



Thunderbird news

FEBRUARY 2011 VOLUME 13, #2

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LA CORSA PIU BELLA DEL MONDO

(THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RACE IN THE WORLD Page 3, 8-9

Miami Auto Show, 2010 Page 10

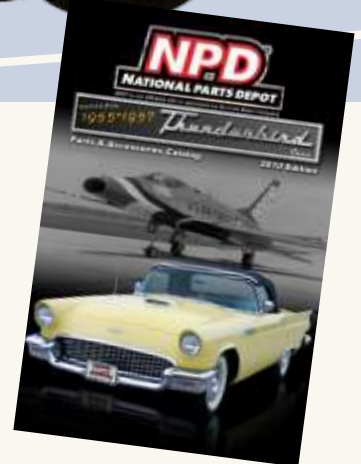
Once Coveted, Now Orphaned
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news

EDITOR'S REPORT



MORE NEWS ABOUT THE "MILLE MIGLIA"

LA CORSA PIU BELLA DEL MONDO

(THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RACE IN THE WORLD)

The application has been sent, hotels have been reserved, two minibus has been rented, and the FIVA [International Federation of Antique Vehicles] has already approved my Thunderbird.

The FIVA approval usually takes no less than six months, but I got it in four days thanks to good friends in high places.

All is in place, and I'm just waiting until February 1st to find out if the Mille Miglia committee approves me.

I have been contacting various shipping companies to find out the best way to ship the car to Italy

As of the time I'm writing this article, we have 12 people going to Italy. As soon as I know if I'm approved, we will have a meeting at my home to finalize all the details.

I have to make the following changes to my T-Bird in order to participate in the race:

Replace the alternator with an original-style generator [done]

Take the a/c out of the car.

Four new non-radial tires [already bought]

I already checked the brakes, seals, hoses, fluids, lights.

The Mille Miglia instruction book is in kilometers instead of miles, so I already have printed a tape over the speedometer in kilometers. I made a table converting miles to kilometers to two decimal points so that I won't lose any time doing conversions during the race.

After I install the four new tires, I'll mark the speedometer with kilometer speeds using my GPS.

This is your chance of a lifetime to see the Mille Miglia race "The Greatest Race in the world" & "the corsa piu bella del mondo". See how for the first time in 53 years an American car, my 1956 Thunderbird, challenges the European cars on their own turf.

Can you imagine the reaction if a Thunderbird beats 1.5 & 2 million dollar cars?

YES SIR, I'LL DO IT!

I'm enclosing several photos of last year Mille Miglia

Felipe Cos



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Our next monthly meeting will be announced by E-mail.

CLASSIC THUNDERBIRD CLUB OF SOUTH FLORIDA CTCI CHAPTER #114 FEBRUARY 2011 VOLUME 13 No.2

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Connie Danluck 2008

Ed Brown 2009

This Newsletter may have some misspellings and mistakes, but it is written with my heart. I could write it without errors in Spanish, but only a handful of you would be able to read it.

Please help me to make it even better.

Felipe Cos Founder & Editor
George Bishopric - Proofing

Photos by Felipe Cos

INTERNET PAGE

Have you seen our internet page? We need to update it. Does anyone know how to do it?

If you can update it call me.

Our page is as follow: THUNDERBIRDCLUB.US

You may have your own individual email, mine is as follow: FCOS@THUNDERBIRDCLUB.US If you want your own just send a note to me. Please follow the previous format in doing so. It is free, no charge. This is another advantage of your club. Any ideas for the page?

This page doesn't cost the club a penny for yearly subscriptions, I'm doing it through my business company web.

