

# The Ragtop

April 2017



## Letter from the President

By Don Couch

**A**pril is looking to be a packed month for TRIUMPH enthusiasts. We have the VTR Regionals April 27-30 down in beautiful New Braunfels. I hope we turn out in record numbers to help support the San Antonio Triumph club. But before we head down to New Braunfels, let's all head out to Bastrop! Lee and Duncan Charlton have graciously volunteered to host our next VTR membership drawing "Fix-It" day. It is planned for April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Saturday BEFORE the VTR Regionals. Duncan will BBQ up some fresh beef he and Lee took down with their bare hands. Wait? Is that right? I think I've got my stories mixed up. Anywho, Duncan did say they would provide the BBQ! So let's get our cars ready for the VTR Regionals by a "Test and Tune" drive with Lee and Duncan.

I know I've been quite delinquent in my web master's duties the last three months or so. Too much time spent turning wrenches on TRIUMPHS! Now that my SCCA race has come and gone, I hope to be able to spend more time on the website and club activities in general. I have to give a shout out thanks to my Vice President for stepping in and taking over my duties for both meetings last month. THANKS MIKE! Somehow, I managed to enjoy the wonderful pleasures of

a bicipital tendon subluxation. I couldn't raise my left arm above my chest let alone drive. A visit to my chiropractor and I was good as new... kinda.

While the pain for the most part had subsided, I still needed R&R on the arm for it to heal. Problem was I had a race in ten days and the car had a short punch list of final things that needed to be finished. Fill the gearbox and differential with gear oil was one item on that list and there was no way I was going to be able to contort through my roll cage with my bum arm to do this. ENTER ROGER BOLICK! It never ceases to amaze me the level of friendship and commitment the members of this club are to each other. One call to Roger and his reply was, "What time in the morning you want me there?". I cannot thank Roger enough for helping me (helping? doing it all by himself while I stood and watched is more the truth). THANK YOU, SIR.

So, check the website often. I'll add details to Lee and Duncan's BBQ drive ASAP. Or really, as soon as I know them! Even if you do not plan on going to the Regionals plan on attending the BBQ! I look forward to seeing you all again real soon.

Don

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Back issues of The Ragtop are available on our website:  
<http://www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org/newsletters.php>

The Hill Country Triumph Club, the 50th Chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR), was founded in 1990 to bring together the owners of Triumph automobiles in the Central Texas area surrounding Austin. In 1991, the membership decided to include other British car fans as associates due to lack of other clubs in our area that represent some of the other marques. As owners and lovers of our unique types of cars, we have a special kinship, which draws us together. Membership is open to anyone who is a British car enthusiast, with or without a car.

Annual dues are just \$15.00 per family group or address per year. We have dinner meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and at least one other event each month. We encourage you to join and support us, even if you don't drive your car regularly. We also offer technical assistance if needed. One goal of the club is to help its members keep their cars on the road. Please call one of the club officers listed in the newsletter for more information about club benefits and spread the word about our club to others.

The Hill Country Club is a local chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)/Triumph Sports Owners Association, which is open to all drivers of Triumph motorcars; a chapter of the Triumph Register of America, exclusively for TR2 through TR4A sports cars; and a chapter of the 6-PACK, dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of the Triumph TR250 and TR6 sports cars. Membership in these national organizations is encouraged. Visit their websites at [www.vtr.org](http://www.vtr.org), [www.triumphregister.com](http://www.triumphregister.com), and [www.6-pack.org](http://www.6-pack.org).

*The Ragtop* is published monthly by the Hill Country Triumph Club. Material within may be freely reproduced providing Ragtop and the authors are credited. Any and all newsletter contributions are welcome. Deadline for submissions is the end of each month. Submissions may be emailed to [editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org). Car related classified ads are free to members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Contact editor for other ads.

# McKenzie's Meeting Minutes

HCTC March Meetings: 11 and 14 March, 2017

By Phil McKenzie

## Meeting at the Frisco, March 11

The HCTC once again filled-up our tables in the back room of the Frisco Saturday morning. Mike Jankowski drove his Rocket-Dog Spitfire, and I rode with Joel McKenzie in his daily driver – a '78 Spitfire. Mike McPhail drove his current restoration project; a former member's TR4. Also attending were Phil Taylor, Dan and Francis Julien, Raymond Brown, Torfason, Mike Schubert, Nick Roccaforte, Warren Kodosky, Roger Bolick and Mitch Zess.

