

Thunderbirds in the Spring

Spring is here with all the rain. Hopefully, some day we will have a car show with no rain. It is time to wake-up our collector cars from the long winter slumber. To recap, our collector cars have been sitting all winter, it is important for safety to check the following before that first drive:

*Check the battery for voltage for at least 12.5 and above, also battery connections. Even though your battery maybe new, it can be defective. I learned this the hard way by buying two expensive batteries on two occasions, when out of town. From now on, I will carry a good spare battery.

*Before that first drive, check for all fluid leaks, especially fuel and brake fluid, these two are the most important from a safety point. I noticed a small fuel leak from the tank of my 1958 T-bird. I restored this car in the early 90's when no gas tank was available, I had it repaired. This tank will be replaced this spring.

*For cars sitting any length of time, moisture can invade a brake system. On single chambered master cylinder systems, as many of our thunderbirds have, check and refill as necessary. Before that first drive, check for a good brake pedal. Also note, any grabbing brakes, spongy pedal, pulling to one side, and locked up brakes, etc. requires attention before driving. Call and have the car towed to a mechanic. Your life, and others depends on good brakes on all motor vehicles.

*Air pressure in tires will need to be checked and refilled as necessary. Sitting all winter, tires can develop flat spots, cracks, and bulges, etc. Any sign of damage dictates that the tire be replaced. Many of our events take us on two lane roads, a blow out can throw your car into

oncoming traffic or off the side of the road with disastrous results. I had nearly twenty- year old wide whitewalls on my 58 T-bird, it was alright for a short trip to a car show or cruise. I was being adventurous and decided to drive out of town to another show on a well-traveled four lane highway. Sure enough, I had a blowout. Fixing a flat on a busy highway with a 60 year old jack is no picnic. Replace old tires now.

The H.V.T.C. wishes all members a safe and fun season! We hope all members participate in some upcoming events. Happy safe motoring!

This column with the next newsletter will be reviewing all generations of the thunderbird starting with the Baby Bird 55-57, to the retro-bird. These series of articles will focus on road tests and reviews from defunct magazines, tech tips, reviews, and much information from my massive library. Stay tuned.

Larry Sneary