Please call Felipe at (305) 661-5170

THUNDERBIRD INFORMATION SUPER HIGHWAY:

Take note that we have changed our web page name, it is now WWW.THUNDERBIRDCLUB.US to get there don't look at it with a search engine, look at it only with www.Thunderbirdclub.us

Our Club's web page: _____ www.thunderbirdclub.us
 2005 Thunderbird: _____ www.fordautomobiles.com
 Ford racing: _____ www.fordacing.com
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HAPPY BIRTHDAYS FOR FEBRUARY

MIKE MCNEAL	3 RD
ANITA BARAZ	6 TH
ZUZANNE FOX	13 TH
GASTON RODRIGUEZ	14 TH
JOHN RAWN	16 TH
BOB TONEY	19 TH
LYN CAMPAMILE	25 TH
MARINA GONZALEZ	26 TH

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NUMBERS TO KEEP

The following are contact numbers and e-mail address you need to have on file:

AACA Ft Lauderdale region-President Ted Plush 954-491-5765
 VMCCA Sun Coast Chapter. President David Bobbitt 305 661-1340
 bobbitt@comcast.net
 Model A Club: Tom Zannis 305 281-9192
 Car show promoter: Russ Gagliano 954-560-5412
 merklvr@msn.com
 AACA Miami Region President Andy Levy 305-439-0910
 www.aaca.org/southflorida
 Car show promoter: Gerry Perez. 786 344-4228 email
 gerrycarshow@bellsouth.com
 Magic Mustang. Frank Alonso 305 551-6077 Fadatec@aol.com
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CAR SHOWS/CRUISE IN

Every Friday 7.00 to 10.00 PM Cruise at Home Depot corner of SW 8th St & SW 28th Ave.

Second Friday, Hollywood Beach Boardwalk Cruise Night 7 to 10 PM 954 779-1420

Every Friday from 4:00 to 7:00 pm at 8th St. & 30th Ave in front of Home Depot in Miami.

Every Sunday Crabby Jack's

Every Friday night a Cruise night reunion at Towers Shop in Davie (595 & University) This is one of the biggest cruise nights in South Florida. (from 5:00 pm to 10:00)

First Saturday of every month, BETSY (old Fuddrucker's) from 6:00 pm to 10:00

First Saturday steak & Shake in Sawgrass Mills mall 6:00 to 9:30

Saturday of every month Steak-N-Shake, Sample Rd. and U.S. 1 behind Wal Mart. Coconut Creek. 8:00 to 12:00.

Second Saturday of every month the Dania Beach Cruise Night. Free admission 6:00 to 10:00 for information 954 924-3626

Second Saturday Car meet at Shorty's 2401 N.W. 87th Ave Jack 305 409-2614

Second Saturday from 5:00 to 9:00 in Homestead at Krome Ave

Third Saturday Denny's Restaurant Bird Rd, between 86th & 87th Ave

Third Saturday Roadhouse Restaurant Sunset Dr. & S.W. 117th Ave

Every Saturday a car show from 6.00 to 11.00 pm at K-Mart in 49th and 14th Ave Hialeah. Only cars 20 yrs or older, No charge

First Sunday of every month: Downtown Hollywood car show, 10:00 to 3:00. Dave 954 926-3377

Every Sunday at Crabby Jacks, 7001 Federal Hwy, 2 miles North of Yamato, Boca Raton. 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Also night cruise at Coral Way & 97th Ave, 5:30 to 8:00 305 553-2228

Third and fifth Saturday of the month from 3:00 to 7:30 at Wall's Ice Cream in 8075 S.W. 67th Ave

Third Saturday of the month, cruise-in at Miami Springs Circle 7:00 to 10:00 P.M.

Third Saturday; at Gotrocks Restaurant, Hillsborough and Wine Rd. in Coconut Creek from 6 to 9

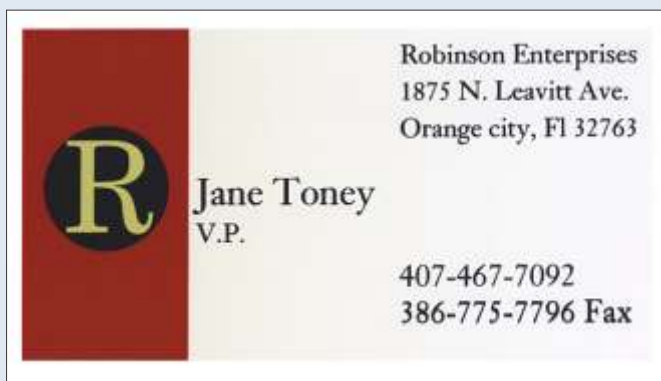
Third Saturday at Dairy Queen Tamarac Square North of McNab Rd. 6:00 to 9:00