Don was called out of town, so Mike Jankowski held a brief meeting, announcing the upcoming VTR Regional being hosted by the San Antonio Triumph Club, and the fix-it day to be held in April or May. Mike opened the meeting to members, and Nick Roccaforte shared his experience from attending the car show at the Georgetown Classic Car and Vintage Plane show in February. He suggested that we add this event to our calendar for next year and attend en-masse as a club. All in attendance agreed, so we will add this to our schedule for next year. Thanks Nick!

## Meeting at the Tavern, March 14<sup>th</sup>

A lively group met at the Tavern on the 14<sup>th</sup> this month; but unlike last month, we were not "Valentines Day rejects". Mike McPhail was the only member who drove a Triumph (this time a blue TR6 restoration project). New member Nathan Quiring announced that he just purchased a Spitfire in need of some work. It is a driver, but due to some "deferred maintenance" by the P.O., he will be spending some time sorting the car out before he drives it to a meeting.

Congratulations and welcome to Nathan!

Dan and Francis Julien, Phil Taylor and Shirley, Bill Waller, Torfason, Roger and Tina Bolick, Mike Jankowski, Dave Fowler and I rounded out the meeting. Don Couch was still out of town, so Mike Jankowski held a brief meeting, with a discussion of the upcoming VTR regional, and our club's participation in it. We have around 6 members planning to attend, with some members just driving down for the auto-cross on Saturday. Mike also relayed to the club that there will be another fix-it day, and a north side car show meet-up some time in April or May; date to be announced.

## Officers Meeting (?)

Several members have suggested that club dues be increased to help accumulate funds to support the next HCTC sponsored VTR regional meet. Due to

the rising costs of lodging and venues in the greater Austin area over the last few years, there is concern that our treasury will not have a balance sufficient to cover the necessary reservation fees and other up-front expenses. The officers will hold a meeting in April or May to discuss this issue and make a recommendation to the club. We will review our current balance, expenses, and anticipated VTR regional costs to determine what increase, if any, must be made. Members are encouraged to let the officers know if they have any recommendations on the subject; our email addresses are listed (as always) in the Ragtop. Our current dues are \$15 per year and will likely increase to ~\$25 per year.

## Still WANTED: The lost charter of HCTC

The reward is still available. Keep looking. I'll make it worth your while.



Photo from "The Tavern." (Credit: Mike McPhail)



Photos from the meeting at "The Tavern". (Credit: Mike McPhail)

# Horn Relay for Triumphs

By Mike McPhail

One of the more common problems with old cars is the non-operative horn. Often the horn itself has passed its useful lifespan. Some horns have an adjustment and using a battery char-

ger with a built-in ammeter they can be tuned up nicely. When the meter reads five amps the horn will be drawing the right amount of current and sound its best.

More often, the horn brush is not making

good contact and some serious fiddling is required. Lastly, the ground connections from the horn button through the brush and down the steering column may be poor. More fiddling!



TR4 horn relay.

It has occurred to me that automotive engineers use horn relays because one might be hard pressed to get sufficient ground to a pair of horns drawing a total of ten amps. On most Triumphs, including Sarah Ann's TR4, there is battery from a purple wire connected directly to one terminal on the horn and ground from the horn button on the other terminal.

The horns on the TR4 were intermittent and never as loud as when connected directly to a battery. I found a pair of horn relays on eBay and installed them without cutting any wires. All that was required was moving the existing wires to the relays, which mounted conveniently next to the horns. Wires with push-on connectors were made up to connect the relays to the horns, and the results were amazing. Clear Hooters!

**Electric**  
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Model HF 150 for all Motor Cycles including lightweights. Beautifully finished Ebony Black and Chrome.

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**CLEAR HOOTERS LTD.**  
**HAMPTON STREET, BIRMINGHAM 19**

For those that don't know a company called Clear Hooters made horns and switches for Triumph...

