

ThunderEnlightening^{T.M.}

Classic Auto Supply Co., Inc.



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CLASSIC THUNDERBIRD OWNER AND RESTORER

ISSUE NUMBER ELEVEN • July 1999

CASCO NEWS

Our hat is off – way off – to those folks who manage to put out a newsletter every month. It's been too long since our last ThunderEnlightening and for that I apologize.

Since our last ThunderEnlightening we have developed and installed our web site. The address is classictbird.com. Those of you that have Internet access can check our site for product specials, information on new items, as well as general information on T-Birds and clubs.

CASCO management took time off last summer to attend the CTCI International Convention in Dallas. Your editor along with wife Sue and son Bob drove our '57 senior non-original. Yes, it does have air conditioning.

While at the Convention, your editor was honored to receive the very prestigious Paul Hudgins award for "outstanding dedication to CTCI".

We are also very proud to announce that Don Mason recently received our Coshocton County's "Outstanding Employee of the Year" award. This award, presented annually by our Coshocton County Chamber of Commerce, is awarded to that employee who best demonstrates excellence on the job and contributes in a significant way to the betterment of the quality of life in our community. Don does both and we are very proud of him.

NEW CATALOG

Our 1999 30th anniversary catalog is out with larger print, 4 more pages, 42 new items, and a change-of-pace cover that is a reprint of one of the earliest T-Bird ads. The cover, along with the publicity about the new 2000 T-Bird prompted some folks to call and ask if the car on the cover was the new Bird. We only wish that it were so.

AUTHENTICITY

POWER PUNCH BATTERY COLORS

Long ago we were told that the original Power Punch batteries supplied by the factory were not painted. Based on what we thought was reliable information we have, over the years, passed this on to our customers. We now realize that the CTCI concurs rules state that the Power Punch on the sides of the battery *is* to be painted. It should be painted red for the standard group 29 battery and yellow for the heavy-duty group 32 battery. In each case this will match the color of the fill caps.

We apologize to those folks that received inaccurate information.

DECODING INVOICE TIP

If you have a copy of your original invoice and are a bit confused by some of the designations the following should help. Thanks to John Shields Scottsdale Arizona.

2PTS T/UP PT – 2 pints of touch up paint; **8TR** – 8 tube radio; **FAH** – forced air heater; **FOM** – Ford-O-Matic transmission; **FS** – fender shields (skirts); **OD** - overdrive; **OF** – oil filter; **PAW** – power assisted wipers; **TG** – tinted glass; **TI** – turn indicators; **WC** – full wheel covers; **WIRE WC** – wire wheel covers; **WSW** – white sidewall tires; **WW** – windshield washers. The others are easy to understand.

PART PROBLEM

If it appears that your turn signal jewel has developed a crack it may be a shadow cast by the bulb. Many of the miniature bulbs made today have the glass part made in two halves with a seam. This seam can cast a shadow that looks like a crack on the lens.

SHOP TIPS

Removing Clock Knobs Trying to remove that pesky clock knob? Hold the shaft with a pair of pliers with some protection on the gripping surface and turn the knob. Usually you will be able to turn the knob by hand and the only trick is understanding which way to turn it. '55 and '56 clocks have a left-hand thread and to remove the knob you will have to turn the knob in a clockwise direction. '57 clocks have normal right-hand threads.

Removing Inside Door Handles To lessen the chance of damaging the door trim panel with the spade tool used to remove the door handle retaining clip you can fashion a plastic protective guard from a plastic milk carton. Trim it to look like the spade tool only larger and insert it between the door trim panel and the spade tool. Thanks and a \$30.00 gift certificate to Lou Wright, Richmond VA.

Lubrication of Thunderbirds The lubrication points on our T-Birds are well known, or are they? The common lube points are the ball joints (4 grease fittings) and the steering linkage (7 fittings). But almost every service station and fast lube stations will miss some or all the following critical areas. Critical because to ignore them can have dire results.

- 1. Universal joints.** Lube the U-joint at each end of the drive shaft to protect the small roller bearings. Modern cars have sealed U-joints which don't need lube and service attendants don't check 'em.
- 2. Distributor.** A lot of us miss this one. If the distributor shaft freezes the drive gear shatters and chunks of gear go floating around the engine but not for long because that gear also drives the oil pump. Don't trash a perfectly good engine for the lack of a couple of drops of engine oil into the distributor oil cup.
- 3. Hood hinges.** Our Owners manual says to spray the hood hinge pins with 10 weight oil; a good substitute is WD-40 or CRC 5-56 The spray is necessary because you can't get in to lube all the areas. But do it and do it regularly.