Third Saturday OC's Raw at 18415 S. Dixie Hwy 6:00 to 10:00

Also Miami Wings. 19145 S. Dixie Hwy. 5 to 10 Info. Gerry 305 786-344-4228

Second Tuesday at World Ford 15551 South Dixie Hwy 7:00 to 10:00 pm Ford cars only Francisco Mederos 786 229-7361

Third Saturday at the Cove in 10730 NW 25th St Miami. Gerry 786-344-4228



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FUTURE EVENTS

FEB. 5TH DOWNTOWN MIAMI SHOW ON FLAGLER STREET. AACA (Ira Shapiro 305-666-2396)

MARCH 3RD-5TH AACA WINTER NATIONAL MEET, (HOMESTEAD SPEED WAY) (Andy Leavy 305-439-0910)

MARCH 26TH FLORIDA VINTAGE CAR RALLY AND CRUISE-IN AT MAGIC CITY CASINO (Felipe 786-554-5200)

MAY 4TH-19TH MILLE MIGLIATRIPTO ITALY

JUNE 15TH-19TH CTCI REGIONAL CONVENTION, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

AUGUST 24-28TH CTCI REGIONAL CONVENTION, OMAHA, NEBRASKA

WHAT ABOUT DRIVING OUR CARS TO THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION IN JUNE, 2011? ANYONE INTERESTED?

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FLORIDA VINTAGE CAR RALLY

There will be a vintage car rally on March 26th. The rally will depart from the Magic City Casino on 37th Ave N.W. 7th St. The event will finish with a cocktail party and tapas at 6:00 pm in the same place.

Cost will be \$250.00 for running for fun and \$350.00 running for \$\$\$\$\$. The \$100.00 difference will go to a pot and will be given away in prizes. More information will follow.

MEMBERSHIP

It is time again, please send your check for \$35.00 for the 2011 year, don't forget to fill all the registration. See you next month. Felipe Cos

CTCI DRIVE

Have you joined the CTCI yet? We need to have all the members of our club enrolled in the CTCI. Remember that we are a CTCI branch. Please fill out the application and mail it directly.



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MORE INVENTORY



Thunderbird
NEWS

MILLE MIGLIA





CTCI NEWS

Region No. 4 Convention: Hosted by The Virginia Classic Thunderbird Club at the Wyndham Virginia Crossings Hotel in Richmond, Virginia on June 15-19. Info: 434-589-8298 or email: mikemartin419@centurylink.net

Region No. 5 Convention: Hosted by Nebraskaland Thunderbird Club will be held at the Embassy Suites Omaha - LaVista Hotel and Conference Center on August 24-28. Information: 402-289-4516. Email: nefron1@cox.net

DUES ARE DUE

\$35.00 MEMBERSHIP ARE DUE,
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COOK RECIPES FROM OUR MEMBERS

ORIENTAL SALAD

One head of Napa (Chinese) Cabbage, sliced

One bunch green onions, sliced including green stems

One package Ramen Oriental Noodles (crushed)

One cup sunflower seeds

One 8 oz. package sliced almonds

Mix together sunflower seeds, almonds, and crushed noodles - set aside.

Dressing:

1/2 cup oil

1/2 cup white sugar

1/3 cup white vinegar

Flavor packet from Ramen Oriental Noodles

Mix dressing together and pour over sliced cabbage and onions. Toss.

Add nut mixture to cabbage (right before serving) and toss.

RECIPE COPIED FROM TRAILBLAZER NEWSLETTER



Miami Auto Show, 2010

Car shows haven't been the same since the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008. Somehow, it's become harder to lease a fully optioned Hummer since loans dried up and the division closed, but life goes on. The show didn't go on very long.

