

ThunderEnlightening^{T.M.}

Classic Auto Supply Co., Inc.



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CLASSIC THUNDERBIRD OWNER AND RESTORER

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CASCO INTRODUCES ON-LINE ORDERING CAPABILITIES

In the spring of 2004 Classic Auto Supply introduced a new level of customer service by offering online ordering to our patrons. The Internet store was an immediate hit with many Thunderbird enthusiasts. Since CASCO's inaugural cruise down the information highway in 1997, marking the introduction of our web site, on-line ordering had been the desire of CASCO's technical crew. And even though the site sported CASCO's parts catalog, there were no commerce capabilities at that time. Online ordering was the next logical step and seemed to be a perfect fit. The implementation of on-line ordering became an instant success with many of our patrons who keep irregular work hours, wish to order on the weekend, or who simply enjoy the ease and convenience of the Internet.

CASCO President Jim Brown comments, "We earn the loyalty of our patrons by continually improving and providing them with exceptional customer service... online ordering is one more option we can offer to enhance our service." CASCO will, of course, continue telephone sales which has been our principle method of communication since the company began in 1969. We very much enjoy speaking to our customers one to one...and will always continue to do so.

After exploring several possible alternatives for online sales, CASCO enlisted the help of a proven Internet sales leader...PARTS 123. The transition from "analog sales" to digital was a welcomed addition to our customers and our staff. For our customers who have concerns about the security of the Internet, Joe Sams, owner of PARTS 123 shared these thoughts... "With our secure ordering, all customer information is encrypted for maximum security and users don't have

to worry about their personal information being used for unauthorized purposes". To order your Tbird parts and accessories online, and to find out what's new at CASCO, visit classictbird.com and click on the "on-line store" link.

INTRODUCING...

Customers who have ordered from us in recent months have often been pleasantly surprised to have their calls received by one of our newest employees, Mr. Brad Fuller. Brad has been friends with the Brown family for years but just recently joined our CASCO family. He brings a fresh voice to our phones and an upbeat perspective to customer service at CASCO. As well as being a great addition to the company, Brad is very involved in our community via the United Way, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Kiwanas, the local theatre group and countless other local organizations.



Most recently, John Lonsberry has joined CASCO Automotive Restorations as manager. He is excited to be part of the Thunderbird hobby and we feel his out-standing commitment to quality and customer service will be great for the TBird hobby as well as CASCO.



John previously served in the Army, and is a big LSU fan. He and his wife, Sherry, have two children. Just prior to joining CASCO, he managed a custom motorcycle fabrication shop.

If you call and get either Brad in sales or John in restorations, please take the opportunity to welcome them to the TBird hobby. We are sure glad to have them both and we are confident you will be too.

LOOSENING THE STEERING COLUMN

It seems that many owners don't realize that their Classic T-Bird has a telescoping steering column. To adjust the steering column, one must first loosen the large grooved chrome locking "nut" that is just below the steering wheel.

When sitting in the seat, to loosen the locking nut, turn it clockwise. Once loosened, you should be able to pull or push on the steering wheel to achieve a more comfortable position. After the column is adjusted, turn it counterclockwise to hold it in place. That's the theory. But in practice, if the column has not been adjusted for years, you may experience difficulties in making this adjustment.

First you may not be able to turn the locking nut because it is stuck. We have had cars in our shop where a previous owner has loosened the locking nut with a large pipe wrench. He likely got it loose, but, of course, he also ruined the soft die cast nut. Not good. Apply some WD-40 or other penetrating lubricant, protect the chrome finish with a rag, and then attempt to turn the nut using a rubber strap wrench like that sold by Sears.

If you are not sure if the steering column is all the way in or out, when the steering wheel is pushed all the way forward, the forward end of the grooved cylinder will be down in the chrome horseshoe shaped trim on the dash. When the steering wheel is all of the way out, about 2 inches, you will be able to see that much of the chrome steering column beyond the grooved cylinder. This should let those of you whose steering wheels don't move know which way to push or pull.

