

# Gateway Gazette

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Louis Chapter  
**BUICK CLUB OF AMERICA**

Volume XXXI, No.3

April 2012

## Fully Restoring an Old Buick Part II by Ted Becker

Hello again and welcome back to restoring an old Buick. Last month I discussed that sanity of such an undertaking and what is required to get started. This month, I will enlighten the reader to some of my more humorous and interesting adventures with my 57 Roadmaster convertible.

I sometimes envy and sometimes feel sorry for those who start with either a pristine original car with no rust or who build a street rod from a fabricated chassis, fiberglass body and all new parts. My, my, those people are missing out on some real adventures. Now that I say that, some of those adventures may involve bloodletting to the envy of the American Red Cross or trips to various medical facilities complete with tetanus shots. But be that as it may, I chose the more torturous path and I have no regrets.

As I said last month, I also bought a 57 Super 2 door hardtop for parts. Boy, am I glad I did that since it has been a wealth of good parts, knowledge and source of additional income. Both cars were located in a 3 sided "barn" on a farm in northern Illinois. Let's see, farm,

unenclosed, long term storage, varmints. Nah couldn't be! Wrong!!!!

I got my convertible out of the barn early in 2003 with very little difficulty. Oh, let me take that back. The car had a locked up front brake drum which rendered the car virtually immovable. It took over an hour of winching and dragging on a very cold day to get it up on the trailer. Not one inch of the move could be done without a come-along. Talk about a workout!! Who needs a gym membership with that experience behind you?

The real issue came with the parts car. My son in law, Brad, helped me retrieve that back in late 2007. The car rolled easily so the come-along was not nearly as exhausting. Getting the car on the trailer and lashed down posed very minimal difficulties. The hood was quite rusted and the latch did not work, so I proceeded to tie it down with a rope. I lifted the hood to start the lash process and Brad yelled to me, "Ted, put the hood down, NOW!!"

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### Upcoming Events

**Next Regular Meeting, Monday, April 16, Fuddruckers, 7:30 pm,  
Including a Presentation by Al Mercer on Appraising Old Cars**

**Garage Tour and Lunch, Sunday, April 22, 10:00 am**

**See Page 5 for Details**

## **Director's Letter**

Hi Everyone!

### ***VOLUNTEER!***

When I did, I was inspired to help make this a better Club.

This is **your** Club and what you put into it will make it better for yourself and everyone else.

The Club has many opportunities and positions available. Three Members-at-Large are needed on the Board of Directors, and my position as Director will be open after the Regional in September.

Because of the secondhand grumbling I hear is circulating throughout the Club, I expect to see many volunteers to help fix whatever is bothering them. Now is your time to step up and be heard.

I heard the Ladies' Luncheon was very nice as was the spring oil spill. A good time was had by all who attended both events.

Please don't forget the Easter show at the Munny in Forest Park. We are planning to meet on Wells Avenue by 9 a.m., so we can go in as a group.

Thanks and be safe!

***Herb***

### **Meeting Minutes, March 19, 2012**

The March 2012 meeting was held on Monday, March 19th, at The STL Sports Hall of Fame Restaurant (Pujols). We had a fair turnout with 2 guests, Brandon Riggs and his friend, Amanda.

The Club meeting was facilitated by Herb Morris, Director.

The minutes of the February 2012 meeting were approved as printed in the Gazette.

**March Birthdays – See Gazette**

**March Anniversaries – See Gazette**

**Members Ill – None Noted**

### **Treasurer's Report-**

Treasurer's Report: \$2535.60 Club Account, \$4326.76 Regional Show Account

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **March**

31 Spring Oil Change/Paul Meyers, Ladies Luncheon at La Bonne Bouchee

#### **April**

2 Board of Directors Meeting, Pete Nathan's  
8 HCCM Easter Show – Forest Park  
16 Regular Monthly Meeting, Fuddruckers, Sunset Hills  
22 Progressive Cruise/Garage Tours, ending at Chet Palumbo's House in New Melle and Lunch at Los Cabos Mexican Restaurant.

#### **May**

5 Display at Dave Sinclair Buick  
20 Kemp Auto Show and Monthly Meeting/Lunch at the Press Box, 10:30

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## **April Birthdays**

Delia Greer  
Louise Smith  
Gooff Lockett

Joe Horvath, Jr  
Jerry Wilson

Bob Paster  
Dani Tharnish

## **April Anniversaries**

Bill & Karen Nolte

## **\*\*\* Attendance Incentives \*\*\***

At the recent calendar planning meeting, the members present decided that a more formal system of "points" awarded to members for attendance at meetings and events might increase member participation.

