

# The Motor Mouth

## Collector Car Overload

*LeMay private tour is journey into auto history*



*PSEB member Les White, a docent at the LeMay Museum and longtime close friend of car collector Harold LeMay, guides Birders through the private residence garages at the LeMay residence. The maroon and gray Rolls limo belonged to Gen. George Patton.*

For 18 awe-struck members of the Puget Sound Early Birds, the 12 barn-sized garages of sweet, shiny metal were a serious assault on the senses. It was like Disneyland for classic car aficionados, catnip for cats, a dinner of desserts and Dom Perignon.

One garage crammed with Cadillacs from the '30s to the '60s . . . a huge garage packed with old Packards . . . another filled with majestic, beautiful Rolls Royces . . . and Cords and Auburns.

We were on a never-before-allowed personalized tour of the Harold LeMay family's private residence garages housing about 400 of his finer automobiles; hundreds of hub caps, antique gas-station pumps, model trains, bicycles, tricycles, toy cars; 1,000 or more dolls, a 1920s fully stocked general store and much, much more. And it all began when Harold "Lucky" LeMay began collecting garbage with one truck and built it into the 10th largest garbage company in the country.

*It's time for a little*

**Foot-in-Mouth  
wine tasting  
and barbecue  
Saturday,  
April 18**

*See page 7 for details.*

***A Capitol Idea!***

**May 9  
State Capitol  
tour plus Olympia  
Farmers'  
Market**

***Save the  
date now!***



*(continued on page 3)*



## *In Vino Veritas*

For those of you who don't read Latin . . . the translation is "In Wine There is Truth." Something to keep in mind for our April 18 tour to the E.B. Foote Winery in Burien. It's a boutique winery that has produced some award-winning wines. So, truth be told, we will taste and then venture to the Cal-lards' home in West Seattle for a barbecue and to share tasting notes. Should be fun. Hope to see many of you there.

Last month's tour at the LeMay Car Museum was something special. Les and Jo White arranged for a viewing of the "private garages" located at the former LeMay residence. It is a little mind-bog-gling to think that one man acquired and restored more than 3,000 collectible cars in his lifetime. And Les, who worked with LeMay for many years,



shared with us many of his personal recollections about the man. Thanks very much to Les and Jo.

By now, I expect that most of you have seen the March-April issue of the CTCI magazine. Featured very prominently as the first article in the book is Gordon Thorne's great story providing a summary of last year's PSEB events. And note that it is the only chapter article illustrated with photos reproduced in color! Now how much did that cost you, Gordon? What great recognition for the club. Bravo, Gordon.

--- *Ray Vingo, President.*

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### THE MOTOR MOUTH

Vol. 16, No. 4 -- April 2009

Gold Medallion-winning publication of the Puget Sound Early Birds, chapter 81 of Classic Thunderbird Club International.

**Members are encouraged to submit articles written by themselves or others. All submissions are subject to editing and space available.**

**Deadline:** 20th of the preceding month

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**Our Mission:** To encourage and promote the preservation, admiration, ownership, enjoyment and restoration of the 1955, 1956 and 1957 Ford Thunderbirds.

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*(Continued from page 1)*

When we chose a tour of the LeMay Museum as our March event, it was a natural that we be led by our own Les White, a museum docent, a long-time close friend of Harold LeMay, and a man with an almost encyclopedic knowledge of automobiles. But just a few days before the tour, our T-bone steak event upgraded to Angus prime filet mignon when Les received permission from the LeMay family for a private tour of all 12 of the residence garages.

LeMay was a self-proclaimed “compulsive accumulator,” collecting wheels, farm machinery, decals, metal signs, gas pumps, engines, children’s toys and autos – and just about anything else that struck his fancy. Apparently, he kept it all.

When he died in 2000, LeMay owned more than 3,000 cars -- the largest private collection in the world. Nearly 400 of his vehicles are on public view at the LeMay Museum, and close to an equal number are housed at the family’s residence garages, which are open to the public just one day a year. It’s then that 8,000 to 10,000 car buffs file through the collection. For 18 of us to have it all to ourselves was a classic car club coup!

