

# Thunderbird Special

*A Thunderbird Midwest Club publication*

March 2025 issue

**Visit our Website: [thunderbirdmidwest.com](http://thunderbirdmidwest.com)**



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This might be an accurate photo but not around the Twin City area with our 50 degree temperatures. But we all know the weather can change in a hurry and we'll be breaking out our heavier coats and snow shovels and you'll blame me for jinxing the weather.

**Vintage Thunderbird Club International**  
 From 1955 to 2005 All years welcome  
 The VTCI is for you

Contact: Jack Wake  
**secretary4vtci@gmail.com**  
 OR visit  
**www.vintagethunderbirdclub.net**  
 and join VTCI online!

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## March Meeting Info

**March meeting VFW Post 5555, 6715 Lake Sore Dr S,  
 Richfield, MN March 15th noon-1 Social hr. , Mtg 1 PM**

**Menu Items**

1. Taco Salad      \$20.00
2. Hot Turkey Sandwich/mashed potatoes & cranberry sauce    \$18.
3. Wallyeye Sandwich with chips      \$20.00
4. California Burger with French fries    \$20.00

**All selections include a softdrink, tax & tip**

Your caller will contact you the weekend prior to the meeting. If for whatever reason you don't receive a call before the Thursday before the meeting, contact by email or phone Donn Olson with the number of people attending the meeting and their menu selection.

If you sign up to attend but then your plans change, contact Donn as soon (**651-260-6961 olsod55@gmail.com**) as possible but by the day before the meeting. We may be able to cancel your selections. If not, you are responsible for the meal costs. The Treasurer will contact you for reimbursement.

## Club Merchandise

Item	* note: 2XL or larger additional cost	Cost w/logo
Lt weight jacket, black only		\$71.20 w/name see note
Heavy weight jacket, black only		\$109.98 w/name see note
Crewneck sweatshirt		\$26.89 w/emblem see note
Hooded full zip sweatshirt		\$38 w/emblem
Denim jacket (mens or ladies)		\$95.06 w/name see note
TShirts (mens or ladies)		\$23.78 w/emblem see note
Polo Shirts Men or ladies		\$23.98 w/emblem see note
Caps		\$21.98 w/emblem

If you have any questions concerning the merchandise, please contact Darlene Roehl: her contact info is just above and to the left on this page. You can also see additional info on these items on our Website, Thunderbirdmidwest.com.

## President's Message

It is hard to believe that it is already March. Once again, we have had a pretty mild winter. According to Punxsutawney Phil we will be seeing six more weeks of winter though. An analysis by the National Weather Service found that, over the last 20 years, Punxsy Phil was right 35% of the time. Groundhog Day organizers acknowledge that the "holiday" exists mostly just to break up the monotony of long, dark winters. The idea came to the U.S. with German immigrants and originally involved a hedgehog, according to the official history of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club. The town held its first Groundhog Day celebration in February 2, 1887.

18 Days after Punxsy Phil seen his shadow the Ford Thunderbird hit it's 70 Year Anniversary. On February 20, 1954, the 1955 Ford Thunderbird was introduced at the Detroit Auto Show at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. During the planning stages, Ford considered over 5,000 names before the name plate Thunderbird was selected. The name came from the thunder and lightning mythical bird of the Native Americans of the southwest. Carlisle Ford Nationals which is being held 6-8 June 2025 will be celebrating 70 Years of the Iconic Thunderbird in which they will have a special tent display tent with activities and more.

I am looking forward to the club events that are being working on by Gloria and her crew. We should have a pretty fun year head. Let's enjoy our T-birds as much as we can.

As a reminder, if you have not paid your dues you have until the end of March to get them in. See you all at the March Meeting. Until then, Stay safe and stay well.

Deborah Vangel-President.

## February 2025 T-Bird Club Meeting Minutes

The Thunderbird Midwest club meeting was held at the Inver Grove Heights, MN Pizza Pub at 1:00 pm on Saturday February 15, 2025, with 34 in attendance. There was a separate meeting room and an all you can eat salad bar, breadsticks, soda, and pizza buffet.