# AROC Spring Tour

By Dean Mericas

The Texas Hill Country chapter of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club will be holding their spring tour on Sunday, April 9th. The details of the route are being worked out, but the drive will start with breakfast, cover approximately 150 miles of scenic hill country roads and end with a catered lunch at Vehicles Unique, a private car collection in

Georgetown. With luck, the bluebonnets should be out in all their glory.

This event requires an RSVP no later than April 5th with your name, number of people in your party, and car you plan to drive. Email your RSVP to Dean Mericas ([dmericas@gmail.com](mailto:dmericas@gmail.com)). Tour instructions will be distributed about a week before the tour.



**Ben Schotz's Alfa Spring Speciale and Fiat Dino**

## April 22<sup>nd</sup> Spring Drive

HCTC and HOTMOG (Heart of Texas Morgan Owners Group)

By Duncan Charlton

Meet at 9:00 AM in the south parking lot of Del Valle High School, 5201 Ross Rd, Del Valle, TX 78617 (a couple of miles east of the airport). Map link to our starting point is: <https://goo.gl/maps/meZAHQpci672>. If the en-

trance to the south parking lot is blocked, we will meet in front of the school on Ross Rd. Be sure to fill your gas tank before arriving. We will head out at 9:30 AM. If lost or late, call Duncan Charlton at 512-965-7583 or Lee Charlton at 512-965-7582 (keep

the numbers with you during the drive). We will hand out directions that include mileage at turn points, points of interest and hazards. The drive will be about 1-1/2 hour long and will pass through Rockne, Rosanky, Smithville and Bastrop, ending up at the Charlton farm at 1121 Lower Elgin Road for a garage tour, farm tour and lunch — burgers (grass fed beef from the farm) and trimmings provided.

If anyone wants to skip the drive and drive straight to the farm, try to arrive no earlier than 11:00 am (gate will be locked). Map link to Charlton farm: <https://goo.gl/maps/qDdtLBqLxuB2>.

Please RSVP with the number of people attending (and any special dietary needs) to: [duncan.charlton54@gmail.com](mailto:duncan.charlton54@gmail.com) or 512-965-7583 (text messages are OK too).



1975: Duncan Charlton's First Triumph

## Why I Have a Triumph

By Robert MacKenzie

**A**utocross. It was autocross that got me into my first Triumph.

I had always loved British cars and the Spitfire in particular. I had a friend in high school, back in the old country, who's father owned a British Leyland dealership. He was given a Spitfire on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. I recall marveling at the ease of access to the car's engine. That was important as I was often asked to boost it off my '71 Toyota Corona when it failed to start after sitting in the parking lot on a cold winter day. In retrospect; the Spit was not the best winter car.

After selling my 3rd Toyota, I got into VWs, a Honda Civic S, then a BMW 2002 and finally a Porsche 911S. Great cars all, but for vastly different reasons.

About 15 years ago, I was in a rough point in my life. Broken-hearted after my marriage fell apart, for the first time since I had gotten a driving license I did not have a "fun" car.

And so the search began.

I had started autocrossing in Canada and got back into it when I moved to San Antonio with the 911. I started looking for a car that I could have some fun with, a car I could autocross with.... As I did not have a lot of money it had to be cheap.

I saw a nice looking Spitfire 1500 on e-bay, put in a low-ball bid and she was mine.

I still have that car today. Over the years I have owned about 30 cars. [My current fleet size is 6 including; two Triumphs.] It came as a bit of a shock that I realized the other day that I have owned that Spitfire longer than I have owned any other car in my life.

That says something about the nature of these cars.

They become part of the family, part of who you are. They have soul.

I nominate Wilbur Jay Cook for the next installment.

# The Racetrack Is Ultimately My Perfect Home!

By Don Couch

The last 8 or 9 months you could find me in my garage getting my '62 Spitfire ready for the SCCA Majors tour race at COTA. It seems like every waking hour was spent turning wrenches, opening my wallet and/or ordering parts. It was a labor of love to say the least. It seems no one told me that racing a Triumph is more like a disease than an endeavor. At one point, I even questioned was it worth the time. I remember mentioning this to Bob Kramer and he told me to

just get in the car and sit in it and it will all make sense. He was so right!

I was lucky to have my brother Russell come in from Florida to help as crew for the race. Russ helped me above and beyond to get this car on track. We had a weekend of trackside repairs to keep her going but we overcame each and every obstacle thrown at us. THANKS RUSS!