This year's show reminds me of the Oscars in a bad year, and like any maudlin Oscar™ show, it would have been a good time for a "Salute to the Departed." Saturn, Pontiac, Hummer, and others, gone gone off into the sunset with Olds, Desoto, Pierce-Arrow, and the equity in our houses. Still there were some good vibes.

The car everyone wanted to see was the Chevy Volt, which is has been the subject of so much advance publicity that it's oddly familiar. Still, the fuel economy is kind of amazing, and the car attractive. I wish GM success with this one. Would really help me to stop sending so much cash to Hugo Chavez and his friends in Iran.

There was, surrounding the Volt, a theme of green. Tucked into one corner of the convention center were electric and hybrids from GM, Toyota, Porsche (yes, in a hulking Cayenne), Lincoln, Audi, and others. Gone were displays of Escalades, Sequoias, and Armadas, all seemingly hidden out of site. The emphasis was on fuel savings. Still, I'd have to say that the organizers of the show did little to show any enthusiasm about this display of pretty amazing technology.

On the positive side, for the last few years, I've observed that interiors in all ranges of cars were inexcusably drab. From Ford to Mercedes, this year, everyone has been slapping on wood (or something that looks like it) and laying on chrome (or shiny plastic). Attractive surfaces abound. Ford interiors this year are easily the nicest I've seen south of Audi for years. BMWs are no longer dungeon drab, and Mercedes is using up Maybach tooling on dashboards. Insides of cars are going to be more pleasant, so those few folks who actually have jobs should enjoy their commutes.

Ford's stand was relatively hopping. The new Fiesta was getting lots of attention, but there were no signs of the coming new Focus (January). The new revised Edge looks great, and the new Explorer, ready for action in our fuel-conscious world. The only new product on the Lincoln stand was the new MKZ Hybrid, which is quite handsome. Someone could trade "down" from a German Luxury car, accepting green points instead of "prestige" points and be perfectly happy. I hope they have product planners working on a replacement for my Thunderbird!

On the GM side, other than the Volt, the hot news is the Buick Regal, which is not only serviceable, but actually desirable, first one to get hit that target in 20 years. GM was smart to hang onto Opel, after all. Buick needs a few more models but they'll come.

In imports, there was remarkably little new product. Lexus had a weird hybrid. I predict that they will sell two in North America. Nice thing about low sales is that if you sell three the following year, it's a huge % increase. Nissan was forgettable, VW has removed so much content from the Jetta, that you could rename it "Cavalier" or "Sunbird," and it would fit right in. The Koreans continue to show great cars, again, great what you can do when someone pays for your defense, and you close your home market. (Thanks, Georgia, for buying us an assembly plant for Christmas!)

Toyota did show the it's lovely GT. Mercedes needs to see what an attractive GT looks like, as they have lost their way. The new Gullwing looks as inspired by a panzer tank as a sports car from the 50s.

Not much else to say.....I came, I saw, I left. Fairly quickly.

GEORGE BISHOPRIC



MECHANICAL STOP LIGHT SWITCH

CASCO developed the first mechanical brake light switch for the classic Thunderbirds many years ago after CASCO owner Bill Brown had trouble disengaging the cruise control on his '56 since it required the brake lights to come on. The original brake light switches in our Thunderbirds are activated by brake fluid pressure entering the switch as the brake pedal is pressed. Therefore, for the brake lights to activate you are actually applying the brakes. On cars with the mechanical switch, the lights are activated with a slight touch of the pedal, without actually applying the brakes. This is what Bill needed for his cruise control to work like the ones on modern cars.

POWER STEERING

Wanting to install power steering on a Thunderbird ?It has been reported that the Toyota MR2 electric power steering pump can be adapted to the little Birds with a bit of ingenuity.

RADIO NOISE

Does your Thunderbird radio have static and you do not know if it is coming from the engine?

With the engine and radio on, pull the antenna lead on the side of the radio. If the noise goes away its ignition noise. If the noise remains, it's coming in through the power lead and a line filter may help. Radio Shack used to stock these filters, but they are getting out of the component business so you may have to try a radio repair shop.

