



Gateway Gazette

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Louis Chapter

BUICK CLUB OF AMERICA

Volume XXVIII, No.3 April 2009

Member Spotlight



Spotlight on Monica Ledwon



This month's "Member Spotlight" focuses on Monica Ledwon. Monica currently owns a 1985 Buick Regal, which has been in her family since it was new.

When asked which was her all time favorite car, she said it would have to be a 1950 Buick 41 D Special. It was her parent's car she grew up with and rode around in as a little girl. As an only child her father took her under his wing and taught her all about old cars. He taught her how to recognize old cars from a distance by their taillights and front grills. This 1950 stayed in the family for 54 years. Monica, with the help of others, restored this old Buick, but sold it not too long ago.

Monica joined the Gateway Chapter and BCA in 1981 and held the office of Newsletter Editor in the mid '80s. This was back in the time when Jeff Watkins and some of the other old timers were active.

Monica's hobby is collecting Pug dogs. She currently has two, but at times as many as three. Her other hobby is just hanging out with her Buick family in the Gateway Chapter.

Monica is a public librarian for the St. Louis County Library. She has worked for St. Louis County Library for 31 years at the Thornhill Branch.

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Upcoming Events

Next Meeting, Thursday, April 2

Syberg's Westport, 2430 Old Dorsett Road (At I-270), 7:30 p.m.

Oil Change and Ladies' Luncheon, Saturday, April 4

See page 5 for details.

Director's Message

Hi All,

Well, the Easter show is almost here! Hope you have registered with Pete Nathan. Also, why not send Pete your dues early! If you get a chance, talk to Pete and make sure to thank him for all he does for the Club.

I'm currently writing this on vacation, so it is a bit shorter than normal. As of April 1, I will be "retired" from Maritz. I was told to use my vacation or lose it. So I used it!

We have an oil change and the ladies' luncheon scheduled for the Saturday April 4! The Easter show is a week later on Sunday April 12.

Happy Buicking!!!

Bob

Meeting Minutes, March 5, 2009

The March 2009 meeting was held on Thursday, March 5, at Syberg's Westport. We had a good turnout with 30 people attending.

The Club meeting was facilitated by Bob Brasses, Director.

The minutes of the February 2009 meeting were approved as printed in the Gazette.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Pete Nathan and was accepted.

Meeting Minutes, March 5, 2009 (Continued)

Upcoming Events:

- Mar. 29 Swap Meet, sponsored by Chicagoland Chapter
- Apr. 2 Regular Monthly Meeting, Syberg's, 7:30 pm
- Apr. 3 Fenton Cruise, Life Science Christian Church
- Apr. 4 Oil Change/Ladies' Luncheon
- Apr. 12 Easter Car Show, Forest Park \$15
- Apr. 25 Buick Performance Club Dyno Day
- Apr. 26 Beffa's Car Show (Same day as Gateway Swap Meet, may reschedule.)
- May 2 Sinclair Buick Car Show
- June 28 Buick Car Show, M.O.T.
- Sept. 12 Wagner All GM Car Show

Canceled: Hooters/Hyman Lunch Tour

Old Business

Blue belt buckles are in stock

New Business

Bobby's Custard Cruise – Not supported by Bobby's, but Club still considering going.

Elections.

Next Regular Meeting:

Apr. 2 Syberg's at Dorsett and I-270, 7:30 pm

Members Ill

Steve Dotson – Knee replacement, doing well

Miscellaneous

Buick Performance Club Dyno Day, April 25

No 50/50 Drawing

April Birthdays

Delia Greer
Bob Paster
Louise Smith

April Anniversaries

Bill and Karen Nolte

Editor's Note: If your birthday or anniversary doesn't show up in this column, it is missing from the database. Please let me know if your birthday or anniversary doesn't show up.

Spotlight on Monica Ledwon (Continued)

When asked when she first became interested in old cars she tells this story. When she was six years old, her uncle, who lived next door, bought a 1931 Ford Model A. It seemed the entire family became interested in restoring and keeping the old car running. She has never lost that interest.

It is refreshing to have a lady as a primary member of our club; it seems like car clubs are mostly full of "good old boys." Thanks, Monica, for being a longtime faithful and active member of the Gateway Chapter.

Contributed by Steve Dodson

2009 Calendar

April

- 2 Regular Monthly Meeting - Sybergs
- 3 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 4 Oil Change/Ladies Luncheon
- 12 Easter Car Show - Forest Park
- 26 Beffa's Restaurant Show, 2700 Olive

May

- 2 Sinclair Buick Show
- 7 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fenton Bar & Grill
- 8 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church

June

- 4 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fenton Bar & Grill
- 5 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 6?? Bobby's Custard Cruise??
- 5-7 Olds Club Tan Tar A Show
- 28 Museum of Transportation Show
- ? St. Genevieve Overnight Tour

July

- 1-5 National Meet - Colorado Springs, CO
- 3 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 9 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fenton Bar & Grill
- 12 Lion's Club Show - McNair Park

August

- 6 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fenton Bar & Grill
- 7 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 13-16 BCA Heartland Regional Show, Appleton, WI
- 29 Skyview Drive-In

September

- 3 Regular Monthly Meeting - Fenton Bar & Grill
- 4 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 6 Wheels In Motion - Westport Plaza
- 12 Wagner Buick Show
- 26-28 Route 66 Festival - Springfield, IL

October

- 1 Regular Monthly Meeting - ?
- 2 Fenton Cruise - Life Science Church
- 4? St. Charles Octoberfest Show

November

- 5 Regular Monthly Meeting - ?
- 7 Fall Oil Change

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THOSE WONDERFUL STRAIGHT-8 BUICKS

By Bill Bicknell

In this article I have tried to document some of the differences in the Buick Straight-8 engines. If any members can add or make corrections to the material provided, I would be pleased to update the information.

