

PONY EXPRESS

EST. 1964

EST. 1776



Celebrating 250 USA
July 2026 Edition



Mustang Club of Tampa

Editor's Note: Celebrating 250 Years of Freedom and Horsepower

Welcome to the historic July 2026 edition of the Pony Express! This month, our nation reaches an incredible milestone—the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. As we look back to 1776 and the brave choices that forged our independence, it feels only fitting that we celebrate this Semiquincentennial with the ultimate symbol of American freedom: the Ford Mustang.

Our cover car beautifully reflects this monumental celebration, wearing a stunning layout of Ruby Red, Oxford White, and Sonic Blue. For generations, the Mustang has been more than just a car; it is a testament to American innovation, style, and the open road. It represents the very spirit of independence born 250 years ago.

As members of the Mustang Club of Tampa, we carry forward that shared passion for freedom and heritage. Whether you are cruising past the Tampa skyline or displaying your ride at our local meets, you are driving a piece of living history. Let's make this historic July unforgettable. Fire up those engines, wave the stars and stripes proudly, and let that

American horsepower roar!

Happy 250th Birthday, America!

Nannette C Parra, DVM

Mustang Club of Tampa

MUSTANG



CLUB OF TAMPA

MCT's

PONY EXPRESS

E-News – July 2026 Edition

Happy Birthday USA! As our great nation turns a spry 250 years old, what could be more patriotic than driving your Ford Mustang? The quintessentially American marque that embodies our great American spirit – bold, adventurous, taming the wild, venturing beyond the known frontier. If you listen to any of the engines that power our steeds you can hear them recite “FREEdom-LIBerty-FREEdom-LIBerty-FREEdom-LIBerty...” over and over again. As you roll into the throttle and release more of those pent-up ponies the cry gets louder – our Founding Fathers had no idea what was to come in the form of a four wheeled freedom machine. Even the genesis of the Mustang name carries with it the color of freedom – while the horse may be its symbol, legend has it the name originally was inspired by the fighter aircraft P-51 Mustang that helped liberate a continent and end a world war. Tying it back to the American Mustangs that roam our great plains and deserts...the Spanish brought them over, a few could not be contained, they made a break for it, and freedom was their prize.

As you grill, or enjoy a free brunch, or roast on a gulf beach, please take a moment and reflect back on a group of individuals who took a risk and brought forth a new nation based on the precept that there exists self-evident truths “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Enjoy the freedom, enjoy the pursuit.

As for club business, we will be looking at some indoor activities for the summer in addition to the events you see we have planned already. Late August brings us two phenomenal events – MCA’s 50 th Anniversary and the Coke Zero Sugar 400. The MCA show will be coupled to a track event AND the Shelby American Auto Club’s 51 st Annual Show. This promises to be a huge event. Go check it out on www.mustang.org, and if

you are not an MCA member yet, check out their membership options. It's a great organization and we'll have several members going up to Road Atlanta to be part of the celebration. If driving to Georgia is not for you, check out the Coke Zero Sugar 400.

The great folks at Daytona International Speedway are putting on a pre-race car show, and for the cost of entry you also get a seat to the race. We can organize a drive over if there is enough interest – let me know and we'll make it happen.

2027 – We are already looking at next year for some big events – January Road Rally, Rolex 24 at Daytona, Mustang Week in March, our 46 th Annual Roundup on April 17 th and another Rays game. If you have any suggestions, please email me and we'll discuss it with the board as we meet in July and September.

Have a great July, I sincerely hope to see you out enjoying your rides at our events, stay safe and let freedom ring!