Bill Abate

COURTESY OF THE TRAIL BIRD NEWS

UNUSUAL BIRDS:



Thunderbird
NEWS

TRANSMISSION FLUIDS



When Ford built our Thunderbirds with Automatic transmissions, the fluid they used was type "A". This fluid was used in the transmission as well as for the power steering. In the mid 60's, type "F" ("F" meaning Ford) was formulated for Ford transmissions and is still being produced by oil companies today. Approximately 20 years ago I heard of several Thunderbird owners switching to the more modern fluids such as Dexron II. The owners that switched gave many positive comments and stated that the Dexron II provided a much smoother shifting of the transmission.

One of these owners was Bill Phelps from Texas. Bill is a past President of the Metroplex Early Birds in Dallas and a former employee of Fina Oil and Chemical Company at their Dallas Headquarters. Bill wrote an article in the September-October 1990 issue of the Early Bird and also repeated in the CTCI restoration manual states "that the new Dexron and Mercon have the ability to last much longer and prevent harmful sludge and varnish problems common with the use of Type A, Suffix A fluid and Type F fluid. Today's Dexron-II and Mercon will run rings around Type A and Type F providing substantially improved protection, performance and longevity." Therefore, in this case, today's technology is an easy choice over yesterday's technology and historical accuracy.

As with many other things, I was satisfied using the type F (or ATF) and reluctant to change something that did not need changing.

Then a few years of years ago my transmission was having trouble shifting into 3rd. gear when I starting out on a cool morning. Sometimes I would have to drive 3/4 to 1 mile before it would shift. (Remember these transmissions start out in 2nd. gear). Summer time could reduce this hesitation to a couple of blocks. Once the transmission was warmed up, it would shift normal until the next cold start.

I knew something had to be done as it would not correct itself. I started listening and reading more from the owners that had switched to Dexron II and decided to give it a try. I drained out the old fluid, added a pint of a Lucas Transmission additive that had been recommended by friends, and filled the transmission with Dexron III and new version of Dexron II. Now three years later I can say that I believe I made the correct choice. The transmission shifts are hardly noticeable and has given me trouble free operation.

That is my input on the subject. Whether you want to change from Type F to Dexron is your choice. After all, the Type F was used for 50 years, and our transmissions worked ok with it.

Courtesy of Dave Tulowitzky



NEW CAR NEWS

One of the great ongoing debates in the automotive world is which of the many alternative-fuel strategies will emerge as the magic key to consumer acceptance and big sales for automakers. Will it be parallel-series hybrids like the ones already on sale for the past decade? Will it be dedicated battery-electric vehicles (BEVs) like the new Nissan Leaf? Or will it be plug-in hybrid powertrains like the new Chevy Volt? No one really knows, as evidenced by the fact that the Ford Motor Company is hedging its bets and plans to provide vehicles with a wide range of alternative-fuel powertrains. Witness the upcoming C-Max, which will be offered both with a familiar parallel-series hybrid powertrain like the one in the current Ford Fusion Hybrid sedan as well as a plug-in hybrid powertrain in the C-Max Energi. Ford will also offer its new Focus not only with conventional powertrains but also as an electric model beginning in late 2011.

The C-Max Hybrid and Energi, for their part, will go on sale sometime in the 2012 calendar year. All C-Max models for the U.S. market will be built at Ford's newly retooled Michigan Assembly Plant in Wayne, Michigan, which is powered in part by a solar energy generator system. The C-Max Hybrid will, like the Fusion Hybrid, use Ford's so-called powersplit architecture, which in theory allows the Fusion to be driven in electric mode only at speeds up to 47 mph. Ford is targeting even higher all-electric speeds for the C-Max Hybrid, but we'd say, don't hold your breath, because in our experience most hybrids don't operate in electric-only mode at anywhere near the speeds their manufacturers claim.