Members would be awarded one point for each meeting or event they attended plus one point for bringing a collectible Buick (a Buick eligible for BCA judging) to that meeting or event. Members would be awarded two points for organizing an event or getting a speaker for a meeting or event. Members who submit an article (one full page or longer) for the Gazette would be awarded two points.

At our annual holiday party, the member with the highest number of points would receive free meals for

the member and spouse/guest and paid club dues for the upcoming year. The member with the second highest number of points would receive a gift (TBD) and paid club dues. The third highest points total would receive paid club dues and the fourth and fifth highest point totals would receive a gift (TBD).

At some event during the year (not announced ahead of time), the members with the most and second most points would receive a gift (TBD).

Also, at one or more of our events which include a meal (the particular event not announced ahead of time), the club would contribute (\$TBD) toward the cost of each meal.

Everyone will receive a Gateway Chapter business card and points will be notated by punches on the card with a unique punch shape at meetings and events.

## **2012 CLUB CALENDAR**

### **April**

- 2 Board of Directors Meeting, Pete Nathan's
- 8 HCCM Easter Show - Forest Park
- 16 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fuddruckers  
Al Mercer to speak on Appraisal of Old Cars
- 22 Garage Tour & Lunch - Barb Knudsen, Adam Martin, Terry Hagan, Chet Palumbo; lunch at Mexican Restaurant in New Melle

### **May**

- 5 Display at Sinclair
- 20 Visit Kemp Auto Show, lunch at the Press Box and Monthly meeting

### **June**

- 1-3 Oldsmobile Club TanTarA Show
- 23 Cookout at Love Park and meeting
- 27-30 BCA National Show - Concord, NC

### **July**

- 14 or 15 Cruise to Brussels, IL, Dinner at the Whitman Hotel, Meeting and winery visit in Grafton
- 28 Cruise to car museum in Fulton, Mo , lunch

### **August**

- 20 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

### **September**

- 6-8 Heartland Regional, Holiday Inn, Airport West
- 9 Wheels in Motion Show, West Port Plaza
- 17 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

### **October**

- 6 Fall oil change
- 15 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??
- 20 Fall Color Tour

### **November**

- 3 Visit Schlafy microbrewery for a tour and lunch
- 19 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

### **December**

- 1 Lunch, Meeting, Toys for Tots at Old Spaghetti Factory

## Fully Restoring an Old Buick Part II (Cont')

OK, so what was that all about? Brad looked at me and said, "There's a possum in there." I gingerly lifted the hood a crack and was looking straight into the beady eyes of the ugliest possum in the whole world. Well, now that I think about it, I guess I have never seen a pretty possum.

What to do, what to do? There was a young farm boy close by and I asked him if he knew whether or not possums are aggressive. He did not know, nor did we. I later found out that they are indeed aggressive. Whew! Well, he got a broom handle and poked on the possum who was neatly sitting on top of the carburetor. He turned tail and ran down the exhaust manifold and onto the bed of the trailer.

Well, there was a large farm dog there that sensed a tasty meal and a very intense battle ensued that lasted all of about 5 seconds. The possum rolled over on his back, deader than a door nail. Whew, we escaped that one! The dog ran away very proud of himself for dispensing of the possum so expeditiously.

We finished the hood lashing process and started to get in the truck to take off. We passed by the location of the "deader than a door nail" possum, only to find no possum present. So, with our very own eyes, we witnessed a possum playing possum. Now you know the rest of the story.

Jump ahead now a few years to the disassembly and reconstruction phase of the restoration. As all car guys know, mice can be the enigma of the car guy who has his car in storage for a long period of time. They get into all the seat stuffing material and build nests in very obscure parts of the car. Then they, how do I say this politely, "urinate" in their nest. Oh my, what a powerful and unpleasant odor. (BTW, you might be a redneck car restorer if you already know what mice urine smells like). The mice in my particular case chose the intake manifold as their nesting location. The carburetor throttle plate was open just enough to allow entry for the mice to build their nest. So, before I could start on the engine rebuild process, I had to pressure wash it internally to get rid of the mice residue. Yucko!