I have to also thank Robert MacKenzie for all his support. Robert

sat cross legged on the hot asphalt with my water pump and housing in his lap, putting the gasket sealer and gasket together while Russ and I replaced the housing in order to get back on the track for Sunday's race. A true friend and racer indeed! THANK YOU ROBERT!

I have to also thank Dave Foreman. Dave has been not only my race mentor but an amazing inspiration. Dave never says die. He seems to never see problems only



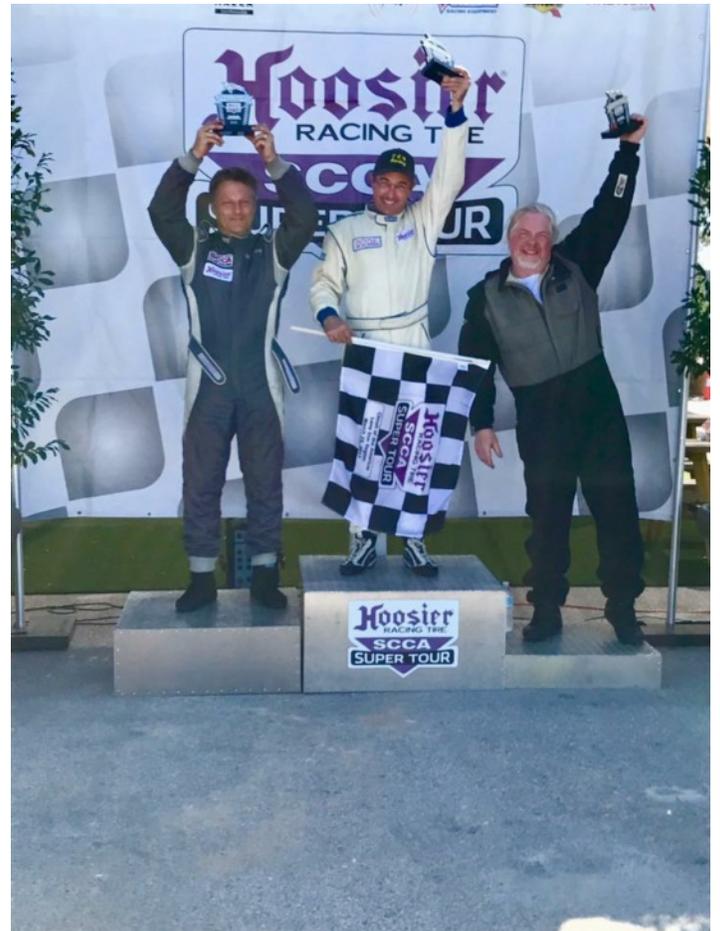


solutions. And, for this I cannot thank him enough. And I cannot forget Betina either. She is truly an amazing woman. First, She somehow puts up with Dave! HAHA! Betina is like a cat wrangler at the track. Always juggling ten jobs and somehow still manages to bring us all lunch! THANK YOU DAVE AND BETINA!

So, all this to get my happy \_\_\_ on the track. Well, we took third place in Saturday's race and fourth on Sunday. Sunday was a 40 minute race. A real test of the fresh motor I spent the last 9 months building. She ran rapped ape the whole time. which was a TRIUMPH in itself.

I have to also thank Brenda and her sister Delna. Both of whom, I would have never made it to the track! Delna loaned me her SUV to tow "Penny" to the track. And as for Brenda, well, too long a list but THANKS to you!

The Racetrack Is Ultimately My Perfect Home!