Bob Turner President, MCT



Upcoming Events

Mustang Club of Tampa – Summer Event Highlights

For more details and updates, follow us: [Facebook](#), [Instagram \(@mctprez\)](#) or on our Events Tab at <https://mustangcluboftampa.com/events/>

For additional events not listed here please visit [Florida Car Shows Website](#)

Upcoming Events and Info

July

Date	Event	Details
July 4	Brunch at Sodalis Tampa	10am to 12 noon at Sodalis Tampa on Bearss. See Flyer in this issue.
July 16	BOD Meeting	6pm to 8:30pm; Location TBD
July 25	Laps At Daytona	See flyer in this issue – this is in conjunction with August 29 th Car Show at the Coke Zero Sugar 400
July 28	Monthly Cruise-In	Ford’s Garage – West Chase; 6pm until ?

August

Date	Event	Details
August 25	Monthly Cruise-In	Ford’s Garage – West Chase; 6pm until ?TBD
August 28 - 30	MCA 50 th Anniversary	Road Atlanta – MCA Car Show and Track Event – see mustang.org for details.
August 29	Pre-Race Midway Car Show	Coke Zero Sugar 400 at Daytona – see flyer in this issue or our website.

ALF# 9981



ALL-AMERICAN

Car Show & Brunch



SAT, JULY 4 ★ 10:00AM TO 12:00PM

FEATURING THE MUSTANG CLUB OF TAMPA

2626 WEST BEARSS AVE | TAMPA, FL 33618

For more information, contact Tiffany Hopkins
at 813-960-5346 or TampaLED@sodalissenior.com



PRE-RACE MIDWAY CAR SHOW



\$68 PER VEHICLE

Includes 1 race ticket, 1 car corral spot, and track laps.

Additional race tickets can be purchased for \$46

- Car Show Parking: Showcase your vehicle on race day at the Coke Zero Sugar 400 on August 29
- Track Laps on Saturday, July 25
- All Make & Models Welcome
- Limited Spots Available: First come, first serve
- Commemorative Dash Plaque Included



For more information, please contact:
Jake Roell | 386-200-9696 | jroell@nascar.com

Member Spotlight

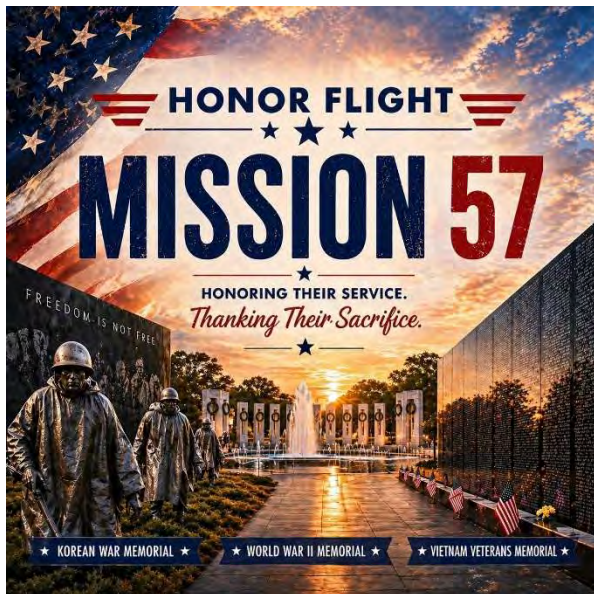
250 Years of Liberty, One Unforgettable Flight

Welcome Home, Bob Perry: My Honor Flight Experience

As our nation celebrates its milestone 250th anniversary, we naturally reflect on the grand tapestry of American history, freedom, and sacrifice. The Mustang Club of Tampa proudly champions these values by supporting the Honor Flight Organization as one of our core charities. The emotional mission of Honor Flight is both simple and breathtakingly profound: to wrap veterans in a blanket of national gratitude, flying them to Washington, D.C., to

stand before the monuments built in honor of their service.

Having served in the U.S. Army from 1966 through 1968, I was overwhelmed with pride to be selected for Flight Mission 57. This marked the 57th time our West Central Florida chapter poured its heart into sending a baseline of heroes to our nation's capital.



