

What's New in Birdland

Volume 3, Number 4

APRIL 1960

COMING UP

by SKIP RIGGS

MAY 14-15 OVER-NIGHTER TO LAKE COUNTY

Mike Tielman, Sports Car Editor of the News-Call Bulletin, was our guest speaker at the April meeting and charmed all present with his affable and easy speech, not to overlook the subject of same . . . a wonderful two-day stay at Clear Lake May 14 and 15. He extended a special invitation to the Bay Area Thunderbird Club to join with the Marin Sports Car Association in a mass assault on Lake County, replete with Tour and Autocross. At your disposal are facilities for Boating, Swimming, Fishing, Dancing, Dining, Sebring Movies — whatever you can think of. Our host will be the Clear Lake Country Club, whose 150-room Lodge was patterned after the famous hostelry at Lucerne, Switzerland. The charge will be a very modest \$9 per night per couple, plus \$4 a day per person for three square meals.

Our group will depart from Jack London Square at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 14, joining up with the Marin group enroute for



a probable rally to Clear Lake. Total driving time is 2½ to 3 hours. Those who prefer to come for Sunday only will observe the same departure point and time as the overnight contingent.

It is not strictly necessary to put up a deposit ahead of time for this fun-fest, but be sure to submit your name to Skip Riggs by May 10th, the day of our next General Meeting.

Let's all attend this show. We've heard lots of chirping for an overnighter and lots more chirping for another tour to Lake County. Here is an event well-planned, requiring nothing from the Thunderbird Club but participation. Let's turn out for this thing and show the sports car crowd that Thunderbird owners can drink with the best of them. Fun planned for all — and I do mean ALL!

JUNE 19 — GIMMICK RALLY, PICNIC, FUN-KHANA



Another event planned to entertain almost everybody. We're planning a simple gimmick rally from our departure point, Jack London Square, at 10 a.m., to our destination at Turtle Rock Ranch on the western slope of Mt. Diablo in Contra Costa Cnty. The rally shouldn't tax anyone's mental or physical output too much for a Sunday morning. The picnic is being planned by the Social Committee and we should have loads of surprises in store for us here. The Fun-Khana will be a very simple affair, neither too strenuous on the cars or the drivers. All in all, I believe we have a very entertaining day planned for all. Activities at the Park include Horse-shoes, Swimming, Pool, Volley Ball, Badminton, Croquette, Ping Pong, and Dancing on the Patio. Beer and hard liquor can be purchased on the grounds for a modest fee. No one is allowed to bring beer or hard li-

quor onto the premises. Barbecue pits are available. Entry fee for this event will be \$3.00 per couple (including as many of your children as can be crammed into your Bird.) This fee entitles you to the use of all facilities at the Park. Dash plaques for all participants and trophies will be awarded to the winners of the Rally and Fun-Khana.

JULY 17 — 2nd ANNUAL CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

This big event is co-sponsored by the Bay Area Thunderbird Owners Club and the Concord Chapter of Kiwanis International. This is an open event designed to put money in the Club Treasury. We split the net proceeds 50/50 with the Kiwanis Club. Your support and assistance in this affair will be greatly appreciated. Remember, this is to make money for our Club, so pitch in and help all you can. It will be set up in the Concord City Ball Park, 2900 block of Sal-

Important!

Due to the demands of a new job, Marvellous MaraLee feels she must resign as Treasurer of BATOC and concentrate, via night school, toward preparing herself for her future with a young and expanding insurance company. This is a poignant loss to us, as MaraLee has held an elective position in our Club since its beginning, mute testimony to her ability. Luckily, two extremely capable candidates have accepted nomination and will compete with anyone who may be nominated from the floor on May 10th for the vacated spot on the Board. We don't know what other candidates there may be, if any, but between Donna Sell and Fran Larsen the choice is a tough one, and we do not say this merely in an effort to be neutral. Each is a good, active member with a mind of her own and can speak it on occasion. Either would be a good addition to your Board. Consider the qualifications of these two young ladies carefully — or any other candidate you wish to nominate — and come to the next meeting prepared to vote for your favorite.



Two drunks were driving furiously, late at night, along a road that ran side by side with a mainline railroad track. Suddenly a streamliner train, dark except for the engine, flashed past them going in the opposite direction.

"Shay," said one of the men in the car, "did you see that little town we just went through?"

"Yeah," replied his companion.