One of the more interesting aspects of the C-Max Hybrid and the Ford Focus Hybrid, which will precede the C-Max to market, is that they will use advanced lithium-ion battery systems developed and assembled in-house by Ford in Michigan. "We've chosen to do battery development in-house," says Mark Fields, Ford President, the Americas, "to make them more affordable." This is a big and somewhat brave step for Ford, considering that most automakers rely on suppliers to conduct the R&D and execute production of battery packs for hybrids.

Here's some other interesting news on the C-Max: The C-Max you might already have heard about is the SEVEN-passenger, long-wheelbase C-Max, known as the Grand C-Max in Europe. It will be offered only with conventional powertrains and it was supposed to precede the alternative-powertrain C-Max models for sale in the USA. But now it looks like the C-Max Hybrid and Energi models, offered only in the short-wheelbase, five-passenger body style, will go on sale here before the seven-passenger C-Max, because Ford is looking to move long-wheelbase C-Max production to North America and that will delay the process. Confused? So are we. But know this: sometime in 2012, you will be able to drive a C-Max Hybrid or a C-Max Energi plug-in Hybrid, and you'll be able to bring four passengers along for the ride.



Thunderbird
news

Once Coveted, Now Orphaned

The New York Times

By JIM KOSCS

Published: November 25, 2010

LAST month was the end of the line for yet another American automotive brand. Assembly plants produced the final vehicles to carry the Mercury nameplate, an unceremonious end for a marque that had been introduced in 1939 as an upscale companion for basic Fords — but more recently allowed to atrophy to little more than a selection of lightly modified Ford sedans and S.U.V.'s.

Still, Mercury leaves behind a history peppered with compelling and even innovative cars that at once conveyed a clear message: based on Fords, but better. Depending on the year and the car, better could have meant any combination of bigger, more stylish, more powerful or more luxurious. Pairing Mercury with the Lincoln franchise after World War II underscored the theme of what is today called entry-level luxury.

Ford's name for its new division naturally conjured up allusions of the speedy messenger to the gods from ancient mythology, for many years depicted in the company's logo with a winged helmet. It also represented business or financial success; for many, buying a Mercury flaunted upward mobility.

John Baumann of Holland, Mich., grew up with the brand. "My father sold Mercurys, so we always had them around," said Mr. Baumann, who was a teenager when the first [Mercury Cougar](#) came out in 1967. Since then, he's had eyes only for early Cougars, especially the 1969-70 convertibles. He owns five.

One of the most acclaimed Mercury designs, the first Cougar was based on Ford's Mustang but offered a striking look of its own — a roomier, more luxurious interior and, its fans say, a smoother driving feel. But it was a success the company let go fallow.

"My sons drove Capris in the '80s," Mr. Baumann said. "But there's nothing there today for the next generation — my grandsons — sporty enough to drive in high school."

Looking at the brand's final models, it might be difficult to envision a time when a Mercury was cool enough for a high schooler. But Tom Austin remembers when it was. Four years ago, he bought a 1953 [Mercury Monterey](#), a car that was still fairly hot in 1957 when, as a high school student, he co-wrote and recorded the hit song "Short Shorts" with the Royal Teens.

Now a real estate appraiser in Ramsey, N.J., Mr. Austin shares the old-car hobby with his two sons. Mr. Austin's Mercury exemplified the brand's blueprint for revving up a Ford model with flashier styling, a more powerful engine and a plusher interior. It was a formula that Ford used, in varying degrees, to create models for the step-up brand over its 71-year run.

The 1949-51 models, the brand's first postwar redesign, were quickly successful — and their popularity proved durable. [James Dean](#) drove a '49 coupe in the 1955 film "Rebel Without a Cause," scoring a lifetime of coolness points for Mercury.

In fact, those models were already an established canvas for customizers. The cars were called "lead sleds" for the copious amounts of lead used to fill seams and smooth body cuts.

The granddaddy of custom Mercs emerged from the shop of George and Sam Barris in 1952, built for a young Japanese-American, Bob Hirohata. The Barris brothers applied every trick in their book. They lowered the body and chopped its roof; they garnished it with parts from other cars, including taillights from a '52 Lincoln and side chrome trim from a Buick.

