



T Bird News

North Texas Vintage
Thunderbirds, Inc.
Local Chapter of VTCI

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September 30, 2021

The President's Message by Dave Egan

What a great time we had at the Wheels for Wellness show in Fort Worth. There were several hundred beautiful cars in the show. Tim Stephens won the best in class for his inspiration yellow 02 retro. The class was composed of all cars newer than 1980 and the competition was tough. It's nice to see a Thunderbird win against all those other guys. Congratulations to Tim. Well deserved!

I'm sure that you have heard the news that Dom has undergone successful heart surgery, but you may not know that Walter Martin, our first vice president, is under a doctor's care for heart issues also. Please keep Dom, Walter and their families in your prayers. [editor's note: Susan Zanella, Dom's wife, has broken three bones in one foot and has 2 fractures in the other ankle! Send a few prayers for her healing as well!)

I represented NTVT at the Texas state fair car corral on Sept 26. It was a last minute invitation, so I could not give much notice to the club. Hopefully, next year we will be invited back. It's nice to go to the fair and park very close to the midway and have my lawn chair and ice chest close at hand on the fair grounds. It was like going to a car show inside the fair grounds.

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting.

October Meeting: Boos & Ghouls!

Don't lose your head worrying about your hosts for the October meeting on Saturday, the 16th. As you can see, we are all fully vaccinated. Come on out from 11:30 to however long you can last and enjoy a fun meeting with sandwiches from Jason's Deli. Water, soft drinks and some tasty red stuff will be available. **No costumes necessary, just bring your car and YOU!**



Tech discussion regarding retro hardtop repair (OK--it fell from the lift--yikes). Parking available in the cul-de-sac in front. Neighbors (still alive) have been warned. **Address is 3008 Pamplona, Grand Prairie, TX 75054.** GPS it. We are close to Joe Pool Lake. **Phone number is 214-287-5899 or eloyandkitty@sbcglobal.net** For those more active there is billiards, pinball, slot machine, foosball and jukebox in the game room. Look forward to seeing everyone. Call or email with questions. [editor's note: watch your email for reminder and RSVP to choose sandwich meat]

Inside this issue:

President's Msg	1
Oct Mtg Info	1
Wheels for	2-3
Wellness Pics	
Tech Article	4
NTVT Calendar	5
Contact #'s	5



September Fun at Wheels for Wellness 2021





Wheels for Wellness 2021 Pictures, continued



Photo credits: Brad Kershaw and Mark Ibbotson



Saga of the Convertible Top by John Garfield

As some of you know I have a 1965 black convertible that I have spent many years rebuilding, almost from the ground up. Two years ago I did some repairs to the top mechanism, but nothing major. Then it stopped working. I spent the next nearly 16 months trying to find the problem

Not working on it diligently but as the whim and relaxation from frustration got over, I tried to trace the electrical problem. I am no wizard on electronics so this was a challenge to start with.

Beginning with the fuse box, I found a bad main top fuse - replaced it. Next I traced the wiring under the dash. No power there. Starting at the front, I worked back from the battery slowly checking components and replacing some. Still no power.

OK, onto the back. I checked relays; looked like a couple might be bad but not sure. I had several from putting in an electronic top control system into another member's car and he gave me the old relays from his car. Still no power. On to more controls. The round flipper lid switch had been replaced years ago; it now had a bad switch that I tried to replace. I made several purchases of switches from a company in Kennedale. Even tried to go there and ask them but they would only deal by mail. None worked. Out of frustration, I bought a whole new mechanism from John Draxler, (a Thunderbird parts dealer in Michigan who runs The Tbird Ranch). Much better construction all the way around. But still not working.

Further inspection found the top-down control switch at the back of the car was sticking down. I pulled it and reworked it, and it seemed to be fine. I reinstalled, and it didn't work. I can't find a replacement from shops or salvage yards. I took it apart again, lubricated it - seems to be OK. But no. Pulled it out again - hum, sticks with a lot of pressure on it. Oh, the top is slightly bent. Straightened it and it now seems to be working fine.

Such is the life with these old cars. I got it all back together in time for the Wheels for Wellness show. My son-in-law drove it and shows a desire to buy it some day and join the club.



Photo taken by Grant Payne at the Regional Convention of the VTCl in 2015

Vintage Thunderbird Club International May 16, 2015

Grant Payne Photos By Grant



Officers 2020-2021

President: Dave Egan

210-287-4019

daveegan@tx.rr.com

1st Vice President (Events):

Walter Martin

972-896-7633

walmar01@verizon.net

2nd Vice President

(Membership): Ben King

817-366-5464

bking@lonestarcap.us

Secretary: Brad Kershaw

817-253-3161

thunderbrad@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Tom Ossorio

817-705-9106

Tom.Ossorio@dsolutions.biz

Newsletter Editor:

Bonnie Kershaw

817-271-2952

bradandbonnie@yahoo.com

Website Editor:

Mark Ibbotson

m_ibbot@sbcglobal.net

NTVT Calendar

Oct 16 11:30 a.m. Meeting at the home of members Eloy and Kitty Villafranca, **3008 Pamplona, Grand Prairie, TX 75054. 214-287-5899**

Nov Day Trip—exact date and location TBD

Dec 5 (Sunday) Christmas Party 4 p.m.—Salt Grass Steak House, Bedford.

Editor's Corner

The newsletter this month is a little shorter than normal, but I hope you all will forgive me. I have often said if I don't get enough pictures and articles, there might not be a newsletter. Luckily this month, I was blessed to receive many good pics from the Wheels for Wellness event from Mark Ibbotson and Brad Kershaw; thanks, guys! And I was fortunate to get the Saga of the Convertible Top from John Garfield—thanks, John.

If those items had not come in, you might have just received an email with the president's message (thanks, Dave—I know I can always count on you!) and the info on the next meeting (which Eloy had already sent you—I just wanted to include it in the newsletter because it was so well done)!

Now....next month, **who is going to send me something?** I'd like to feature new and old members both so we all get better acquainted. How about sending me a short article on how you got started with Tbirds? Is there a story behind your bird? Do you have special memories tied to your Thunderbird? Send along a picture of your car and include yourselves if you like. I'd like to showcase our cars and our people, too!

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