After everyone was finished eating, President Deb Vangel called the meeting to order. Deb had a slide presentation with birthdays and anniversaries and new members noted. She also shared pictures from the January 26<sup>th</sup> club outing to Ham Lake to see the performance of "Til Death Do Us Die" at The Mystery Café. 26 members enjoyed a brunch buffet and murder mystery interactive play. Our own Vice President, Donn Olson, was selected to play the father of the bride. It made for an entertaining afternoon. Deb mentioned that The Mystery Cafe also has different performances in Bloomington so if you were unable to attend, there may be another outing like this one planned in the future.

The club events calendar this year includes the spring cruise in May TBD, Thunderbird Appreciation Days Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup>, Morristown Dam Days car show Saturday May 31<sup>st</sup>, the Saturday July 19<sup>th</sup> club picnic at Cliff-Fen Park in Burnsville, and Defeat of Jesse James Days in Northfield on Saturday September 6<sup>th</sup>. Watch the monthly newsletter for the details on these as they become available.

Randy Mattson discussed the VTCI Convention to be held September 9-13<sup>th</sup> in Grapevine, TX. There will also be a convention in Lehigh Valley, PA the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in June.

It was mentioned that it is an election year for the club which will be held at the Christmas Party in December. There will be 2 offices open; treasurer and member at large. Randy Mattson and Darlene Roehl are stepping down. It was asked that everyone consider running for office, but especially these two openings.

Tom Knight won the free meal card. Karen Kieffer, Rick Madsen, and David Larson won the 37/37/36 game.

The next meeting will be held at the Richfield VFW @ 1:00pm on Saturday March 15th.

**Please note: The room will be available at 12:30.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Hepler

Club Secretary

# Retro Top Latch Fix Thunderbird Convertible

For all Retro Thunderbird members.

If you have a 2002 – 2005 Retro Thunderbird and are experiencing a “hanging top latch” I have a solution for you.

When I purchased my 2002 Retro it had one hanging latch hook that would not engage to secure the top when operating the top latch handle. I had to push up the latch hook with my free hand while operating the roof latch handle to make it latch. I tried the Ford repair path, but they don't sell the individual parts needed and wanted \$700 to purchase a new header assembly for the convertible top. I quickly realized that this was not something I could tackle by myself. Ford wanted an estimated \$1000 to do the work. So, I went to work trying to figure out an alternative way to fix my problem. After some time, I figured out a much simpler way to remove the latching arms. At disassembly, I found plastic bushings and a pivot pin that were worn beyond use. After trying to find the bushings, with no luck, I decided the only solution was to make custom bushings. This was the beginning of a repair kit for Retro Thunderbirds that Ford does not supply. I currently can supply: Bushings, Pivot Pins, Pivot Arms, Springs, and instructions to disassemble and assemble.



If you are having issues with your Thunderbird convertible roof latches not working, please contact me at [olsod55@gmail.com](mailto:olsod55@gmail.com) or 651-260-6961 and I can get you a quote for repair parts.

Donn Olson

## 2025 Club Dues Reminder

The 2025 Club dues are \$25 and a check can be mailed to Randy Mattson 4380 245th St, Forest Lake, MN 55025 Make the check out to Thunderbird Midwest

The grace period is over at the end of March...if dues are not received by March 31st, you will be dropped from the roster. Don't let that happen.

## The 2025 International Convention

On September 9-13, the VTCI will join with the CTCI to convene their first joint International Convention in Grapevine, Texas, just north of Dallas, at the Embassy Suites Hotel. With an agenda featuring guest speakers, live entertainment, special tours to the Texas Motor Speedway, the Dallas Cowboys Stadium, and the George W Bush Presidential Library, the Grapevine event will offer something for everyone - including some of the best Thunderbirds in the nation strutting their stuff for Concours Judging.

## **Club History File by Randy Mattson**

### **30 YEARS AGO...According to *Thunderbird Midwest News*, October, 1994**

- 48 people attended our February meeting at Park Tavern in Bloomington.
- 38 of our members worked the "World of Wheels" this year. This event pays for the Christmas party.
- We had a booth at the first ever indoor swap meet at Minar Ford that saw us grow by 3 new members.
- New members welcomed this month were Sean Silvernail from Rochester, George Zilligen, who is looking for a '61 to '63 convertible, Curt Diener from Burnsville with a '64 hardtop, Brian & Sue Carlson from Roseville with a '65 hardtop and Brian & Heidi Anderson from Fridley with a '66 hardtop.
- We will again meet at the Park Tavern in Bloomington this month.