If it is all the way in, you can sit in the seat and apply a pulling force (not so much that you are bending the wheel) on the steering wheel (or try the same pushing then pulling). The column will likely come out with a clunk.

If you still can't get the wheel to move in or out, you can loosen the set screw far enough to allow you to unscrew the grooved cylinder all the way and let it slide down the column to the dash (if your wheel is toward you and not toward the dash). This will allow you to get some lubricant inside. You will note that the part of the steering column under the cylinder just forward of the threads is cut lengthwise every half inch or so. When the cylinder is tightened, this area is compressed against the fixed steering column thereby increasing the friction required to move the wheel in or out.

If you do disengage the cylinder, be careful when screwing it back on. The steering column will sag enough to cause the threads to want to cross thread. Lift the steering wheel slightly to align it with the column when re-engaging the threads of the grooved cylinder.

Once the locking nut is loose, you may still not be able to move the steering wheel in and out. If this is the case the upper steering shaft is frozen to the lower shaft. The lower grooved short shaft (male) and worm gear is part of the gearbox. The upper groove shaft (female) is the part that the steering wheel attaches to. These two parts freeze (rust) together after years of no use. There is no way to use oil or heat to loosen these shafts.

Gil Baumgardner has written a procedure for fixing this problem when the column is all the way in that he has used several times:

1. Remove the steering wheel.
2. Attach a slide hammer to the upper shaft. This can be achieved by fabricating a bracket or using a piece of chain under the steering wheel nut, insuring the nut is tightened all the way down.
3. Hook the slide hammer (at least a 10 lb slider) to the bracket or chain and bang away. The top will have to be removed from the car to make clearance for the slide hammer. If the column is all the way in it should come loose.

If the column is adjusted all the way out, it may be necessary to disconnect the steering column assembly and remove the complete column. I recommend removing the column anyway and lubricating the lower shaft grooves to insure it will not stick in the future.
Gil Baumgardner, Suisun City, CA

SHOP TIPS

TEXTURE & PAINT IN 5 EASY STEPS

Texture and paint the bottom of dash and dash parts:

1. Start with a wax and silicone remover such as CASCO part #CC100A.
2. Sandblast or scuff old surface with 220 grit sandpaper or a red Scotch-brite pad.
3. Clean and prime the surface.
4. Texture with CASCO part #19000TB or 19000TW as per instructions on can. Use white texture for color dye or black texture for black color.
5. Color coat with vinyl dye color of choice.

If you have any questions on this procedure, please call Joe in our tech department at 740-622-9700.

SHOP TIPS

HOW DO I REMOVE THE #@\$#%&**?

Ignition & trunk lock tumblers? After you remove the ignition switch or trunk lock housing, insert the key, turn clockwise 45 degrees, and push down the retaining button at the rear of the tumbler assembly through the hole in the housing. The tumbler will then pull out easily. To reinstall use the reverse procedure, when the key is turned the retaining pin will be pushed up and the assembly will be locked into place.

Headlight switch control shaft? Push down the spring loaded button on the headlamp switch; this should release the shaft. Some pushing-pulling-wiggling may be necessary.

The dash assembly? I have no doubt that I missed something, but below are the obvious items I could easily think of.

- a. Unhook battery
- b. Remove grommet from main harness where it goes through the firewall
- c. Unhook all wires in main harness from their respective connection under the hood
- d. Unhook horn wire at bottom of steering column
- e. Loosen bolt holding steering column to steering gear box
- f. Remove top just to make things easier
- g. Remove seat just to make things easier
- h. Go under dashboard and unhook the six wires coming out the side of the steering column
- i. Remove the two long screws that hold the steering column collar to the dash
- j. Pull up on the steering column and remove wheel and steering column as one piece
- k. Remove inside window trim across the center and both inside doglegs, plus the chrome end on the dog leg.
- l. Remove hex head screws that retain front edge of dash to cowl (usually 6 of them)
- m. Pull the courtesy light switches from the door jambs, remove the wires and pull the wires out of jamb until they are free under the dash
- n. Pull the antenna wire from the radio
- o. Remove the heater plenum chamber
- p. Unhook the 3 heater control cables (2 on the heater box, 1 on the right air vent)
- q. Unhook the red and orange wires from the heater control switch
- r. Unhook the left vent cable under the hood
- s. Unhook the wires going to rear of car
 1. Yellow, Black, Orange-Blue and Green-Orange (fuel, tail, right and left turn), near rear of radio