Thanks and a \$30.00 gift certificate to Bob Lukens, Fairfax VA.

Now that we have your attention about keeping your Bird properly lubricated we need to refer you to your owners manual in your glove box. In the owners manual you will find that there is a listing of the many places to be lubricated. Our suggestion, get the proper lubricants and have them ready to use. Here's what you will need: a tube of Lubriplate, distributor grease, door latch wax stick, door and ignition lock lube, an oil can with engine oil, and WD-40. Having these lubricants on hand will help assure that your Bird gets the lubrication it deserves.

ELECTRICAL TROUBLE SHOOTING

The chart on the facing page is intended to help you locate problems in your cranking and ignition circuits. The primary tool used is a test light. Test lights are commercially available but they are really quite easy to make. To make one all you need is a miniature lamp socket with two terminals such as Radio Shack #272-355, add about 3' of wire lead to each of the terminals with an alligator clip on each end. Install a miniature bulb of the same voltage as your car and you are ready to start testing.

T-BIRDERS ONLINE

Do you have a computer? Are you using the Internet and E-mail? If so you should know that there is a self-help forum for owners and lovers of the Classic T-Birds available on the Internet in the form of a mailing list. And it's FREE! Once you subscribe you can send questions about almost any T-Bird related subject to the mailing list and normally in a matter of hours someone will give you the benefit of their experience with the same topic. You, in turn, can offer your helpful hints to others.

The mailing list for Classic T-Birds has grown to over 700 subscribers and is growing every day. It's educational, it's fun, and like we said, it's free.

To get on board you can view the Thunderbird Cyber Nest at www.tbird.org and subscribe to the mailing list from there.

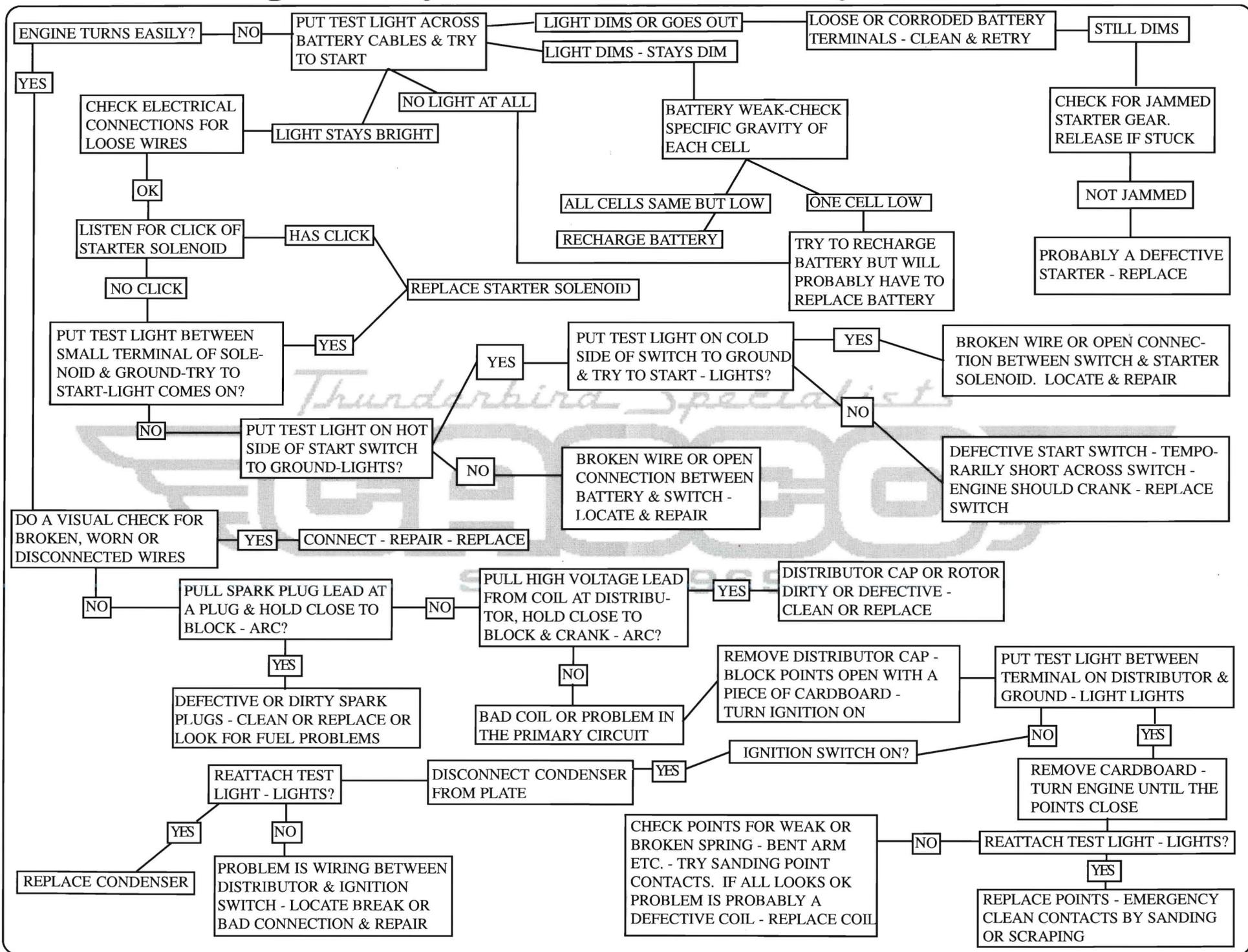
COD - NOT CASH ON DELIVERY?