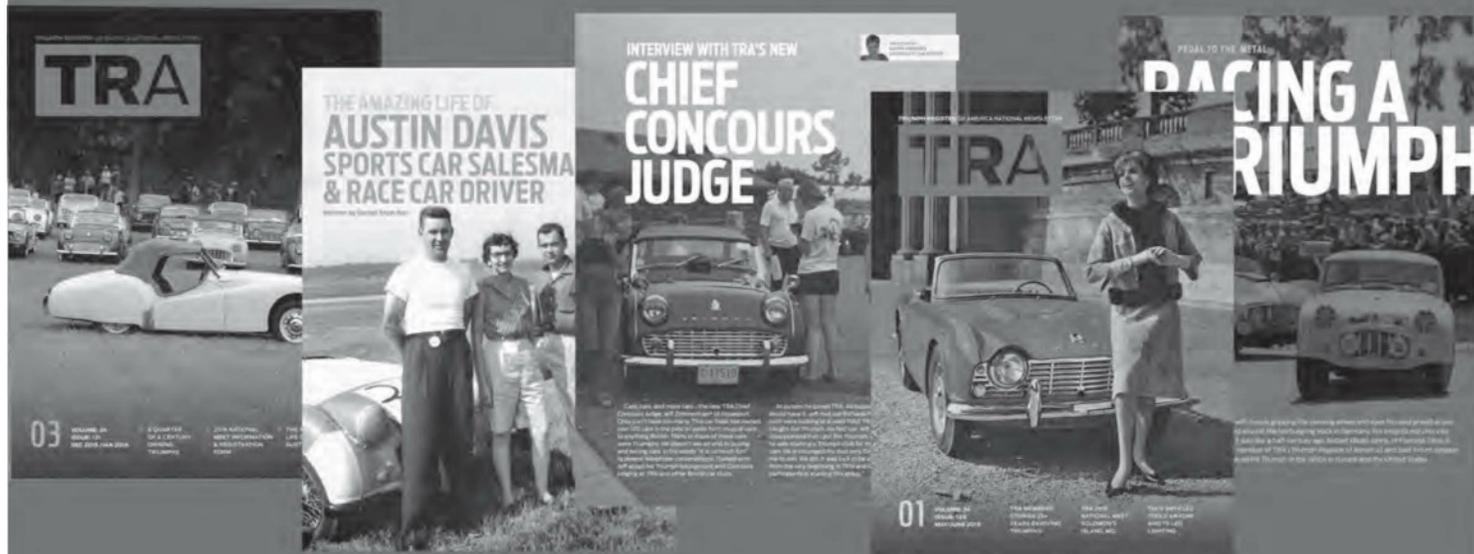
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- Annual National Meet
- Website (member password protected area)
- Concours judging standards

- Factory build records
- Technical articles
- Contact information
- Shutterfly National Meet website



SEE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING AT:  
**www.TriumphRegister.com**

OR CONTACT:

**TONDA.MACY@MACYSGARGE.COM**

# Welcome to TRA



## TRIUMPH REGISTER OF AMERICA Membership Application Form

*Please write legibly.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Please include area code

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mail check and/or application to:

Tonda Macy  
TRA Treasurer/Membership  
4200 Lisa Drive  
Tipp City, OH 45371  
[tonda@macysgarage.com](mailto:tonda@macysgarage.com)  
937-266-1832

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Wood Wheels with Hub	\$219.95
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Vinyl Wheels with Hub	\$109.95



I have steering wheels and hubs for almost all British classics as well as accessories like shift knobs, mirrors, light/badge bars and more. Check out my current listings on eBay at <http://stores.ebay.com/specialtypartshop> or email me at [jicenhower@yahoo.com](mailto:jicenhower@yahoo.com) for more information.

Listing change as I get shipments from the UK so check back often or contact me for any special requests.

# HCTC Classifieds



I know I have been out of the loop for a while with the club members but still enjoy the Triumph hobby. In an effort to add a unique look to my shop, I sourced a maker of metal signs. This is the sign i have asked him to make.

I thought some other members might be interested as well. Here is the pricing and the different finishes he can offer.

4'x6' sign as per pic/3 colors printed on .040 aluminum sheet -does not include wood borders/aging or crating /shipping, \$325.00

printed on painted 24-26 ga steel sheet no aging wood borders crating or shipping \$425.00

on steel as per pic w/wood borders, aged and distressed \$565.00

If people have questions, they can reach me at 512-517-5325

Thank you,

Fil Valderrama

I have the following items for sale:

1. Triple carb intake off a TR6, may fit other models. Like new.
2. (3) 14" mini lite rims off a TR8. Also one 13" stock rim off TR7-8
3. Soft top rail off TR7-8
4. Intake and exhaust manifold off TR3-4
5. Twin carb intake off GT6-TR6

Call for prices or pictures all parts are in my shop in Marble Falls. 512-909-6849.