The Uniform of the Day

Our journey began at 4:00 AM at the St. Pete/Clearwater International Airport, crackling with a unique, early-morning electric energy. As we were issued our official hats, shirts, and backpacks—our “uniform of the day”—a wave of nostalgia hit me. There were 74 of us veterans, the vast majority from the Vietnam War era. Beside us stood 74 guardians. These incredible volunteers dedicate their entire day to ensuring we feel safe, supported, and deeply



Member Spotlight...Continued

cared for at every single step. Honor Flight covers every single expense so that no veteran ever has to open their wallet. This selfless generosity instantly relieves any anxiety, letting us focus entirely on the emotional journey ahead. We took off at 6:00 AM, flying toward history.



Tears and Tarmacs

The tears started early. Upon landing at Dulles International Airport, fire trucks lined the tarmac, raising their arches to give our plane a breathtaking water cannon salute. Stepping into the terminal, the sheer wall of sound hit us. An honor guard and massive crowds of strangers lined the walkways. They were cheering, weeping, waving flags, and shouting

"Thank you!" The pure joy radiating from the Honor Flight volunteers and the public was infectious, carrying us all the way to three waiting tour buses.

Our itinerary was a whirlwind of sacred ground: the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. After a provided lunch, we moved to the World War II Memorial. It instantly became my personal favorite, as the beautiful, dancing water fountains seemed to echo the vibrant spirit of a grateful nation. We concluded at the Air Force Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery. There, we stood in a breathless, quiet respect during the changing of the guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown



Soldier. At every single monument, the emotional heartbeat of the day never faltered. Complete strangers rushed over just to shake our hands, their eyes filled with genuine gratitude.

Member Spotlight...Continued



Healing an Old Wound

The flight home held a secret that shattered whatever emotional defenses we had left. High in the air, the

cabin lights dimmed for a sacred military tradition: "mail call." Volunteers handed each of



us a thick, heavy bundle containing 40 to 50 personal letters. Reading those notes—many



scribbled in the innocent, colorful handwriting of school children, others beautifully handmade by appreciative



citizens—brought quiet tears to the eyes of grown men across the cabin. In a country celebrating 250 years of independence, it was a beautiful reminder that our liberty is safe in the hands of the next generation. We touched down back in Florida at 8:30 PM, but the true emotional crescendo awaited us outside the gates. We walked out into a roaring sea of several hundred well-wishers and a pristine honor guard. It took us a full, overwhelming hour just to navigate the crowd. For nearly 60



years, many of the Vietnam veterans on that flight had carried the heavy, quiet pain of returning home to an ungrateful nation. That night, the loud, ringing cheers of "Welcome home!" finally washed that old sorrow away.

Member Spotlight...Continued

It was an exhausting day, but truly a once-in-a-lifetime, soul-stirring experience. Honor Flight does not just show veterans monuments; they heal spirits. They are a charity entirely worthy of our club's unwavering, continued support!

How You Can Keep the Planes Flying

Honor Flight of West Central Florida is a 100% volunteer-run organization that receives zero government funding. They rely entirely on private donations from citizens and clubs like ours to keep these flights completely free for our heroes. As we celebrate 250 years of American liberty, let's make sure no veteran's sacrifice is forgotten. You can make a secure, tax-deductible online donation on the [Honor Flight West Central Florida Donation Page](#). If you prefer to donate by mail, please make your check payable to "Honor Flight of West Central Florida" and send it to:

Honor Flight of West Central Florida
P.O. Box 55661
St. Petersburg, FL 33732

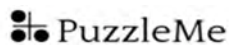
Editor's Note: Mail Call

Thank you, Bob, for sharing your journey. Editing your experience brought me to tears. My father, a Vietnam veteran, passed away too young to receive that honor. Not just on the 4th of July, but every single day, I offer my deepest gratitude and a resounding "WELCOME HOME" to all veterans—while forever honoring those who never made it back. We remain free because of your sacrifice.

