



# Gateway Gazette

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Louis Chapter

**BUICK CLUB OF AMERICA**

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August 2006

## MY 1937 BUICK SPECIAL

Contributed by Herb Morris

This story starts innocently enough . . . with a man in Birmingham, Alabama, sending an e-mail to the national Buick club about a '37 Special in an estate sale. The story ends well (Knock on wood!), but getting there was challenging.

After being forwarded through the levels of the Club, the above-mentioned e-mail landed in my mailbox from Bill Landers. When I first joined the Club I had a '69 LeSabre and then went through a Reatta phase with three at one time (I still have one), but I'd always

wanted an old, fat-fendered car. Something told me this was the one.

After little deliberation, I called the man from the ad and my interest was piqued. A few days later, I was at Kentucky Lake calling on customers, but I couldn't stop thinking about the car. I got out the road atlas and figured I was already 200 miles south of home so I made an appointment to see the car the next day. Well, I may have been closer than if I were com-

*(Continued on page 2)*



**UPCOMING EVENTS:** August 3rd 7:30 PM Monthly Meeting at Wings of Hope

## MY 1937 BUICK SPECIAL

*(Continued from page 1)*

ing from St. Louis, but it was still 325 miles farther south. And after several hours driving, I was there.

The car looked great, fittingly sitting in an old garage with a wooden floor, but it didn't run because it didn't have a battery. It had been sitting for six years and it wasn't completely assembled, but I wasn't deterred - I was in love.

I made them an offer contingent upon whether the car would be drivable when I returned and it was all they said it was, even though they didn't have a lot of answers because the owner had died a few months earlier. And, as his wife stated, "You know, Mr. Sanders never told me much about that car."

A friend had a car hauler and two weeks later we set off early on a Saturday morning for Birmingham. I was able to test drive the car - a treacherous trip because only one of the four brakes worked. It also smoked a lot. But again, I was not deterred. I figured the brakes were bad because it had sat for so long and I thought the smoke was caused by the rings not being seated from the restoration and that it would fix itself after some miles. We drove it on the hauler, shut it off and did the deal.

Once home, Aaron Ford and I took a closer look and found out that cosmetically my fat-fendered car was restored, but mechanically it was not. So the work began.

Aaron and I replaced the steering box, wheel cylinders, master cylinder, generator and voltage regulator and it was ready for the road - or so I thought. However, after it consumed multiple quarts of oil, Aaron and I did some further investigating and we found out the engine was not overhauled. So more work began.

We had hoped for a top-end overhaul, but had to do a major, including a new flywheel, clutch and throw-out bearing. We also discovered that when the car was being restored, the frame was sand blasted with the drive train in it, which meant we

had to take everything including the transmission apart and clean it. Basically, the car was a mechanical disaster, earning me the "Hard Luck" Award from the Chapter in December of 2004.

After hours of labor, a donated engine for parts from Paul Meyer and Aaron devoting much expertise and time, for which I am immensely grateful, the overhaul is complete. And, except for a recently remedied overheating problem, which was the result of the fan being installed backward, the car runs great.

Now, two years later, I have a mechanically and cosmetically restored '37 Buick Special.

**Herb Morris**



Our thanks to Shane Hoyt for designing this new sign which has been installed at Spectra Painting.

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# ENGINE OVERHAUL ON HERB'S 1937 SPECIAL

February 2005

Aaron Ford works and directs. Herb Morris follows directions. John Waltz watches, takes a few photos, and bags and marks a few parts. Fun. Discovering that the frame had been sandblasted with the drive train in place was not fun.



Aaron Ford makes one last check to see that everything is loose and the engine block is ready to come out.



"I'm guiding. You lift it up onto the table."  
"Oh, Herb, why is your clutch and flywheel covered with sand?"



"Now that we've lifted the crankshaft out, do we have a place to put it?"



"What's with all this sand on and in the frame?"

# BCA NATIONAL AT ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

Contributed by Bob Brasses



*'Get Your Guns Boys,  
They're Robbing the Bank!'*

With those words, a University of Michigan student helped rouse the townspeople of Northfield, Minnesota, to fend off an attempted robbery of their bank by the James-Younger gang in September 1876. Henry Wheeler then got an old civil war rifle, grabbed some ammunition and went to an upstairs window. He joined the townspeople in a seven-minute battle with the gang. Henry killed Clell Miller and wounded Bob Younger. All three Youngers were wounded that day requiring medical attention. Frank and Jesse James had only been winged.