PSEBers caravanned to south Tacoma where we met Les and his wife, Jo, and their guests, Jerry and Debbie Wilkinson, at the museum. PSEBers included Ray Vingo, Pat Howard, Fred and Helen Gilchrist, Duane and Gimpy Niemi, Der and Judy Roupe, Bob and Martha Callard, Gordon and Judy Thorne, Ted and Charline Austin, and Stan and Gretchen Liebenberg.

After a brief orientation, the Whites led us in their silver Bird the short distance to the residence. Les began the tour with a bang as the first car we saw was a block-long majestic Duesenberg. Another car, a 1926 Chrysler Imperial Convertible, was so long that Judy Roupe remarked that it probably had its own zip code!



And so it went, dozens and dozens of cars in each garage scattered around the grounds, with classic and collector cars shoe-horned into two-



story showrooms. Pontiacs and old Buicks; a garage of muscle cars including Carroll Shelby's GT350 Mustang staring down a couple of nearby early '60s 'Vettes; oldies such as a 1906 Cadillac Model L, a 1906 Buick, and Priscilla, the 1914 Detroit Electric where the driver sat in the back seat.

And we saw the cars used in the 1980s movie bio of Jackie Kennedy – where Les was in charge of providing the vintage cars and even landed bit parts as a chauffeur and a rancher.

A major highlight for the T-Birders was a large room that sported a full-size 1950s ice cream parlor and soda fountain, complete with mannequin “soda jerk” and customers, tables, chairs and jukebox. Just next to the soda fountain were three collectible icons– a black '55 Bird, a green '56, and a pink '57.

For Fred Gilchrist, it was a special reunion when he found the right-hand-drive 1928 Ford Phaeton Model AR he sold to LeMay years ago. Moments later, Jo told us that the gorgeous '33 Packard convertible we were admiring had been restored and owned by Les before he, too, sold it to LeMay. Seems Les took it as collateral when he loaned an attorney \$10,000 for his divorce; it wasn't repaid and Les got the car in pieces in washtubs and spent \$27,000 to restore it.

After two hours of ogling and drooling over the never-ending eye candy, we came back to reality by driving to a nearby diner for patty melts, old-fashioned malts and other goodies. But wait – there was more! The admission fee was also good for the LeMay Museum, so many decided to walk off lunch with more car touring.

The museum is moving to new digs in several years when the LeMay – America's Car Museum becomes a reality near the Tacoma Dome. It will be a fitting legacy for a man whose high-school class in Tacoma actually voted him “least likely to succeed.”

Many, many thanks to Les White for arranging this once-in-a-lifetime experience, and to Jo, for her fine work as “sweeper,” making sure we didn't lose anyone caught in reverie at the sight of



so much automotive history in one location.

-- written by Gordon Thorne



*Thank you , Les and Jo, for giving us a once-in-a-lifetime journey into the world of collectible cars. It was an incredible experience for all of us.*



# The Road Ahead 2009



<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Host</i>
<i>April 18</i>	<i>Private wine tasting at E.B. Foote Winery and barbecue at Callards' home in West Seattle</i>	<i>Callard</i>
<i>May 9</i>	<i>State Capitol Tour, Olympia Farmers' Market</i>	<i>Talbot</i>
<i>June 14-15</i>	<i>Grand Coulee Dam overnight with Olympic Classic T-Bird Club; back roads tour</i>	<i>Thorne/Dilores-OCTC</i>
<i>July 18</i>	<i>Brown Maloney auto/motorcycle collection and Sequim Lavender Festival</i>	<i>Maloney/Vingo</i>
<i>August TBD</i>	<i>Paul Allen Heritage Aviation Museum and barbecue at Hummels' beach house</i>	<i>Hummel</i>
<i>September TBD</i>	<i>Overnight tour to Hobucks Beach, Neah Bay</i>	<i>Weiler</i>
<i>October TBD</i>	<i>Fall colors tour</i>	<i>Gilchrist</i>
<i>November 15</i>	<i>Great Chefs of the Northwest</i>	<i>Roupe</i>
<i>December 13</i>	<i>Christmas Party and Gift Exchange</i>	<i>Low</i>