Nannette
Editor, Mustang Club of Tampa Newsletter

The Pit Stop: Answers While You Refuel

June's Crossword Puzzle, the answers



Ford Mustangs over the years

- ✓ BOSS
- ✓ BULLET
- ✓ CALYPSO
- ✓ COBRA
- ✓ ECOBOOST
- ✓ FOXBODY
- ✓ GT
- ✓ KING
- ✓ LX
- ✓ MACH
- ✓ NEWEDGE
- ✓ ROUSH
- ✓ S197
- ✓ S550
- ✓ SALEEN
- ✓ SHELBY
- ✓ SN
- ✓ SPECIAL
- ✓ STEEDA
- ✓ SVO
- ✓ TERLINGUA
- ✓ V6
- ✓ V8



The Pit Stop...need a break from reading?

Need a quick breather between articles? Pull into The Pit Stop—your fast, fun intermission in the newsletter. Grab a pencil, test your Mustang knowledge, and enjoy a few light activities before you hit the road to the next section.

The Questions

1. In what year did Ford officially introduce the very first Mustang to the public at the New York World's Fair?
 - A) 1963
 - B) 1964
 - C) 1965
 - D) 1966
2. Which legendary automotive designer and racer partnered with Ford to create the high-performance 1965 Shelby GT350?
 - A) Carroll Shelby
 - B) Lee Iacocca
 - C) Ken Miles
 - D) Mickey Thompson
3. The famous 1968 Mustang GT Fastback driven by Steve McQueen in the movie "Bullitt" featured what iconic paint color?
 - A) Wimbledon White
 - B) Highland Green
 - C) Acapulco Blue
 - D) Raven Black
4. What is the name of the iconic, high-performance engine option introduced in 1968 that featured Ram Air induction and became a drag racing legend?
 - A) 289 Hi-Po
 - B) 351 Cleveland
 - C) 428 Cobra Jet
 - D) 429 Boss
5. Which Mustang model, introduced in 1969, was named after a legendary speed record and featured a reflective side stripe and matte black hood?
 - A) Mach 1
 - B) Boss 302
 - C) Grande
 - D) Cobra II
6. During the "Fox Body" era, Ford introduced a special high-performance model in 1984 developed by the Special Vehicle Operations department. What was it called?
 - A) Mustang GT

- B) Mustang SVO
 - C) Mustang Cobra R
 - D) Mustang LX 5.0
7. What was the factory-rated horsepower of the famous 5.0L "Coyote" V8 engine when it first debuted in the 2011 Mustang GT?
- A) 305 hp
 - B) 412 hp
 - C) 435 hp
 - D) 460 hp
8. The SVT Mustang Cobra R is a legendary, track-focused, stripped-down racing machine. In which three model years was the Cobra R produced?
- A) 1983, 1993, 2003
 - B) 1993, 1995, 2000
 - C) 1994, 1996, 1998
 - D) 1999, 2001, 2003
9. What unique, track-ready feature was introduced on the 2015 Mustang GT manual transmission models to help drivers achieve perfect drag strip launches?
- A) Launch Control
 - B) Electronic Line-Lock
 - C) MagneRide Suspension
 - D) Rev-Matching
10. Introduced for the 2024 model year, what is the name of Ford's ultimate, street-legal, track-ready Mustang powered by a targeted 800-horsepower supercharged V8?
- A) Dark Horse
 - B) Shelby GT500KR
 - C) Mustang GTD
 - D) Mach 1 Premium





MUSTANG CLUB OF TAMPA

DRIVE THE LEGEND. SUPPORT OUR HEROES.

Sponsorship Opportunities

46th Annual Mustang & All Ford Round Up

Saturday, April 17, 2027 (National Mustang Day!) | Tampa, FL

Celebrate a Legend. Support a Hero.

Join the Mustang Club of Tampa for our most significant event of the year. This isn't just a car show; it's a community mission. All proceeds benefit Celebrate Birthdays, ensuring every child feels special, and Honor Flight of West Central Florida, flying our veterans to their memorials in D.C.