Bob Younger

*(While at the Buick National, Barb Brasses visited the site where her great aunt's husband, Henry Wheeler, shot Bob Younger.)*



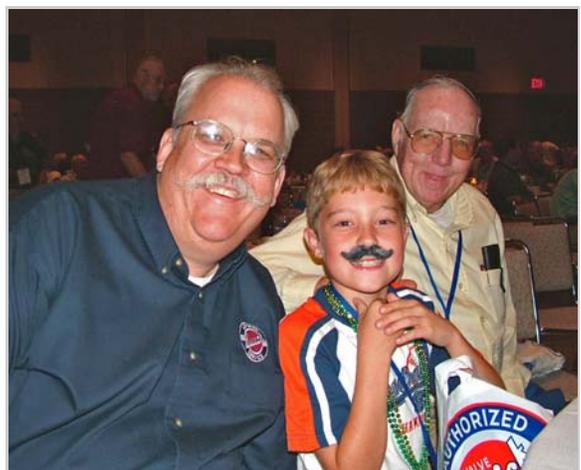
Phil and Mary Berger found a nice show location for their '32 series 56 S.



Touring with Pete Nathan, Bob and Barb Brasses, and Bob Windal. (Photo by Adam Martin)



This good looking mobile home has a 1938 Buick front end. We can hope it has the big 320 cubic inch straight eight engine.



Party Animals at the Banquet  
Bob Brasses, Timmy and John Pegg  
(Photo by Adam Martin)

## OUR INTERSTATES AT 50: A MISSOURI CELEBRATION

June 28, 2006 — St. Charles, Missouri

The Missouri State Highway Commission awarded contracts for 14 miles of pavement on U.S. 66 in Laclede County, August 2, 1956. This would become part of Interstate 44. Also that day, Missouri awarded a contract for work on U.S. Route 40, now I-70, in St. Charles. This is the basis for Missouri's claim to be the first with interstate projects.

Our Gateway Chapter provided Buicks from the fifties as a backdrop for a small celebration of the historic beginnings of our interstate transportation system. Pictured below with their cars are Paul Meyer, Ina and Gene Hughes, Bill Seibel, Doug Johnson, Bob and Barb Brasses, and John Waltz.

There were several political speakers but the main speaker, Pete Rahn, Director of the Missouri Department of Transportation, spoke of future needs and plans. He talked about the truck traffic on our interstate highways and the need to deal with it better. He talked about separate lanes for trucks and the complexities that change would add to entrance and exit ramps. Separating trucks on I-70 would involve adding at least one additional lane and could cost \$3.5 billion.

We were pleased to receive a nice buffet lunch after the speeches. And it was a time to get to meet new club members Ina and Gene Hughes.



## THIS & THAT FROM THE NATIONAL SHOW IN ROCHESTER, MN

Registration for the National was over 600 people and over 400 cars. Our chapter had about 25 members and 10 cars. Cars filled the grassy show area and overflowed up one street. With temperatures in the high 90's it was nice to have the vendors all indoors. Bob Brasses found a restorable '53 Roadmaster mustache for Bernie Boedeker.

There were tours available and I heard that Jeffrey Watkins took a junkyard tour. Pete Nathan took a Mayo Clinic tour. Funny thing, nobody submitted an article about their tours this year. I'll have to resume arm twisting next year. I understand that many of our chapter cars received awards. Steve Dodson's stained glass Skylark appeared to be a popular raffle item. We need to follow up on it and see what it brought in.

For another year we have our inside track to National news with Paul Meyer as President of BCA for another year. Mary Ann received the prestig-

ious title of "First Lady." Paul wants to honor the women who support the active men in the BCA. He spoke to that purpose at the banquet and had all the women there stand up for recognition. Our chapter has an annual spring luncheon just for the women and I hope that does speak to our appreciation that their participation and support are vital and recognized as such. (Chris and I prepare the newsletter each month, but I regularly claim the title "Editor." You should all know there are months the newsletter is much more her work than mine. So I support Paul's effort to recognize the women of the BCA.)

The only offer for a National Show in 2008 came from the Flint chapter. It will be a non-judged event, but, assuming they can get the facilities they had in 2003, it can be a great event.

Thanks again to Bob Windal, Adam Martin and Bob Brasses for a full day sno-cone work.

**Thursday, August 3rd**  
**Gateway BCA Monthly Meeting**

at

**Wings of Hope Hangar**

Spirit of St. Louis Airport  
18590 Edison Avenue  
Chesterfield, MO

**THE MEETING BEGINS AT 7:30 PM**

Remember to wear your name tag!



**Directions:**

- Hwy. 40 West to Exit 16 (Spirit of St. Louis Airport/Long Road).
- Right at first traffic light onto Chesterfield Airport Road.
- Continue 1.1 miles.
- Left onto Spirit of St. Louis Blvd.
- Right onto Edison Blvd.
- Follow road to Wings of Hope.



**Welcome**  
**New Members**

Bernie has joined the club  
in the last few weeks. In-  
troduce yourself and get  
acquainted with him.

**Bernie Boedeker**  
**St. Charles, MO**

1953 Buick Skylark Convertible