### **20 YEARS AGO...According to *The Thunderbird Special*, October, 2004**

- 51 members met at Broadway Pizza in February.
- Gloria Lonergan invited us to join her & Jim for Dam Days in Morristown.
- Due to losing some of our fundraisers, the board of directors announced an increase in dues to \$25 per year beginning in 2006.
- John Ryan announced that one of the 1967 Thunderbird Apollos will be displayed at the VTCI International Show in Indianapolis. It is a rare car to see so plan on making the trip.
- The meeting for March will be at Tasty's Pizza in Blaine.
- 

### **10 YEARS AGO...According to *The Thunderbird Special*, October, 2014**

- February's meeting was at Moe's in Moundsvew.
- The VTCI International this year is in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada. Any of our members planning on attending?
- Cliff is organizing a caravan for the VTCI Regional in Wichita, KS.
- Spring Cruise plans, yet to be finalized, may have us attending the car show at Fiedler Ford in Grantsburg, WI.
- The March meeting is at Broadway Pizza. Member Jean Judd will be our guest speaker.

## Early Version of a Calendar

This is a temporary calendar but we wanted to keep you posted as to what we've working on.

May 10th Club meeting: Saturday 1pm. the meeting will be a week early,

May 18th Spring Cruise and TBird Appreciation Day. See page 8 for details

May 31st The return of **DAM DAYS** in Morristown. Some more details will come out prior

June Nothing planned for a club activity. Here's an opportunity for some suggestions that the club could take part in.

July 19th The **Annual Club Picnic**. A park has already been reserved. More details later.

August Nothing planned for a club activity. Here's an opportunity for some suggestions that the club could take part in.

Sept 6th **Jesse James Car Show in Northfield**

October4th **Fall Cruise.....no final destination yet.**

November No planned club activity

December Christmas party on Sunday Defember 7th at Casper's in Eagan.

## Member's Special Days

### March Birthdays

2...Roger Huber	20...Brad Copeland
5...Don Swanson	24...Pat Lieske
9...Jackie Dockter	25...Carl Hartell
9...Don Roloff	28...Carrie Terrell
14...Neil Koehane	31...Dennis Anderson
16...Cesar Dominguez	8...Terry Davern

### March Anniversaries

Not a single anniversary

# VTCI *Membership Application Form*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSES NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE / PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

LIST NAME IN ROSTER? YES  NO

LIST E-MAIL ADDRESS IN ROSTER? YES  NO

LIST TELEPHONE IN ROSTER? YES  NO

PLEASE LIST THUNDERBIRD YOU OWN: \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Annual dues: \$40.00 United States and Canada, \$60.00 all other countries. Due the 31st of January each year. Canadian and overseas payment must be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank

For NEW members only Send initial dues according to the month you join. You will then receive a renewal notice mailed with the November/December Scoop.

	US and Canada	All Other Countries
January / February	\$40.00	\$60.00
March / April	\$35.00	\$55.00
May / June	\$30.00	\$45.00
July / August	\$25.00	\$40.00
September / October	\$55.00	\$90.00 includes next year
November / December	\$50.00	\$80.00 includes next year



VISA / MasterCard (circle one)

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

(if different from above-please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable & mail to:  
Vintage Thunderbird Club International

P.O. Box 75308 Wichita, KS 67275

\*Annual dues include a subscription to "Thunderbird Scoop" magazine.

## Spring Cruise/TBird Day Info

For our SPRING CRUISE this year, we are going to the National Eagle Center in Wabasha. This event is scheduled for Sunday, May 18th. This is in conjunction with the annual Thunderbird Appreciation Day. This is a special day as it commemorates Thunderbird's 70th Anniversary. By the April newsletter, we will figure out where we can start from so that we can caravan to the Wabasha area. Hopefully it will be a nice day for us to get the TBirds out to show them off.