Choose your performance Level

Put your brand in front of 170+ member families and 5,500+ social followers!

Level	Awards w/ Logo	Website Link	Social Post	Investment
Silver:	1 (Sponsor's Choice*)	—	—	\$100
Gold :	10	Included	—	\$300
Platinum:	20	Included	Included	\$500

*Sponsors at the \$100 level are invited to walk the field and personally present their award!

2. NON-CASH SPONSORSHIPS: DOOR PRIZES & RAFFLE ITEMS

Help us drive donations through our Silent Auction and Raffle. We welcome items of all kinds—sports memorabilia, entertainment packages, cosmetics, or gift certificates.

Your donation will be highlighted during our live drawings!

3. VENDOR SPACES - \$50

Want to engage the crowd directly? Secure a 10'x10' vendor space. (Note: These are car-related OR general interest—and they are included free with any cash sponsorship above!)

Note: Vendor spaces are FREE with any Cash Sponsorship listed above!



Snapshots from the Stable

Mustang Memories: We want to see the herd in action! Share your favorite pictures from recent shows and club cruises with the MCT team.

Cruising to the Trop: A Day of Ponies, Pals, and Rays Baseball!

By BT

To say we had a blast at our recent cruise-in to Tropicana Field would be a massive understatement—it was an absolute home run of a day! There is nothing quite like the electric energy of multiple car clubs rolling together, sharing laughs, scoring prime seats, and best of all: watching our hometown **Tampa Bay Rays lock in a spectacular win!**

The Gandy Rumble

Our high-octane adventure kicked off at the Gandy Wawa, where the rumble of American muscle filled the air. An incredible convoy of **30+ Mustangs** lined up and hit the pavement together, turning heads all the way down to the Trop's Lot 6!

Once we arrived, the camaraderie was instant. We scored the ultimate parking jackpot right next to a giant, beautiful shade tree (seriously, huge shoutout to whoever planted that masterpiece decades ago!). Mustangs of every generation were glittering in the Florida sun as members from all different clubs mingled, swapped stories, and checked out each other's rides. The sense of family and shared passion was undeniable.

Top 10 and Stadium Lights

The excitement went up another notch when our amazing host, Tate Anderson, came out to survey the field. She had the incredibly tough job of picking her favorite Top 10 Mustangs from the stunning lineup! With the car show wrapped up, our crew headed inside the dome to beat the heat. We loaded up on stadium hot dogs, nachos, a couple of ice-cold beers, and that glorious, crisp air conditioning.

A massive, heartfelt thank you goes out to Tate, the entire Rays organization, and every single car club that brought their passion out to the asphalt. You all made this a truly unforgettable day of friendship and horsepower.

Looking Ahead to 2027

We are already dreaming about doing this all over again in **2027!** We learned a ton from this first incredible outing, and next time around, we are aiming even bigger and better. Stay tuned, keep those engines purring, and let's go Rays!



Snapshots from the Stable



" 📷 **Mustang Club of Tampa Photo Reminder!** 📷

Don't forget to send in your best shots from your recent Cruise-in's, car shows or club gatherings for next month's newsletter! Please include your name, car model, and a quick note about the event. Send them to the newsletter editor or reach out via the MCT website." [Nannette C Parra, DVM](#)

Snapshots from the Stable

Snapshots from the Stable: R2 Pub Custom Car Show

By Doc Hostetler | May 31, 2026

It promised to be a scorching day, so I arrived early with one goal: grab a coveted shady parking spot! Bobby rolled in at



the exact same time in his Camaro drag car, so we successfully scored two of the rare shaded spots. By noon, the entire lot was completely full—though unfortunately for Bobby, his shade had entirely vanished! The competition was fierce. Rusty Gillis showed up in a customer's sleek Falcon and walked away with the well-deserved **Best Engine** trophy!