## Non-PSEB Events of Interest

<i>April 18</i>	<i>Pizza Run to Hadlock; Aero Museum tour Port Townsend (information: Ted Austin 360/394-2297)</i>	<i>OVAC</i>
<i>May 15</i>	<i>Classic Car Show – Bremerton (360/473-0577)</i>	<i>West Sound Tech</i>
<i>May 22-26</i>	<i>17th Annual Show &amp; Shine, Kelowna, B.C.</i>	<i>Okanagan T-Bird Club</i>
<i>May 30</i>	<i>Shop 'n' Shine Car Show breast cancer benefit in Gig Harbor (see page 8)</i>	<i>Komen Foundation</i>
<i>August 18-21</i>	<i>CTCI Region 3 Convention in Vancouver, B.C. Information in February Motor Mouth</i>	<i>Totem T-Bird Club</i>



Let's Sip and Sup  
Complimentary wine tasting and  
barbecue, thanks to our hosts,  
Bob and Martha Callard  
1 p.m. April 18  
E.B. Foote Winery in Burien

**If you like good wine, enjoy hors d'oeuvres and love burgers and brats, then you have to join your PSEB buddies for good fun when the Callards host a Saturday to remember.**

**RSVP 206/932-3236 or  
[recallard@yahoo.com](mailto:recallard@yahoo.com) no later  
than Wednesday, April 15.**

**WHO:** Up to 40 tasters, including PSEBers and Callard neighbors.

**WHAT:** A complimentary private wine tasting with hors d'oeuvres, followed by a barbecue at the Callards' West Seattle home -- just a stone's throw from the Fauntleroy-Southworth Ferry.

**WHEN:** The tasting begins at 1 p.m. The 11:30 a.m. Bainbridge ferry will put you in Burien about the right time. Once you're in Seattle, follow the directions below. After the tasting, the Callards will lead a caravan to their home, where we'll enjoy a barbecue of brats and burgers, salad and chips.

**WHERE:** E.B. Foote Winery, 127-B (basement -- it's a wine cellar, after all), S.W. 153rd St., Burien. The Callards' address is 9616 47th S.W., West Seattle.

**BRING:** An eager palate, discerning nose, observant eyes (look for those legs on the wine glass), a good appetite **and a dessert** to top off the barbecue. Bob and Martha will provide the rest of the food, pop and bottled water. If you want beer, wine or another beverage, please bring your own.

**DIRECTIONS:** From I-5 north or south, take the Burien/Sea-Tac Airport exit to Hwy. 518 West. Hwy. 518 becomes 148th S.W. At the major signal at First Ave. S.W., turn left. Go several blocks to S.W. 153rd St. and turn right. The winery is on the left.

**WEAR:** It'll be cool at the winery, so layers are suggested plus comfortable shoes for the concrete floor.



## Hey, Girlfriends!

How about a car show with upscale shopping?

A car show next to a nail salon and a spa?

A car show that supports the Susan B. Komen Foundation?

Let's get our guys and our Birds (or other classic cars) together for a Saturday girls' good time -- they can show off their cars and talk that car talk, and we can shop, get a pedicure or even a massage. Did I mention restaurants? And a theater?

### "Shop 'n' Shine" Car Show

**10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

(participants arrive after 8 a.m.)

**Saturday, May 30**

**Uptown Gig Harbor**

(our new and still-growing shopping area fashioned after the University Village concept)

**4701 Pt. Fosdick Dr. N.W.**

**Prize for People's Choice**

Live music, too

**Suggested registration** donation of \$20 per vehicle includes raffle tickets and a silent auction with **100 percent of proceeds going to the Komen Foundation.**

**Come check out** Chico's, Coldwater Creek, Ann Taylor Loft, J Jill, Bloom Denim, Heart, SQ Decor, Elandan Gallery, Borders Books, Adam & Eve, Posh Paw . . . Tuscan Sanctuary Salon and Spa, Massage Envy, Julep Nail Parlor . . . Ben & Jerry's, Panerra Bread, Fondi Pizzeria, Jamba Juice and more.