The photo shows a TBird owners group getting out their cars and just enjoying showing them a bit. Let the public see and remember "the good old days" long past us now. Wherever they stop, rest area, gas station, lunch, they always draw a crowd,



## Spring Cruise

For our event at the Eagle Center, admission is \$10.00 for seniors and \$12.00 for non seniors. If we have 30 people signed up, the group rate is \$10.00 each. We have reserved a private Eagle Program at 2:00. There will be more updates as we get closer as to meeting place, eating place, along with times. There will be a sign up sheet at both the March and April meetings. If you would like to attend and can't make it to one of these meetings, you can call me, Gloria, at 507-685-4486. This sounds like a fun event.





## Want Ads 2003 Retro For Sale by Club Member

2003 Retro for sale by a new member of the club

Exterior color Desert Sky Blue Interior color black and cream

Milage: 143,600

Car originally came from Tennessee

3.9 V8 Automatic

Asking \$10K firm

Contact info: Allen at 763-226-5473

Email address: allen.schlipp@gmail.com



# Club By-Laws Regarding Officers

In the near future, the club will face a general election. Below is the section regarding the officers and how they are elected. Being that we have quite a few new members in the past 2 years, and we all need to be refreshed, I thought it would be good to give us a chance to be on the same page. Any comments/suggestions would be welcomed. Simply send them to me and I will make sure the present board members are aware of them.

## ARTICLE III – OFFICERS & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1 The officers of The Club shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Member at Large, the newsletter editor, Program Director and Activities Director. The VTCI requires that the President be a VTCI member.

2

The Board of Directors shall all be elected officers of The Club.

A majority of votes cast by the members attending the December club meeting, and the absentee ballots, will elect the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Member at Large, Program Director and Activities Director.

The Board will insure that an absentee ballot will be published in the November newsletter. This ballot can be used by members not attending the December meeting but wish to have their vote counted.

Elections shall be conducted at the December club meeting. Nomination of officers may be received by any Board member up to and including the December club meeting. Consent shall be obtained from the nominated member before his/her name is placed on the ballot prior to voting or at the December meeting.

6. The term of elected officers commences on January 1 of the year following the election through December 31 of the following year (2 years). The terms for the President, Treasurer, Program Director and Activities Director shall begin on even numbered years and the terms for the Vice President, Secretary, Member at Large shall begin on odd numbered years to provide some continuity between administrations.

Two consecutive terms (4 years) is the maximum the elected Treasurer can hold the office. All other officers are not under that restriction.

Vacancy occurring in the position of President shall be filled by the Vice President. Vacancies occurring in Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Member at Large, Program Director and Activities Director shall be appointed by the Board for the remaining term.

# Club By-Laws Regarding Duties

Next month will begin the listing of duties of each Board position. Soon we'll be asking for volunteers to fill the positions that are up for election. It would be nice for you to know what you are volunteering for, what's expected of you in that position, etc. So many things have changed so it's time to review these positions and maybe bring them up to date. The duties are ever changing due to many different factors that we tend to forget to update them. Also we have quite a few new members in the past several years, and the rest of us do what we can to keep the club a fun group to be part of.



Below are the first 4 positions in this listing of 8: **President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Member-at-Large, Editor, Program Director, and Activity Director.**

It's always good to discuss whether all of the positions are required to manage the club. If not, then the club has to work things out. Things change and the club needs to probably change also. We have one heck of a club where everybody gets along and we enjoy being together as a group. Adding new members can also give the club some new ideas on how to expand and grow.

When it time for elections, take a close look at yourself and decide whether or not you could help. It's not all work. We enjoy working together for the good of the group. Bring some new ideas and make the club even more fun. We have basically 88 memberships that make up the club. We generally see at least one new membership every 2 months or so.