Then it came time for the frame work. I used the frame from the parts car to build the convertible upon. I know that the convertible has a unique frame that is a bit stronger, but I do not consider that increase in strength to be a show stopper. Besides, the parts car frame allows me to complete the running chassis, which I now have, and work on the body separately. There were a few additional body mounts needed that I fabricated and welded in place to accommodate the additional mounting pads for the convertible. Other than that, the frames are virtually identical.

I took the frame into a sandblaster in Wentzville and they gave it a very good once over. I then wanted to get it powder coated, but I had a very difficult time finding a source that could handle such a large piece. I got quotes in the neighborhood of well over \$1000, so paint booth, here we come!!! I took it to my neighbor's body shop for a coat of gloss black urethane paint. It came out beautiful and I was now on my way to working on my chassis.

I got the frame home and put it on jack stands. Remember here, no Harbor Freight jack stands!!! This is one area that should not be shorted for safety purposes. A good hydraulic jack and a good set of stands is a good insurance policy that should never be short changed.

The frame is on stands and the work begins. On goes the rear springs, on goes the rear axle, on goes the rear brakes, on goes the shocks (air shocks in my case), on goes the panhard bar (and quite a task that turned out to be), on goes the front suspension (another death defying act), on goes the engine/transmission, and on goes the torque tube. And on and on and on it goes!

So, I'm putting on the parking brake cable and I go to mount it on the side of the frame rail. Oh my, what do I smell? Mice urine! Oh good grief! So I get out my needle nose pliers and start pulling out mice infested seat stuffing. I pull some out, and I pull some more out, and I pull some more out. Oh, man, where is this going to end? The location was in a fork area where the X member comes together with the side rails. I looked it over and decided that I could blow it out with shop air. And that is when the fun began!

Continued on page 5

## **Fully Restoring an Old Buick Part II (Cont')**

I realized that this was not going to be a sanitary operation, so I got on my safety goggles and my respirator. I stuck the air hose in a hole in the side of the frame rail and "let 'er rip". Man, you have never seen, nor smelled, such a mess in your whole life!! When the dust finally cleared about 5 minutes later, I began to inspect the carnage. I found about a

coffee can size quantity of mice urine soaked seat stuffing, 2 petrified frogs and 3 snake skins.

See what you would be missing by not starting a project like mine?

Hope you enjoyed this article. See you next month.

Gearhead Ted

## **Upcoming Events**

**April Regular Meeting.** Monday, April 16, at Fuddrucker's, South Lindbergh and Watson Road. Plan to arrive in time for dinner with your Buick friends before the meeting at 7:30. The club receives a rebate on food purchased. Al Mercer, who has many years of experience in the field, will speak on appraisal of old cars. We were scheduled to hold this meeting at Frankie & Johnnys in south county, but the place closed.

**Garage Tour.** Sunday, April 22, 10:00 am, beginning at Barb Knudsen's garage at 1750 Scherer Parkway, St. Charles, MO 63033. Take I-70 to south on Highway 94 for approximately 1 mile to a left onto Friedens Road at the traffic light. Stay in the rightmost left turn lane for the turn onto Friedens, as you will then be turning right onto the second street, Scherer Parkway. At 1750, you will see a "For Lease" sign out front and a sign with "R&B Service LLC Tubes and Hoses" on a white metal building with green awnings. Barb's shop is halfway down the lot with white awnings. Contact numbers for that morning are 314-660-1275 or 314-346-2109. We plan to stay approximately 45 minutes and travel to the next stop.

The second stop is at Adam Martin's garage at 1212 Cloverbrook, St Charles, MO 63304. To get to Adam's place, return to Friedens Road and turn left (south) on Highway 94. Follow 94 to a left on Kisker Road, then a left at the fourth street onto Shoshone, then a left onto Cloverbrook. Again we plan to stay for 45 minutes and move on to the Los Cabos restaurant in New Melle for lunch.

From Adam's house, return to MO 94 south via Shoshone and Kisker Road. Travel about 5.8 miles south on 94 to a right turn onto MO highway D, and follow D about 10.4 miles to a right turn onto MO highway Z. Los Cabos will be on the right after about 0.3 miles. After lunch we will caravan to Terry and Sharon Hagan's garage a couple of minutes away. After checking out the Hagan's collection, we're invited to Chet and Jeanne Palumbo's garage.

## **Important information about driving in New Melle.**

The speed limit is 35.00 mph.