"You know something? I think that first house was on fire."

vio Street. This is an open event with all the usual rules and classes applying. Of special interest to Club members — THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL CLASS FOR THUNDERBIRD OWNERS WHO HAVE NEVER PLACED FIRST IN CLASS IN ANY PREVIOUS CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE. So, let's get 'em shined up and see who has the second sharpest Bird in the flock.



POKER RALLY

Despite a slight nip in the air (actually there were times when we thought we might freeze), eighteen cars were in Jack London Square on April 24th to try their luck in the Poker Rally.

Dwight Johnston distributed instruction sheets, dash plaques, collected post fees, and finally sent us on our way in caravan. We haven't travelled in this manner for too long a time, and added to the pleasure of driving in caravan, a long string of Birds is always a beautiful sight to behold.

The route took us north through the Napa Valley, past all the wineries, conjuring up memories of winery tours we had enjoyed in the past, including the delicious steak barbecue of last year. The instruction sheet included notes directing our attention to points of interest along the way. We reached the Petrified Forest just outside Calistoga, where Skip and Mid Riggs were awaiting our arrival, after an enjoyable and scenic drive.

The Shidellers, whom we had not seen for a l-o-n-g time, were in attendance. Faye Edwards was looking as slender and lovely as ever after the recent addition to her family. Bob White informed us that Jerry and he are now the proud parents of a son. Larry and Dottie Farrell in their Corvette somehow managed to keep pace with the Birds. Rose De Costa was having engine trouble; hope she got home without too much difficulty. We had the pleasure of welcoming several prospective members; Art Bellasans of Richmond and his pretty navigator, Lonnie Silvery; Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Crooks of Mill Valley; Harry Duarte, Jr. from Hayward; and Mr. & Mrs. Speckelmire, friends of Bill and MaraLee.

After we had all settled down and enjoyed our lunches, picnic style, Joe White and Jack Taylor began table-hopping. This was not done in the usual sense of the word, since after their departure the unsuspecting victims would look around only to discover that the remainder of the lunch was no longer remaining. Hope you managed to fill those cavities, fellas - or were you storing food for the winter?

In an effort to keep warm Lew Edwards did a brief version of the Hawaiian War Dance. Our Vice-President has talent.

Immediately following lunch Skip Riggs, aided by Bob Growden and Joe White, started looking for winners. Lew and Faye Edwards with an eight high flush were third. Maxine Nunes and her handsome escort, Jim, were second with a queen high flush, and the Larsens were first with a full house. A handsome trophy, donated by Skip Riggs, was awarded for First Place.

Plaques will be mailed to the Second and Third Place winners. Dash plaques were given all participants. Another successful car event very much enjoyed by us all.

MG HOUND 'n HARE RALLY

Three BATOC members accepted and very much enjoyed the kind invitation from the M-G Club to participate in their Hare and Hound Rally held on April 3. Lew Edwards who was navigating a Sprite, Bob Growden, and Andy Larsen.

The Rally was under the supervision of the M-G Club's Activities chairman, Lance Klokkwold and Norm Boyd. It ran from Oakland through the more scenic spots in Marin and ended at the Keg in San Francisco, a very challenging rally to both the navigator and the driver.

The Booby Prize went to Bill Ammon who was driving a Sprite. Third Place winner was Co Bagley in his M-G; Second Place winner was Hans Toepfer, and First Place went to Andy Larsen. What were the First and Second Place winners driving? THUNDERBIRDS!!

Incidentally, Hans Toepfer is a proud Bird owner from Belmont who has been trying to locate BATOC for six long months and finally found us through Josh Hogue's column last week. He and his yellow Bird are very interested in becoming members and the idea of coming clear from Belmont doesn't seem to faze him a bit.

MEETING DATES

Activities Committee meets on May 4th at Horsfall residence, 3917 Atlas Avenue, Oakland. Time: 7:30 p.m.

General Membership Meeting is May 10th at The Driftwood, 1413 Park Street in Alameda. Time: 8 p.m. Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Membership meets May 18th at Edwards home, 3451 - 35th Avenue, Oakland. Time: 7:30 p.m.



"DID YOU KNOW THE HANDLE WAS MISSING FROM THIS DOOR?"

Letters



A few weeks ago, in a spirit of trying to help our President arrive at some ideas for stimulating interest among some of the members whose attitude so far this year could charitably be referred to as lackadaisical, we sent questionnaires to all of you. The replies have been enlightening, but in this corner we shall concern ourselves only with those comments directed at our little paper.

Dear Editor:

I received your questionnaire. They say wisdom comes with age, but in your case age came alone. Now I hear you are going to move to Oakland in order to be nearer the rest of us. Who invited you? I think you've been out in the sun too long. But let me know when you get moved and I'll give you some paper-shell pecan trees for your yard. They will give you shade and I guarantee they will make you nuts.

