – Automotive Hall of Fame

July 21 (Sun) – Annual Picnic

Aug 11 (Sun) – Pre-Dream Cruise

Aug 25 (Sun) – Hines Park Cruise

Sept 15 (Sun) – All T-Bird Day

Oct 20 (Sun) – Hines Park Cider Cruise

Nov 10 (Sun) - Planning Meeting

Dec 1 (Sun) – Annual Christmas Party



## **Ford 427 SOHC Racing Engine Story – by Larry Seyfarth published in VTCI Thunderbird Scoop March/April 2019.**

This is a story about the personal events surrounding the creation of the legendary Ford 427 CID Overhead Cam (SOHC) racing engine.

While attending the 2018 VTCI international Convention in Tulsa OK we were visiting the Star-bird Automotive Museum and I was excited to see one of “my” SOHC engines in one of the performance cars. Ann Longaker was nearby, witnessed my excitement and later requested that I write a story for the Scoop about my experience helping to create the engine.

First, as in most large companies, many people are involved in the decisions and direction to bring an idea to reality. So, this story is simply from my personal perspective of being involved with Ford performance and racing for most of my Ford career.

Ford recruited me from Dearborn High School, put me on a training program and paid for all of my education.

Through a series of events, they soon realized I was an avid collector of Ford Motor Company and Ford family history and loved street racing with my older souped-up Fords, often beating the new Ford prototypes on the streets of Dearborn.

As a young design trainee, was put on the 1957 Thunderbird supercharger program and detailed the bracketing for mounting the supercharger. From that time on, whenever there was a performance program, I was usually involved, which included Indy, NASCAR and road racing like Cobras, GT40's & Mustangs.

Fast forward to the 1963 Daytona NASCAR events where the Chrysler Hemi's “destroyed” us with what we considered and illegal engine. The current NASCAR rules stated there must be at least 1500 similar engines available in the showrooms for the customer purchase. The facts were, Chrysler first sold a total of 493 Hemi's qualified at speeds just short of 175 MPH while the 427 CID Fords led by Parnelli Jones qualified at 169 MPH. Henry Ford II was furious and Monday morning following the race requested we obtain a NASCAR Chrysler Hemi engine, tear it down, inspect every part and then modify it to get the maximum horsepower without creating any new castings. Then create a new 427 CID NASCAR engine to beat the Chrysler Hemi by 100 horsepower.

I was given the assignment to lead the design with the huge challenge to create the new running engine in a few months in preparation for the very serious testing program and to win the 1964 Daytona race. Mr. Ford instilled confidence in my ability to pull this off by saying “this is called you bet your career, but I know you can do it.”

Fast forward again to the first build installed in early prototype 1964 Ford Galaxy. In addition to driving the dirty white Galaxy almost daily on the track, I was having a ball street racing this 184 MPH hot rod up and down Telegraph road on my way to and from Detroit pattern shop, which was doing the second series cylinder heads. The street racing was restricted to just fast enough to show them who was boss, but on the track it was flat-out.

Finally, with the 1964 Daytona race quickly approaching, we went to Daytona for some serious mid-night testing. About 2:00am Bill France appeared out of the darkness and said “you aren't running that f####ing engine here, people come here to see competition.” That must have been the result of customer feed-back from 1963?

We were all tooled up for the SOHC engine so we built 2500 of them and did offer them as an option in the 1964 Ford Galaxy and they very quickly turned into drag racing successes in both car and boat racing. They are still legendary today with many aftermarket modifications.

One example is on display in a 1939 Willys drag racing coupe at the Henry Ford Greenfield Village Museum in Dearborn. When it was donated to the museum, I was called on to authenticate the engine. This was very easy as I already knew of the car and history. An elderly Ohio gentleman always ordered the biggest engine when he ordered a new Ford. This one scared the daylights out of him and the car sat in the garage for many years until the drag racing guy bought the Galaxy and swapped engines, having an almost new 427 SOHC engine for his favorite little Willys.

Regards, Larry

**Welcome back to Ken and Karla.**

**Ken and Karla Coll of Holly, MI, with their 1963 Diamond Blue, white top Landau. Glad you came back to the club!**

**For Sale:**

1998 Lincoln MK VIII LSC 2dr coupe. Exterior is ivory pearlescent, interior is ivory leather. Premium chrome 16" wheels, 68k miles. Loaded as only a Lincoln can be, this car is in very good condition. \$5500.

Contact Nelson @313-928-7692 or [nelsonzuchetto@hotmail.com](mailto:nelsonzuchetto@hotmail.com)



**For Sale:**

2003 Torch Red Retro Bird

**REDUCED PRICE:** \$9,000 OBO "Ready to Deal!" The car is in mint condition and runs perfectly due to constant maintenance checks! This convertible is fully loaded, perfect for those summer days coming. Both tops are included (black soft top, matching red hardtop—with hanging rack). It does have 135,000 miles—very dependable. It has new wheels and tires and new battery (2016). Don't miss out on getting YOUR Retro Bird!

Call during day Suzanne Fruhlinger (elderly member downsizing) 313-334-0637 first to negotiate; then Theresa Riviera (her daughter) 248-563-1120 to see the car. PLEASE LEAVE MESSAGE (avoiding spam).



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Our Visit to Roush Industries March 30, 2019