Come to a full stop at all stop signs.

Use your turn signals.

Have your seat belts properly fastened.

Maps and directions will be available at Barb's place for the rest of the trip.

## Welcome New Members

Welcome to new member Henry James Horvath, son of Joe Horvath III, born February 14, weighing 9 pounds, 9 ounces.

Welcome to new members Buick and Dani Tharnish of Jackson, MO and Geoff and Angela Lockett of Wentzville. Geoff and Angela have a 1949 Super Sedanette.

## FOR SALE

**1988 Reatta.** Original owner, VIN xxxxx00425, red/saddle, 81K miles, new tires. Has the special suede/leather interior which is near perfect. Original documents, some advertising signage. Left headlight motor needs repair. Asking \$7500. Call anytime, Vic, 636-394-2735.

**Huge Quantity of 1964 Buick Riviera parts For Sale.** Donated to our chapter by a Buick enthusiast, proceeds will be used to fund chapter activities, including the 2012 Heartland Regional Show. Call Paul Meyer, 314-574-9853, ASAP for the Rivi parts you need.

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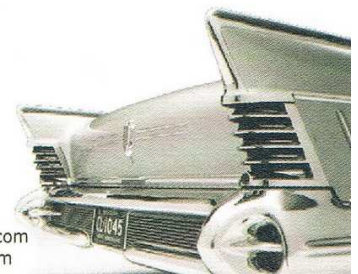
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## Meeting Minutes, March 19, 2012(Cont')

### **Old Business**

Magnetic Club Signs - \$18.00 ea.  
Belt Buckles still available, \$5 to members

### **New Business**

Steve Dotson gave an excellent presentation on Collector Car Insurance and its advantage over regular car insurance.

There will be a follow-up Board meeting April 2 at 7 p.m. at Pete Nathan's home. Everyone is welcome to

attend. **Please consider volunteering.**

There will be an incentive program announced for participation in meetings and events. See the Gazette for details!

2012 Club dues of \$ 15.00 are due now. Please see Pete Nathan.

**50/50 drawing** – None

**Next Regular Meeting:** Fuddruckers in Sunset Hills, 7:30 pm.

## Other Events Around the Area

**Fenton Cruise**, Life Christian Church, first Friday of every month April through October.

**Gateway GTO/Behlmann Buick-GMC North County Cruise**, second Friday of every month, April through October, 6 pm to 9 pm. DJ music, 50/50 to benefit Friends of Kids with Cancer. Behlmann Buick-GMC, I-270 and McDonnell Blvd, Hazelwood.

**Model T Club Swap Meet**, Sunday, April 29, at Fairmont Race Track, Collinsville, IL.

**Hazelwood Baptist Church Show**, Saturday, June 16.

**Route 66 Classic Car Cruise**, Saturday, August 11. Music by Sh-Boom 7-10 pm. Register 11 am on, at Crestwood Court, corner of Sappington & Watson, Crestwood.

## **Photos from the March 31 Oil Change**



The *GATEWAY GAZETTE* is a monthly newsletter, free to paid members of the St. Louis Gateway Chapter of the Buick Club of America. Articles, technical information, For Sale and Want Ads, photos, restoration sagas and coming events are welcomed, but must be submitted by the first Monday of the month to assure inclusion in the next issue.

Our membership year runs from May 1 to April 30. Membership is renewable on May 1. Members joining between January 1 and April 30 are paid up through the next April. Dues are \$15 per year for the local chapter. Contact Pete Nathan, Treasurer. See address below. Current dues for the national club are \$50 per year, payable to: Buick Club of America, P.O. Box 360775, Columbus, OH 43236-0775.

The Gateway Chapter meets monthly on the THIRD MONDAY of the month. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and guests are welcome to attend. We meet at various restaurants around St. Louis and most members and guests try to arrive by 6:30 or earlier to have dinner before the meeting.

For more information, our local mailing addresses are as follows:

<b>Director:</b>	Herb Morris (314)221-8138	2005 Dohack Dr Arnold, MO 63010	reatta90@sbcglobal.net
<b>Asst. Director:</b>	Paul Meyer (314) 574-9853	11694 Mark Twain Lane Bridgeton, MO 63044	42buickman@gmail.com
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Pete Nathan (314) 413-2966	#1 Huntleigh Trails Lane St. Louis, MO 63131	phnauto@aol.com
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