— Claude Hopper

Dear Editor:

In answer to your question, "Do I have any fault to find with Birdland," I just want to say I think it's wonderful, and so are you. In fact, I am going to name my baby after you if it's a boy, if I have one and if I get married.

— Lena Genster

Dear Ed E. Tor:

You ast if I wood be willin to rite fer th' paper. I wood like to be yer confidentule secretary. I no I kin lem to be a good secretery and I'll keep everythin we do confidentule.

— Lola Bridgida

Dear Editor:

Yes, I have plenty of fault to find with the paper. I can't stand you, because you remind me of my brother and I hate that son of a bee. Affectionately,

— Cuff Link

Dear Editor:

I been reading car papers for some time and must say yours is the worst. I think it's worse than those enjoyed by people a thousand years ago.

— Phil Potts

... and strictly personal to the one who sent his questionnaire back unsigned: I am sorry you were offended by what I said in the March issue of Birdland. I am willing to make amends. You stay here and I'll go to hell.

BAY AREA Thunderbird OWNERS CLUB	
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LEW EDWARDS	Vice-President
MARALEE HOUSTON	Treasurer
EDNA NEISS	Recording Secretary
ROGER NEISS	Corresponding Secretary
FRAN LARSEN	Editor
	Associate Editor

Contributions should be submitted to the Editor, 45 Ecker Street, San Francisco



Bird Bane

We wrote about ostriches last time, but that is the sneaky thing about writers. Wait five minutes and they think of something they forgot — and it's back in business again. Besides, the flood of letters from readers (both of them very flattering) prompts us to write about the big birds just one more time. Anyway, this story would interest you. At any rate, it will interest me to tell it, and that is enough for any man to ask.

I was sitting in my car the other day talking to an old friend, an insurance agent. (He is now a big iron and steel man in Pittsburgh — his wife irons and he . . .) Well, he wasn't exactly a friend, and truth to tell, it wasn't exactly the other day, either. Actually, it was during the Roosevelt Administration (Theodore Roosevelt's) and I had just gotten my first job, a non-administrative position with Drudge & Toyle, a buggy-whip factory. So this chap was trying to part me from some of my \$15 per week salary for one of those new-fangled 20-Year Endowment policies. I tried to point out what a poor risk I'd be, what with all that climbing in and out of bedroom windows, but he merely flashed me a golden smile. The front fillings were gold; the back ones stainless steel.

"Old man, did I ever tell you some of the strange incidents we insurance men sometimes run up against?"

I assured him that he had and started out of my Model T (predecessor of the T-Bird) to crank it. But he was in a mood for entertaining, whether he entertained or not, so I opened the door on his side, hoping he'd fall out. He took umbrage at this maneuver. That would be Fanny Umbrage, a walkathon dancer he was carrying on with at the time.

"You would hardly believe some of the strange cases we are called upon to settle for," he began, jogging me slightly to awaken me.

"Whazzat?" I asked, startled.

"Here is a comical tale about one Paul A. Tanzillo* who asked reimbursement for damages inflicted by an ostrich under our clause, 'Bird Bane'" continued my friend. (I shall continue to call him my friend for the purposes of this article, but everybody knows that an insurance man has no friends. With him for a friend, who needs enemies?)

"Bird Brain?" I asked in some (but not much) surprise.

"Bird BANE", he continued, scarcely pausing for breath. "Mr. Tanzillo had been attending a Stutz Club meeting and had started for home about four a.m. on a steam roller which he had mistaken for his Bearcat. At nine o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a ring on his doorbell. Upon opening the door, he was confronted by a man who said,

'Here is your ostrich.'

"Mr. Tanzillo said, as nicely as he could for the aspirin tablets in his mouth, that there must be some mistake as he hadn't lost any ostrich; that he was in fact a bachelor living alone in a two-room apartment and that he moreover intended to maintain the status quo in that respect.

"'You own an ostrich now', insisted the man. 'You bought her last night.'"

"If he had an ostrich messing up his apartment he could always tell his friends his business was picking up," I offered helpfully.

Ignoring my sally (by the way, I wonder what's become of Sally?), he continued:

"Well, to make an anecdote into a long story, it developed that Mr. Tanzillo had alighted from his steam roller at the ostrich pen in Golden Gate Park. Climbing over the fence, he had mounted one of the fancier fowls for a brisk spin about the compound. The bird had done considerable remonstrating, with the result that it had lost some of its plumage as well as dignity. The caretaker had rushed out and insisted that since Mr. Tanzillo seemed so fond of the bird he should buy it. The sale was effected then and there, with the man agreeing to deliver the ostrich at Mr. Tanzillo's place in the morning. And so here it was."