### At last -- a car show for girls!

Gordon and I will be there. If you'd like to join us, RSVP by mid-May and we'll arrange to meet you at Gig Harbor Office Depot and caravan together. Come on, girls -- I hate to shop alone! -- **Judy 4**

## April Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 1 Dennis Hasard
- 1 Pat Hasard (no foolin')
- 4 Duane Niemi
- 8 Michael Perry
- 18 Tom Harris
- 20 Sandi Talbot
- 24 Judy Lowe



### Anniversaries

- 6 Matthews
- 3 Talbots

## As the Tires Change

**Mike Talbot** checks in: Ever tried to change a rear tire on a T-Bird? Let me tell you, it is a real project even with the right equipment. The stock bumper jack by itself is dangerous. Typical bottle hydraulic jacks are hard to get under the spring because most are too tall. Years ago, I found a hydraulic scissor jack that has been kept in the T-Bird.

### Tech Tip

Recently, I had to put chains on Sandi's Honda Accord while it was in the garage. I first tried the jack that came with the car -- forget that! So I used the hydraulic scissor jack from the T-Bird. Then I went to Harbor Freight to get another one to keep in Sandi's car, but they no longer stock them.

What they have now is an electric scissor jack that plugs into the lighter. It costs about \$60, which is well worth it if you have ever changed a rear wheel without one. If you want one and don't have a Harbor Freight near you, let me know and I'll get one for you.



## News from CTCI Region 3

The annual CTCI board meeting was held Feb. 6-7 at the CTCI office in Signal Hill, Calif., with a variety of business discussed and actions taken. Our 2008 president, Sue Smith, was re-elected to this position for another year, as was Scott McGilvray as vice president and John Sailors as secretary. After many years of service as CTCI treasurer, Jim Hack is stepping down, and Larry Kooiman was elected treasurer.

The March/April Early Bird includes the President's Report, CTCI Operating Summary and membership stats. A synopsis of the meeting will be printed soon.

CTCI's Concours, Authenticity and Judge's Training Committees continue to find ways to make our concours

events more enjoyable for car owners, participants, judges and the host clubs. These committees appreciate input from the membership; they determine if and where these ideas can be incorporated into the guidelines and rules. The updated 2009 Concours Guidelines and Concours Procedures and the 2009 Concours and Touring Rules can be viewed or downloaded at [www.ctci.org](http://www.ctci.org).

The two 2009 CTCI regionals are the Region 5 event, "T'Birds 'n Tulsa Celebration 2009," July 3-6, and **our own Region 3 "Thunderbirds Roll at the River Rock," Aug. 18-20, in Richmond (Vancouver), B.C.** Barry Miller, Vancouver chairman, says 125 rooms were booked by the early deadline of March 1, and there are still plenty of rooms available. At this time,

the U.S./Canadian exchange rate makes the event enticing. Be sure to take 10 percent off your registration totals before sending your forms and checks to the Totem Club.

Most important -- be sure you have a U.S. passport or enhanced driver's license (Washington state) to ensure a smooth border crossing. And be sure to keep in mind the Ford Johnson Memorial Trophy that goes to the chapter with the most combined miles driven. This year will start the round of combined miles for the 2009-10 events.

The 2010 CTCI international convention will be June 15-20 in Dayton, Ohio, at Wright Paterson Air Force Base. -- **Cathy Stubbs, Region 3 Director**, 8331 144<sup>th</sup> Place. S.E., Newcastle, WA 98069, 425/228-7198; [cfstubbs@msn.com](mailto:cfstubbs@msn.com)

### Grand Coulee Dam Tour Update

Our June 13-14 Grand Coulee Dam tour promises to be great fun. So much fun, in fact, that the organizers, Olympic Classic Thunderbird Club, have added a Sunday tour and second overnight in Leavenworth for those who won't be ready to go home after just one night.

