

Fall festival and car show bring out the crowds

**By Annie Gentile - ReminderNews
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Joe Gregitis of Enfield stands beside his 1955 Thunderbird as part of the Knights of Columbus car show held in conjunction with St. Martha's Fall Festival. Photos by Annie Gentile.

Rides, games, crafts, music, food, classic cars and more - there was something for everyone at the annual St. Martha's Fall Festival on Saturday, Sept. 28.

"[The festival] has been a mainstay at St. Martha's for years," said Ann Sarpu, principal of St. Martha's School. "It's a great way for the parish and student families to enjoy an afternoon of group camaraderie."

The bounce house and air slides were very popular activities, as were the face-painting, sand art, and assorted games. Several booths were set up for browsing and purchasing. They included an assortment of paintings, bird houses, jewelry, hand-made doll clothes, brightly-colored pumpkins, and plenty of good food. Profits from the sales or booth rentals went to benefit St. Martha's School.

While the annual Knights of Columbus classic car show used to be held on a different day, this year it was incorporated into the usual fall festival activities, Sarpu said. "The Knights of Columbus members are both parishioners and school families, and so it's another way to add some group participation," she said.

Several dozen cars and trucks were on display at the car show, including Joe Gregitis of Enfield's shiny black and completely restored 1955 Thunderbird. "I've always loved Thunderbirds," said Gregitis, as he polished away a fingerprint. "I've been [restoring] them since 1975." The car he was showing had only recently been put back on the road, he said, after having been kept in an enclosed trailer and transported around the country to be entered in shows, tallying up wins wherever he has taken it. While Gregitis takes most of the credit for the restoration work, his friend Charlie Scavotto was not to be outdone. He said he should get some credit as well, since he was responsible for adding the dab of bright red paint to the hub caps. "That gets him a free ride in it now and then," laughed Gregitis.

Reggie Duby of Automatic TLC Energy in East Hartford displayed the company's 1931 Ford Model A oil truck that it uses for parades and other promotional events. Duby said they got the truck when Hop Energy, their parent company, acquired a business on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. "I run into a lot of people that remember that truck on the Cape," said Duby. "It's a piece of history."

Besides offering fun for the whole family, St. Martha's Fall Festival is a way for the church community to do some outreach and promote the church and school. A "Blue Ribbon" school, St. Martha's has been recognized by the United States Department of Education for its academic excellence, Sarpu said.