"I am fascinated", I lied.

"As the man would under no circumstances take the animal back, Mr. Tanzillo was obliged to take it into his apartment where in the course of a week or so, it ate the buttons off all the shirts in his bureau drawer, and in general distressed its new owner to such an extent that it was impossible for him to sleep. It was at this juncture that Mr. Tanzillo presented himself at our office to claim reimbursement on the Bird Bane clause, for which he had, unfortunately for us, been farsighted enough to insure himself. I thought you'd find this little story amusing."

"You THOUGHT! I screamed. "Well, it wasn't! Now before you go — and you ARE going, aren't you? — there is one policy you can sell me."

"What is that?" beamed my friend, all smiles and policy forms.

"Against insurance agents," I fairly shouted, "and against such losses of time as I have just suffered."

I'll be darned if he didn't write me out a policy.

FOR SALE — 1957 T-Bird, Standard Transmission with Over-Drive. Very good condition. See Johnny Braga at Quik Kovers, 3757 Broadway, Oakland. \$2,950.

◆ ◆ ◆

"Do you know Art?"

"Art Horsfall?"

"No, Artisian."

"Sure, I know Artesian well."

TECH TIPS

by FRANK FICKER

FRUSTRATE THIEVES by applying plastic aluminum to the screw slots of your Bird's accessories. Hardened plastic aluminum removes with a soldering iron.

TO DEGREASE THE UNDERSIDE of your Bird, use the spray attachment of a household vacuum cleaner to apply kerosene. A rubber band will keep the valve open so you can reach under the Bird. Let the kerosene soak in, then hose off the dirt.

LACKING A RUBBER Mallet to drive a wheel cover or hub-cap into place, you can still save your hand from a bruising. Use the rubber heel of your shoe. Light blows with the shoe will seat a wheel cover in seconds without damaging it.

SMALL BREAKS IN CORK GASKETS can be patched with a filler made by mixing grated cork with gasket compound. Grate the cork on the fine side of a vegetable grater and stir it into the compound until the mixture becomes stiff.

You can get an idea of the number of miles your plugs have gone by measuring the gap across the electrodes. The average spark plug wears about .001 inch each 1000 miles the plugs are in operation.

The **WHY**, as to not waiting too long between brake adjustments. The lining on brake shoes decreases in thickness as wear takes place. This is compensated by the brake cylinders in each wheel having a greater distance to expand the shoes on the drum. More wear than is necessary is exerted on all four brake cylinder parts, which may have to be replaced if you wait too long for brake adjustment. The brake shoes should be adjusted when the brake pedal travels more than halfway to the floor to apply the brakes.

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*No relation to our Paul A. Tanzillo, who wasn't born at the time.

PRESIDENT'S PERCH

I feel very strongly that the Board of Directors has now set up the Activities Committee to do a very thorough job on future events. We now have the combined efforts of Riggs, Volpatti and Brooks (- Brooks, where are you?). Activities will not be governed by the Board but will submit reports to the Board as to their plans, costs, dates, etc.

Roger took the initiative of putting out a questionnaire covering all the pertinent questions presently confronting us. Excellent coverage, and we need your answers in order to complete the summary properly, so please turn in those papers. Thanks, Roger.

One of our first events under the reorganized set-up was the Poker Rally, a fore-runner of the quality of coming events. We now look forward to the Lake County trip to be a very successful weekend.



A Meeting Place of Our Own?

A small but vociferous group has been campaigning for our very own club house. A "Real Estate" committee was selected to scout around for likely locations and it has been doing just that. As reported last month, there is no problem in finding suitable locations . . . the difficulty lies in selecting one having the necessary facilities at a price we can afford.

We had hoped to print an article here by one of the movement's chief protagonists, Dwight Johnston, who has a knack for expressing himself in a manner both lucid and persuasive. But Dwight evidently became afflicted with writer's cramp and we've had to issue him a rain check. We do not feel qualified to fill his shoes, and besides, an editor should strive to be an unopinionated reporter. As we see it, the advantages are fairly obvious. We wouldn't feel obligated to buy dinners each month in order to keep a host restaurant happy. We could attend dressed as beatniks were we so minded. Not having a bar adjoining could be beneficial, also. Besides loosening inhibitions, liquor sometimes lubricates tongues and it would be easier to conduct a business-like meeting without John Barleycorn so much in evidence. Oh yes, the building would be ours to use for other purposes besides the monthly General Meeting. Activities and Membership could hold forth there, and we could all drop around for informal bull sessions as the spirit dictates. Perhaps hold a card party now and then.