After breakfast at Coulee House Inn (our June 13 hotel, 800/715-7767), the tour will depart for back roads that may include a stop in historic Waterville, Rocky Reach Dam or Ohme Gardens in Wenatchee, depending on time. They plan to arrive in Leavenworth with time to shop and have an early evening gathering before dinner.

Hotel information for Sunday, June 14: DER RITTERHOF MOTOR INN, 190 U.S. Hwy. 2, Leavenworth 800/255-5845 or 509/548-5845. Rates: one queen \$92; two queens \$100. Amenities include continental breakfast, refrigerators, microwaves, outdoor pool, whirlpool, and nice outdoor area with barbecue grills, picnic tables, badminton and volleyball in a parklike setting.

#### RESERVATION DEADLINE MAY 14

For information on this portion of the tour, please contact Cathy Stubbs at 425/228-7198 or [cfstubbs@msn.com](mailto:cfstubbs@msn.com).



## Good Stuff to Know

- **Stuck fasteners** -- dip the tip of your screwdriver or wrench in valve grinding compound (water or oil based). It increases the effective torque. Works great on rusted or stuck fasteners, pulleys, etc. Dull drill bit? Yep, valve grinding compound works great there, too. -- *The Air Scoop, San Antonio T-Bird Club*
- **Say goodbye to funnels** -- Instead, use the push down/closed, pull up/open top from an empty bottle of dishwashing liquid. These

tops have the same thread as the plastic oil and transmission bottles. It eliminates the mess -- put it on the oil bottle, leave it closed, turn the bottle over and into the dipstick hole. Hold the top with one hand and pull the bottle up to start the flow. When you're done, push the bottle down and it's closed. -- *The Air Scoop, San Antonio T-Bird Club*

- **The rear license lamp** on a 1955 T-Bird will function as a trunk light when the trunk is open IF the headlight switch is pulled out one or two notches. -- *ThunderEnlightening*

## Swap Meets and Car Shows

*Always call before you go*

**April 4 -- Antique Farm Engine and Tractor Show**, Elma, Grays Harbor Fairgrounds, 8-3; AFETA, 206/246-2848.

**April 12 -- All Emergency Vehicle Show**, Issaquah, Triple XXX Root Beer Drive-In, 8 a.m.; 425/865-9587.

**April 18-19 -- Defrost Kick-off**, Kent, Pacific Raceways, 9-5; 435/277-3177.

**April 18 -- Mount Vernon Swap Meet**, Skagit County



Fairgrounds, 8-4; North Cascade Street Rod Association, 360/421-1407.

**April 24-26 -- Mild to Wild Hot Rods and Hot Ride**, Tacoma Dome, 1-9, 10-9, 10-5; Mild to Wild LLC, 253/539-3929.

**April 25 -- '50s Cruise Reunion**, Warrenton, Ore., Camp

Rilea, 9-4; Lower Columbia Classics Club, 503/325-1807.

**April 25 -- Vintage Military Show**, Issaquah, Triple XXX Root Beer Drive-In; Puget Sound Military Collectors, 253/670-1046.

**April 25 -- Jeffco Expo**, Port Townsend, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 9-5 both days; Jefferson County Fair Association, 360/385-1013.

**April 26 -- Breakfast and Poker Run**, Puyallup Elks Club, 8:30 a.m.; Gallopin' Gertie Model A Club, 253/566-4374.

**May 1-2 -- Classic Chassis Parade and Car Show**, East Wenatchee, Eastmont Park; 509/886-6108.

## DAFFYNITIONS

**Hydraulic floor jack** -- used for lowering an automobile to the ground after you have installed new disk brake pads, trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper. (*See Tech Tip on page 8.*)

**Eight-foot 2 x 4** -- used for levering an automobile upward off a hydraulic handle.

**Tweezers** -- a tool for removing wood splinters.

**Phone** -- a tool for calling your neighbor to see if he has another hydraulic floor jack. -- *Totem T-Bird Club Smoke Signal*

## Words from and for the Wise

IF it doesn't move and it should, use WD-40.

IF it shouldn't move and it does, use Duct Tape.

IF it can't be fixed with a hammer, it's an electrical problem.