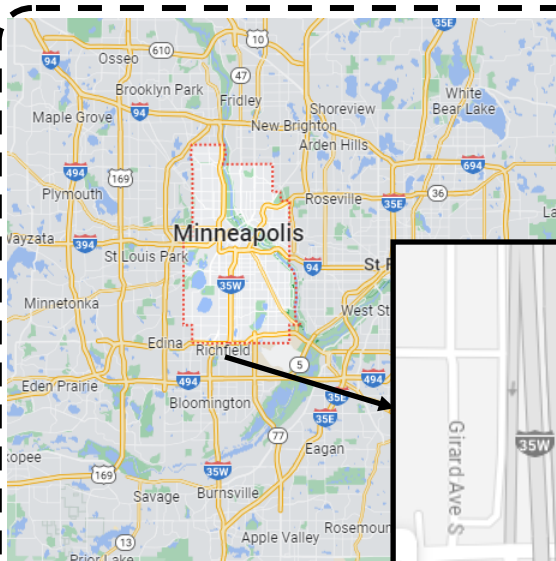
## ARTICLE IV – DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

1 **President.** The President shall preside at all meetings of The Club, preserve order, appoint committees, and call special meetings. He/she is the chief executive officer of The Club and shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to such office. The President also organizes and presides over Board meetings, is the main focal contact with the VTCI Board, particularly with the North Central Regional Director. The VTCI requires that the President be a VTCI member.

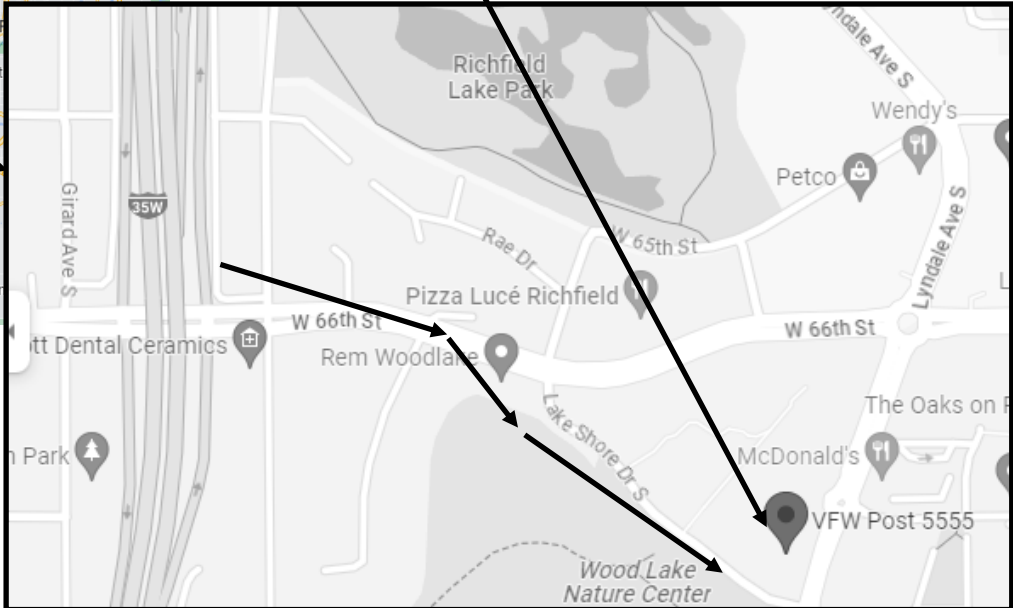
**Vice President.** The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President. In the Thunderbird Midwest Club, the Vice President arranges the regularly scheduled meetings, negotiates meal menus and costs, and is the Club representative with the meeting establishments. As a Board member, also attends the Club Board meetings.

**Secretary.** The Secretary shall take minutes at Board meetings and at monthly meetings and see that a copy of the minutes is delivered to the President and the newsletter editor. As a Board member, also attends the Club Board meetings.

**Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall keep the checkbook, pay The Club bills, deposit funds in Club accounts, keep financial books, prepare financial reports and perform such duties as usually pertain to such office. As a Board member, also attends the Club Board meetings



**VFW Post 5555**  
**6715 Lake Shore Dr S.**  
**Richfield**



**From 35W exit on  
to W 66th St, Then  
right on to Lake  
Shore Dr, then the  
VFW will be on  
your left.**

**Cliff & Pat Lieske**  
**2501 38th Ave NE #163**  
**St Anthony, MN 55421**