Most Buick folks know that Buick made a “Small Series” and a “Big Series” Straight-8 engine. However, there were actually 12 different versions of the engine plus many product improvements along the way from its introductory year of 1931 through 1953. Interchangeability is very good throughout the years, especially from 1936 thru 1952 for the large series and 1937 thru 1953 for the small series, but still there are some exceptions. Below is a list of milestones and a spreadsheet that shows many of the differences in these engines. The one common thread: They all sound great and run smooth.

BUICK STRAIGHT-8 MILESTONES:

1931 – First Straight-8

1934 – Changed generator drive from timing chain to belt drive.

1939 – (1) Changed starter switch from manifold to carburetor. (2) Changed Choke from separate manifold device with linkage to integral with carburetor.

1940 – (1) Oil pump capacity increased 25%. (2) Changed spark plug cover from “rounded” type to “squared off” type.

1941-42 Dual carburetion (Specials came standard with one carburetor and had the dual carburetors as an option; on all others they were standard).

1942 – Timing cover oil seal changed from “rope seal” to neoprene seal. (This is a good upgrade when rebuilding older engines.)

BUICK STRAIGHT-8 MILESTONES: (Continued)

1947 – Oil supply to distributor gear was changed from external tubing to internal block passage (both series).

1948 – (1) Changed front motor mounts from bottom of timing cover plate to separate “L-shaped” brackets bolted to side of block with four bolts. (2) Throttle linkage changed to “vertical shaft” arrangement.

1949 – (1) Mid-year change from Babbitt to insert bearings in connecting rods. (2) Hydraulic valve lifters introduced on engines with Dynaflow transmissions.

1950 – (1) New block and head design with lower overall engine height (block itself is 5/8” shorter than 1949 and earlier blocks). An easy way to tell is to look at the water pump; it discharges through a 90-degree cast elbow into the block instead of out the rear of the pump into the block. (2) All main bearings now the same diameter (previous engines had five different diameter main bearings). (3) First year for the 263 series engines; intake manifold changed to 4-bolt carburetor mount on 263 series engines.

1952 – Big series engines: (1) Last year of 320 cu. in. engine. (2) Center exhaust manifold casting changed to 1-piece with heat riser housing. (3) First year for 4-barrel carburetor – same carburetor as used on the '53 V-8.

How to tell if an engine is the “Small series” or the “Large series”:

1. Serial number is located on a machined boss below the push rod cover. On the small series, this is in front of the distributor, and on the big series, it is back further by the dip stick.
2. Exhaust manifolds: Small series is 1-piece; Big series is 3-piece (does not include the separate cast heat riser section that connects the intake manifold to the exhaust manifold).

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BUICK STRAIGHT-8 MILESTONES (Continued)

TIDBITS:

1. Flexible buses used Buick chassis beginning in the 1920's up into the 1960's. Flexible used the big series Buick Straight-8 engines from about 1940 to 1952. These engines were equipped with insert rod bearings before the car production changed in 1949.
2. If you want insert bearings in your older Buick engines that have Babbitt bearings, you can use the newer connecting rods in the older engines back to 1936 for the 320 series engines and back to 1937 for the 248 series engines. Note: The 263 series engine rods from 1950-53 do NOT fit the 248 series engines.

BUICK STRAIGHT EIGHT ENGINE DATA

	A	B	C	D	E
1				DISPLACE-	
2	YEAR	BORE	STROKE	MENT	COMMENT
3	1931	2 7/8	4 1/4	220	50 Series
4	1931-33	3 1/16	4 5/8	272	60 Series
5	1931-35	3 5/16	5	344	80 & 90 Series
6	1932-33	2 15/16	4 1/4	230	50 Series
7	1934-35	3 3/32	3 7/8	233	40 Series
8	1934-35	2 31/32	4 1/4	235	50 Series
9	1934-35	3 3/32	4 5/8	278	60 Series
10	1936	3 3/32	3 7/8	233	40 Series
11	1936-1952	3 7/16	4 5/16	320	60, 70, 80, & 90 Series
12	1937-1950	3 3/32	4 1/8	248	40 & 50 Series (except 1950 below)
13	1950	3 3/16	4 1/8	263	50 Series only
14	1951-1953	3 3/16	4 1/8	263	40 & 50 Series

Condolences to the Dodson Family. Steve's father, who was in his 90s, passed away recently.