By now you probably know that UPS no longer accepts cash (good old American greenbacks) for COD shipments. Those who have used COD in the past may now find it more convenient, and less costly, to use a credit or debit card rather than go to the trouble to get a money order.

GOLDEN RULES FOR LIVING

- If you open it, close it
- If you turn it on, turn it off
- If you break it, admit it
- If you can't fix it, call someone who can
- If you borrow it, return it.
- If you value it, take care of it.
- If you make a mess, clean it up.
- If you move it, put it back.
- If it belongs to someone else and you want to use it, get permission.
- If it's none of your business, don't ask questions.
- If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
- If it will brighten someone's day, say it.
- If it will tarnish someone's reputation, keep it to yourself.

Ignition System Troubleshooter by CASCO



CLASSIC THUNDERBIRD CLUB INT.

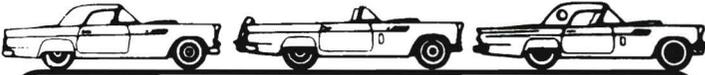


At least once a year we like to encourage all T-Bird owners to become members of the Classic Thunderbird Club International. CTCI publishes

a bimonthly publication "The Early Bird" which is crammed full of technical and other information of interest to Classic T-Bird owners. This publication alone is well worth the \$25.00 annual dues.

CTCI is the only organization that is 100% dedicated to representing the owners of Classic T-Birds.

For information on CTCI membership give us a call or simply put the part number CTCI on your parts order form. We'll be happy to send along the brochure and application form.



CASCO NUMBERS

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

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

Technical Help: (740) 622-9700

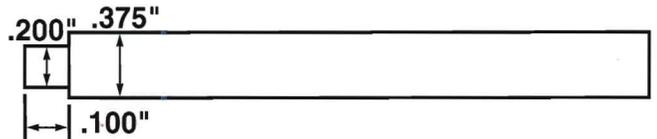
T-BIRD VIDEO

Perhaps you have seen the History Channel video covering the history and development of the Thunderbird. Want your own copy? Want to give one as a gift? We have it in stock.

The video concentrates on the Classic T-Bird with lots of original factory footage, copies of TV ads, and early shots from the Ford Design Center. Commentary by Bill Boyer, the designer of the Thunderbird, gives authenticity to the presentation. CASCO part # is V-Tbird. Price is \$19.95 plus shipping.

Also available are videos' on the Mustang (V-MUSTANG) and one on the 10 Greatest American Cars - The Classic T-Bird is not included in this video (V-10BEST). These are also \$19.95 ea.

DATA PLATE RIVET TOOL



The simple little tool shown above is all you need to properly set the original type data plate rivets. The idea is to flatten the bottom of the rivet without punching all the way through. All it takes is a light tap with a small hammer.

ThunderEnlightening™

Classic Auto Supply Co., Inc.



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This publication is prepared and published by Classic Auto Supply Co. Inc. for the owners of 1955, 1956, & 1957 Ford Thunderbird automobiles. It is provided without cost to its current active customers.

Readers are encouraged to submit shop tips and articles for publication. Each submission printed will earn for its author the gratitude of Classic T-Bird owners around the world and a \$30.00 gift certificate from Classic Auto Supply Co. We reserve the right to edit any submission.

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