RH and LH Trunk Side Panel TR3, TR3A, TR3B. These are new steel panels, made in the U.K. They have never been fitted or installed. \$70.00 each. Carol 512 971-6778.



My old friend Mike Hado from the Houston Club sent me the emails below about 2 GT6's for sale. I spoke to the man selling them a couple of times. He has had some health problems and is selling his two Triumphs. He is a very nice guy and I think he has a couple of really nice cars. I was interested but can't afford to buy any more cars right now! He asked me if I would please send out a message to our club to see if anyone would be interested. I told him I would be happy to send along . Is this something you could put in the next newsletter?

His name is Kenneth Pierce. His home number is 325-573-0979. Anyone interested can call him direct.

Thanks

Nick Roccaforte

\*\*\*\*\*

TTR Members,

Please note the information below regarding two GT6's for sale in the Snyder, TX, area. Note that the seller claims that one of these cars may be a prototype. This sounded interesting so I checked the Illustrated Triumph Buyer's Guide by Richard Newton and it appears that the given commission number of KC7400L is a non-overdrive Mark 1 GT6 about halfway through the production run which was KC1 to

KC13752. Based on this information, it is doubtful that the car for sale is a prototype as claimed.

Please contact the seller directly if you are interested in either of these cars.

Best regards,

Mike Hado

\*\*\*\*\*

1968 triumph gt6 in running condition (not show) 6 cylinder 2 liter \$15,900

Vin plate shows this one was made august 1965. vin number kc7400 L

This is one of 3 prototypes made. The only one in the USA (other two are in the UK)

Has all new rubber, hoses, interior, dash, running boards and floor boards. Parts are ordered from UK triumph supplier.

Original Engine and Transmission still running great. New tires. additional history posted at the bottom in a p.s.

1973 gt6 in mint condition 6 cylinders 2 liters \$12,000

rebuilt original engine and transmission

replaced rubber, hoses, running board, interior, and tires





TR-6 Factory Hardtop for Sale \$1500.

Comes complete with new seals and hardware for rebuilding from the Roadster Factory

Contact Joe Payne email: [robjoepayne@yahoo.com](mailto:robjoepayne@yahoo.com) (m) 210.326.6673



Triumph Doors Complete with Glass and Trunk Lid \$500

Contact Joe Payne email: [robjoepayne@yahoo.com](mailto:robjoepayne@yahoo.com) (m) 210.326.6673

# Pay Your Dues!!!!!!!

Please check the latest spreadsheet sent out by Nel. If it says Jan-17 in the dues column your dues are over-due now. Any quite delinquent member who hasn't paid will be dropped from the roster.

Cost is \$15 per year per family. If you don't wish to renew, please notify Nel.

Mail your check made out to **HCTC** to:

Nel McPhail  
1105 N Canyonwood Dr  
Dripping Springs, Tx 78620  
(512) 656-1456  
[nmcp hail@austin.rr.com](mailto:nmcp hail@austin.rr.com)

## Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_



Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_  
Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

How on earth did you hear about the Hill Country Triumph Club?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your application and \$15 check payable to HCTC to:  
Nel McPhail, 1105 North Canyonwood Dr, Dripping Springs, TX 78620

# Upcoming Events

April 8 — HCTC Saturday morning meeting, 9 AM, The Frisco.

April 9 — AROC Spring Tour. See [p. 7](#) for details.

April 11 — HCTC evening meeting, 7 PM, The Tavern, 12<sup>th</sup> and Lamar.

April 22 — Spring Drive with the Morgan club. See [p. 7](#) for details.

April 27-30 — VTR Regionals, New Braunfels, TX. Information at [www.sotxtriumphasn.org](http://www.sotxtriumphasn.org).

August 16-19 — VTR Nationals, Princeton, NJ. Information at [vtr2017.org](http://vtr2017.org).

## Next Saturday meeting:

Saturday, April 8, 2017, 9:00 AM

The Frisco

6801 Burnet Rd

Austin, TX 78757

[thefriscoaustin.com](http://thefriscoaustin.com) — Phone: 512-459-6279

## Next evening meeting:

Tuesday, April 11, 2017, 7:00 PM

The Tavern

922 West 12<sup>th</sup> St

Austin, TX 78703

At the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Lamar

[tavernaustin.com](http://tavernaustin.com) — Phone: 512-320-8377