Oil Change and Ladies' Luncheon, Saturday, April 4

Oil Change – Will be held at Paul Meyer's Spectra Painting, 13573 St. Charles Rock Road (1.3 miles west of I-270), 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Soda, hot dogs, etc. will be provided.

Ladies Luncheon – Will be held at LaBonne Bouchee, 12344 Olive Street Road (0.7 miles west of I-270), Phone 314.576.6606. The luncheon will start at 11:30 a.m. Please check their Web site (labonnebouchee.com) for driving directions.

Heard Around The Club

By Jeff Watkins

Jim Hall recently sold his last Buick, a 1983 Riviera. The car was sold to Germany.

Mike Marx is having the brakes fixed on his '30 coupe.

Scott Keller is looking for a restoration shop for his '67 California GS.

Bob Brasses and Bob Windal are thinking about a trip to the Chicago BPOC swap meet.

Did you know that two club members own Cords – Bill Bicknell and Barb Knudsen.

For your reading pleasure, several articles on Buicks:

Collectible Automobile, April 2009: '34 to '58 Specials

Muscle Machines, February 2009: '67 GS 340

Hemmings Classic Car, March 2009: Buick Greats, Drive Report '64 Le Sabre coupe

New Toys on the Market:

1938 Special 4-door 1/43 scale, third Buick in the collection.

1969 GS 400 Convertible and '68 GS 400 coupe, 1/64 scale, by Greenlight.

For Sale

1965 Checker Marathon Station Wagon, 283 V-8, auto transmission, PS, PB, white with dark blue roof, blue interior. Rusty \$2,000.

1976 Ford Granada Ghia 4-door, 250 CI 6 cyl., auto transmission, PS, non-power disc brakes, A/C, 42,000 miles, new gas tank, radiator, belts and hoses. Red inside and outside. Needs some TLC. \$1,500.

1978 Silver Anniversary Corvette billboard. Just the thing for your garage or car room. Mounted on foam board. 7 ft. high by 22 ft long. \$450.

1990 Corvette billboard. 3 panels, rolled up. \$125.

Call Jeff Watkins, 314-351-2809

1973 Electra 225 4-door HT. Second owner, 445 engine, full power, automatic, factory A/C, everything works, 2 extra wheels, 59,000 actual miles. Runs, drives, looks excellent. \$7,000. OBO.

Two Golf Bags, with clubs and 1 pull cart, \$50 for all.

Dave Smith, 314-550-5853.



**SEVENTH ANNUAL
2009 Mid-Missouri Oldsmobile Show**

**Friday Saturday Sunday
June 5th June 6th June 7th**

Location:



**TAN-TAR-A
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Hosted by Archway Oldsmobile Club

With invited guests representing the chapters of the Pontiac Oakland Club and the Buick Club of America.

ALL models and years of Oldsmobile, Buick and Pontiac vehicles are welcome!

First 60 registered will have indoor Air Conditioned Exhibition Hall Parking

Registration fee: \$50.00 for the first car and \$25.00 for each additional car.

This includes one \$15.00 Awards Breakfast Ticket.

There is no gate registration, this show is by reservation only!

Tan-Tar-A Resort Special \$99.00 per night for "Run of the House" (placement anywhere on property),
or \$109.00 per night for Main Resort complex room. Rates available June 3rd through June 8th, 2009

Mention the Oldsmobile Show.

Room reservations must be received by May 1, 2009 – For reservations call : 573-348-3131

For show information call: Jerry Wilson 314-878-5651 or email: jfwilson66@earthlink.net or sweetpeppeolds@aol.com

Friday June 5th - Set Up - Dinner on your own

Saturday June 6th - Judging 11:am to 4pm - Dinner on your own

Sunday June 7th - Awards Breakfast 8:30am to 10:00am \$15.00 per person

Oldsmobile Club of America National Point Judging

Oldsmobile Club of America Membership not required

Ample trailer parking available

Registration form – cut along dotted line and return with payment

Mid-Missouri Oldsmobile Show – June 5 to June 7, 2009

Name _____ OCA # _____

Address _____ City _____

State/Zip _____ Phone _____

Car #1 Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____ Class _____

Car #2 Year _____ Model _____ Body Style _____ Class _____

E-mail: _____

Please list additional cars on a separate sheet.

Are you a member of the Oldsmobile Club of America? Yes ___ No ___

Will you be judging? Yes ___ No ___

If so, what class do you prefer to judge? _____

Will you need trailer parking? Yes ___ No ___

PAYMENT DUE:

Car #1	Amount	Total
	\$50	\$ _____

(Includes one Awards Breakfast Ticket)

Additional Cars # _____	@ \$25 ea.	\$ _____
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Extra Award Breakfast Tickets # _____	@ \$15 ea.	\$ _____
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TOTAL:	\$ _____
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The Gateway Chapter meets monthly on the FIRST THURSDAY of the month. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and guests are welcome to attend. During the warmer months, May through October, we meet at Fenton Bar & Grill, 701 Rudder Road, Fenton, MO. During the winter months, November through April, we move indoors to various restaurants around St. Louis.

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

Director:	Bob Brasses (636) 343-1507	911 Woodway Circle Fenton, MO 63026	bbrasses@earthlink.net
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