Tasteful coupes and convertibles of the 1950s gave way to an overcooked brew of chrome, glitz and girth, typified by the Turnpike Cruiser of 1957. One of that model's features, a power-retractable rear window, resurfaced on the unusual but popular 1963-66 Breezeway sedans.

From the mid-1960s, full-size Mercurys adopted Lincoln-influenced designs and ran with Ford's top engines. On TV, the top cop of the original "Hawaii Five-O" series, Steve McGarrett, cracked crimes in a black '68 Park Lane.

Even with its parent Ford deeply involved in racing, Mercury filled its own trophy case. In [Nascar](#), Mercury had a strong presence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with David Pearson, Cale Yarborough, Bobby Allison and A. J. Foyt racking up wins. In drag racing, specially built 1966 Comets were progenitors of the Funny Car class, while on American road courses, Dan Gurney, Parnelli Jones and Ed Leslie made the Cougar competitive in the Trans-Am series.

In Mercury showrooms, the Cyclone and Cougar Eliminator muscle models stoked the performance image. As the Cougar began to grow into a model with luxury aspirations, Mercury turned to Ford's German branch to lure younger buyers with the hot-selling Capri sports coupe in the 1970s (advertised as "the



sexy European").

Mercury tried to keep a sporty streak going: the Capri name bounced to a Mustang-based model and then to a small Australian-built, Mazda-powered convertible in the early '90s; the Cougar badge later made a brief reprise on a small, front-wheel-drive sports coupe.

In 2003, Mercury revived the Marauder moniker for a performance-tuned Grand Marquis, but sold just 11,000 over two years. By then, the boundary between Ford and Mercury vehicles had all but vanished.

That line, though, was still clear when Gary Davis he bought a new 1970 Mercury Marauder X-100, a full-size coupe with a 429 cubic-inch V-8, for \$5,100. He still owns it.

Mr. Davis caught the Mercury bug early. "One of my first car memories was going with my father in 1949 to shop for a new car," he said. "He looked at Hudsons and Pontiacs and bought a Mercury."

When Mr. Davis ordered the Marauder, a worker let him slip in to watch the car going down the assembly line.

"It was a dream to drive," he said.

Mr. Davis had no takers when he tried to sell the thirsty Marauder in the 1980s, so he had it repainted and began driving it to weekend car shows. The interior is original, except for tiny teeth marks in the door trim left by his daughter decades ago as a 2-year-old.

In Massapequa, N.Y., Bob McMinn also credits his father with lighting the Mercury fire for him. "He had a '55, and later a '64 Comet," said Mr. McMinn, an accountant who advertises his affection for the brand with a neon Mercury sign in the front window of his house. Eight of his 20 vehicles are Mercurys, from a '46 woody wagon to a '94 Capri.

The '46 woody wagon is among the most valuable Mercury models today, with the best examples selling for more than \$100,000. He bought his 20 years ago for \$375, replacing its seized V-8 with a rebuilt engine from Ford.

Mr. McMinn bought his first Mercury in 1959, a '54 two-door sedan. Today, he has a '54, a '56 and a '57 in that same style, a cheaper alternative to the more popular pillarless hardtop models. What's needed, he said, is more time to drive his cars — one thing he hopes to get when he retires.

Jori and Inka Rintamaki make the time now to drive their 14 Mercurys. In the summer, the couple treks to club meets, cruises and car shows near their home in Sumiainen, Finland, and in neighboring countries. Their Mercury collection includes two Marauder X-100s, a '59 Monterey and a '66 S-55 two-door hardtop, a fairly rare full-size coupe. Mr. Rintamaki's daily driver is a '98 Grand Marquis; his wife drives a '96 Cougar Xr7.

"I love Mercury styling," Mr. Rintamaki said in an e-mail.