The turnout was fantastic, featuring a ton of beautiful Fords alongside some incredible builds in the “other” category. Mother Nature even decided to crash the party. If you look



closely at the McLaren photo, you will see fresh raindrops on the hood! A sudden, unexpected summer shower had everyone scrambling to quickly get their tops and windows up.

Despite the heat and the brief rain, the R2 Pub was beautifully air-conditioned. The event room had plenty of space to comfortably hold all the participants for the awards ceremony. While the kitchen staff was a bit overwhelmed—making lunch

wait times a little long—it was an excellent show at a great venue with even better people.

See you all at the next show!



Membership Benefits:



MCT is pleased to have the sponsorship of **Bill Currie Ford**. In addition to supporting our annual car show, and hosting our General Meeting location, Bill Currie Ford also offers a **15% discount** to members on:

- Parts
- Service & aftermarket installation
- Body Shop

Their Referral Program is another way they help you and the club:

- **\$500 to the club when a member purchases a vehicle – we'll split it with you! (see next page)**

Use the next page to lock in your savings.

Questions? Email

president@mustangcluboftampa.com

For your Bill Currie Ford Service needs, make sure you ask for PJ or Leo as your Service Writer, and Ryan in Parts for aftermarket discounts.



Join the MCA to get even more benefits:

- Ford X-Plan Pricing (BCF will still beat this deal!)

Discounts at:

- Car Covers Direct
- CJ Pony Parts
- Hagerty Insurance
- Plus 17 other vendors

Go to www.mustang.org for details

Our Other Partners:

Streetside Classics Tampa – Chris

Mauro– Call (813-501-1630) or email

Christopher.Mauro@streetsideclassics.com Chris to either buy or sell you classic or modern muscle car.

Hagerty Insurance – Email Matt Judge (mjjudge@hagerty.com) to get you custom quote.

Insty Tune & Lube – Let owner Andreh Alito know you are with MCT – 14783 N Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa, FL 33618. PH – 813-960-3908.

GT1 Detail Products – Let Gene know you are with MCT...might not get you a discount, but he will gladly give you a tutorial on how to best use his products!

Ford's Garage – Ask for Mark at Westchase or Kelly at Wesley Chapel – they will make sure you feel right at home...and get you a 10% discount!

NPD – National Parts Depot – No discount yet, but if you mention you are with MCT, eventually maybe we'll earn one!

*****Print and bring this form to Bill Currie Ford, make sure it's in your deal package.*****



Purchaser's Name:

Purchaser's Address:

Vehicle VIN:

Date of Sale:

Deal #:

Referred by:

Remit ~~\$500~~^{\$1000} Referral Bonus to:
Mustang Club of Tampa
c/o Rusty Gillis, Treasurer
6330 Pine Hill Rd. #7
Port Richey, FL 34668

*****Print and bring this form to Bill Currie Ford, make sure it's in your deal package.*****

MCT Swag

We have an arrangement with Cigar City Promotions to produce polo shirts and hats with two logos to choose from. Thanks to Lucy Carroll for getting this arrangement set up for us, and thank you to the membership for helping us design and decide on the updated logo. If you want a hat or shirt:

EMAIL Cigar City at: SALES@cigarcitypromos.com state NAME and a member of MCT. Our contact is Susan.

POLO SHIRT: Request men Golf or women's V-neck shirt, size and color, or provide your own shirt.

Cost of Shirt is	\$29.95
Name added	\$ 6.00
tax	\$ 2.70
TOTAL	\$38.68.

HAT: Request New Era Mesh Back Cap Idex (NE 1090), size (S/M, M/L, L/EL) and color, or provide your own hat.

Cost of Hat is	\$21.98
tax	\$ 1.54
TOTAL	\$23.52

They will email you an invoice, you pay online, and they will notify you when your shirt is ready to pick up.

Multiple Colors Available – Match your Car!