Moneywise, unfortunately, we are not so well off as some clubs. So it has been proposed that we sublet our quarters to two or

It was with regret that the Board accepted MaraLee Houston's resignation. She no longer has time for these duties on account of her new job. A successor will be elected at the May General Meeting. If you would like to be nominated, please phone a Board member.

There seems to be a bit of dissension in the Club. As your President, I am especially concerned that it should come up during my term in office. Don't wait for other members to strengthen the Club, but get in yourself and help pull this Club back together. I guarantee we won't break even if we should get down to only ten hard-headed members.

I have just one statement that I want each and every member to take to heart and stand firmly with us to accomplish. Make our motto, "Build each of us a strong member and pledge your integrity." Thank you.

Our bats are off to tough guy Art Horsfall who had all his teeth pulled out on April 21st. He could have had some of them saved but chose instead to eschew the dentist's drill forever.

three other car clubs to use for a meeting place. While this would cut our own cost appreciably, it would also reduce the number of days the premises would be available to our own people.

At least it's food for thought. Should we or shouldn't we?

You will have a chance to decide for yourself. It will be discussed and then voted upon at the May General Meeting. If you have strong feelings one way or the other, begin now to assemble your facts and come prepared to expound on them. Or if you just want a voice in the manner in which your money is spent, be there to vote!

ABOUT THOSE QUESTIONNAIRES . . .

Your Board of Directors is quite concerned about poor attendance at Club affairs so far this year. Inasmuch as they are at a loss to explain this apathy, your Editor sent questionnaires to all of you two weeks ago with the request that they be filled in and returned posthaste so that the results could be tabulated and discussed in this issue. Unhappily, only 15 were returned - all from active members who attend most everything anyway. The stay-aways, who obviously must have their reasons for non-attendance, failed to submit a single questionnaire. Too bad, as this would have been a splendid opportunity to be heard.

While a 100% return might have shown some variations, the statistics based on 15 questionnaires are quite revealing. See

what you think.

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The type of Activities preferred would not seem to be in line with those we have been scheduling so far this year, and this might be indicative of something. Sunday tours were the first choice of 11 who submitted questionnaires and the second choice of three more for a total of 14 votes. (Our last Sunday tour was held about a year ago.) Over-Night trips received only 1 first, but 5 seconds and 5 thirds for a total of 11 votes. Rallies got 3 firsts, 4 seconds and 3 thirds for a total of 10 votes. No other suggestion received more than three votes, none being first choices.

Strange as it may seem after all the verbal discussion in recent months, only three people expressed disapproval of the Activities Committee. The Board received 13 votes of confidence, but the manner in which the meetings have been conducted drew the ire of ten out of 14 responders. Quite obviously, something should be done to enliven these while keeping them shorter and more to the point. Fran Larsen went to the trouble of writing a fine five-page letter to accompany her questionnaire. She blames the meetings for most of our ills. "Instead of the meeting consisting of pleasant topics of discussion," she writes, "i.e., suggestions for making the next car event more fun or more interesting, or one of the members of the Activities Committee making a tour or rally sound so attractive that we can't wait for the day to arrive, we all proceed to sit there and get bored by new business, old business, the state of our finances, or a downright hassel over something. Most of the members and guests really couldn't care less. They want to enjoy themselves. Most of the discussion is generally participated in by a small percentage of the membership (usually the same people at each meeting). It just plain bores the majority." She goes on to say that much of this admittedly necessary detail work could be done in committee rather than at the General Meeting level. Her letter, along with all of the questionnaires, will be turned over to the individual members of the Board for further consideration.

Another matter up for much conversation lately has been a possible increase in dues. Our survey indicated eight members do not agree with this thinking, as compared with six who do. Sentiment pretty even here.

Personally, we don't see too much wrong with our Club that a little enthusiasm on the part of certain key members wouldn't cure. We have a few natural leaders who are either "taking a back seat" this year or have disposed of their Birds and departed our ranks. These fortunate individuals have the personal magnetism to inspire enthusiasm in others. Other members may have the same interest for Club and car but they lack the knack for instilling these qualities in the rest of the membership. While we firmly believe the questionnaires will prove helpful, we do not look for any miracles until the inspirational member assumes his proper place in the scheme of things.