Last September, the couple made a pilgrimage to the annual James Dean Run in the actor's hometown of Fairmount, Ind. Of the 2,000 cars that converged on the 1.5-square-mile town (population 2,700), 160 were 1949-51 Mercurys, according to Jerry Robbin, founder of the International Mercury Owners Association. And many of those, including Mr. Robbin's car, were lead sleds.

The Rintamakis shipped two Mercurys for the event, a restored '51 sedan and a customized '50 M47 pickup truck that Mr. Rintamaki and a friend built. (In addition to selling pickups under its own brand, Ford also sold them as Mercurys in Canada in 1946-68.)


Mr. Baumann, the Cougar enthusiast from Michigan, said his father remained loyal to Mercury and drove a Grand Marquis. "I'm old enough to drive that car now, but I don't like it," he said.

More his style, he added, would have been something like the Mercury Messenger design study that made its debut at the Detroit auto show in 2003. With classic Cougar design cues and a Mustang V-8 under its long hood, the Messenger hinted at a sporty Mercury revival that never came.



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MINUTES OF MEETING & CHRISTMAS PARTY JANUARY 22, 2011

AT COS HOME, CORAL GABLES

This meeting was held on a Saturday morning in conjunction with club members preparing the information and gift bags that were to be given to car owners who participated in our annual car show at Tropical Park the following weekend.

Coffee and donuts were served.

President Daisy Hernandez opened the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Treasurer, and club founder, Felipe Cos said he had been contacted by people at the Magic City Casino – located at the site of the former Flagler Dog Track – who had seen an ad for our Jan. 30 car show. He said officials at Magic City Casino would like to hold a cruise-in and car show March 26 to coincide with the finale of the Everglades 300 Mile Vintage Car Rally. (Felipe is coordinating the rally.)

The cruise-in and show will include a voluntary donation to benefit the Ovarian Cancer Society in memory of Liz Brown, an active club member and the late wife of former President Ed Brown.

Casino officials have donated several items to our club to raffle and will give cruise-in participants a \$5 gambling coupon and discounts on food. They are also donating some tickets to be raffled for an April 17 concert featuring The Spinners and The Village People.

Felipe said that because our club would be the host group for the event, it was necessary for club members to vote on whether to approve it.

A motion to approve the cruise-in and show passed unanimously.

Felipe said that depending on turnout at the event it is possible our club could consider moving our annual show to the Magic City Casino.

He also mentioned the possibility of car-related events at the casino site, at Northwest 37th Avenue and Sixth Street, as often as once a month but arranging for other area car clubs to host perhaps as many as eight other months.

Ed Brown said “We’re not talking about (our club holding events) every month; perhaps our regular show in January, then in March and two more times for a cruise-in. The woman (we spoke to) at the Casino

wanted one club to coordinate” multiple events at the casino.

Norm Gabe said he believes “We should keep this as a Thunderbird Club event so we can have control over it.

Frank Jones expressed a similar sentiment. “If other clubs are coordinating it the other eight months, who is going to control it?”

Mike McNeal said that if other clubs ran shows and our club was able to collect a profit from them (as the controlling group approved by the casino management) “We would not need to have our annual January show.”

Daisy said, however, “We are known as the people who have the show at Tropical Park.”

Ed Brown said that if other clubs are hosting a show, “We can’t charge them. That would create dissent.”

Peter Klein said the March 26 event is “raising money for the charity. Other times we will do something to raise money for the club; and in the other eight months other clubs could operate (events) and make some money.”

Ed added that “We have been trying for years to coordinate with other clubs; honestly we don’t support other clubs as much as we should.”

After some scattered discussion on the pros and cons of creating a situation that could lead to monthly shows at the Magic City Casino site, Peter said, “I think we should do this (have cruise-ins and a show) two or three times in a row to explore the viability of the idea that we can get people to attend before we go to other clubs and ask them to handle the shows other months.”

Mike added he thinks “We have to extend this idea to the other clubs and their officers and see if they are interested” in helping set up cruise-ins and shows at the casino facility.

Felipe said he has spoken with some people from other car clubs and “they are interested.”

He then presented Daisy with a clock trophy for her service as president in 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

POPPY MADDEN