2. Red-Blue for neutral safety switch if an automatic transmission
- t. Remove wiper control knob from dash and let it hang from the wiper motor
- u. Remove wires from dimmer switch on left floorboard
- v. Remove the bolts at each end of dash to body bracket
- w. Feed the main wire harness and both air vent cables through the firewall
- x. Unhook speedometer and tachometer cables
- y. Begin pulling the dash backwards out of its position
- z. Check for items I forgot to list, unhook or remove them, and pull dash clear of car and place on bench

It's not hard, and shouldn't take more than a few hours.

John Sailors, Hillsboro, OR

HOOD ADJUSTMENT

When I recently had my car painted, it came back with the hood not closing properly at all. The dowel pins on the hood were out of adjustment with the lock latch receptacles. The problem encountered was in knowing how much and in which direction each pin needed to go. I realized that if I removed the hood scoop and gently lowered the hood, with a flashlight I could see the adjustment needed through the opening. This took all the guesswork out of the process and made the job fast and easy.

Gary Wink, Whitestone, NY

CENTERING BRAKE SHOES

Having trouble getting freshly turned drums to drag evenly? What I learned while working in a gas station in the 50's was how to center the brake drums and have a good pedal. I also did this on my new brakes on the '56.

First, you adjust them until they start dragging. Second, you smack the backing plate with a large ball peen hammer (you may need some touchup paint) then the drag will go away. Third, you adjust some more until they stop the wheel rotation. Fourth, you back off the adjuster 6 clicks... It works for me. I did this on our bird and have around 3000 hard braking miles and the pedal is still good.... Hope this helps...

Dean Fredrickson, Littleton, CO

We are sending our thanks and a \$30 gift certificate to each of our TE contributors: Gary Wink, Dean Frederickson, John Sailors, Jerry Mannix, & Gil Baumgartner.

OVERHEATING TIP

Here's a tip that may help you keep your cooling system in top shape. Spray the fan side of the radiator with a water-soluble cleaner such as Simple Green or Gunk Engine Degreaser, let it soak in, and then flush with a fine spray from your garden hose. Be sure not to use too much water pressure as you might close the radiator fins. A radiator with clean fins will cool more efficiently.

COIL COMPRESSION

If you don't have a coil compression tool just jack the car (with the engine in it) up high and place it on jack stands on the frame. Loosen the large ball joint nut (the one with the cotter pin) so it is up about 1/2 inch on the screw shaft. It's important not to take the nut all the way off. Then I use a ball joint tool to pop the shaft loose. Then install the jack under the lower control arm right under the spring. Jack it up to compress the spring (not too much or the car will lift off the stands) then loosen the lower ball joint screw all the way off. Lower the jack SLOWLY and the spring will come right out; do the reverse to reinstall.

This has worked well for me on two cars.
Jerry Mannix, Leesburg, VA

HOLIDAY SPECIAL FROM CASCO

SPECIAL SAVINGS ON SHIPPING
on all orders shipped between
November 25 and December 31, 2004.
During that time period CASCO will charge a
maximum shipping & handling of **\$9.95**
for all shipments made by standard UPS surface
within the continental United States.
This special excludes any items which are normally
billed at actual shipping costs.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL THE GANG AT CASCO

Nancy Glenn Arney Richard Shawn
Brad Joe Jeff Brad Betsy
Bibi Sue Don Susan Dave Jim

CASCO NUMBERS

Orders: (740) 622-8561 or (800) 374-0914

Fax: (740) 622-5151 or (800) 513-5806

Technical Help: (740) 622-9700

E-Mail: sales@classictbird.com

Website: www.classictbird.com

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Betsy Brown - Editor
Phone: (740) 622-8561
Fax: (740) 622-5151
E-Mail: sales@classictbird.com

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