



Steve Pitts' 1987 Grand National

### Father and Son – Turbos run in the family

Everyone is pretty used to seeing Steve Pitts Senior and Junior show up for all of our races. They also show up for most of the car shows, tech sessions and dyno days. So we decided it was time to check into their history with Turbo Buicks. You will always recognize Steve Senior with his Doctor Pepper in hand at our events. Steve Senior is a long time automotive enthusiast early on did not include the Buick marquee.

Steve Senior's first Buick was a white 87 Turbo Regal that he bought at a government auction. He had a ton of fun with this car. While racing the Regal at the Grove, he met Tom Rix, who turned him on to Gary Oswald. This is where the endless upgrades started so innocently at first. The white Turbo Regal ended up totaled – being hit head on in Cicero; fortunately Steve was not hurt, and fortunately neither was the engine. Steve then bought an 85 GN, which ended up getting the 87 engine transplanted into it.

Next he bought an 87 WE4 from a dealer. The 85 was sold to make room, as an 87 GN popped up from Nick Esposito, in Kansas City, MO. This is the 87 "Grocery

Getter" that he currently owns that won the Race Class in the car show at the GSCA Nationals in Bowling, Green, KY 2 years ago.

Steve Senior then fell in love with the Pro Street car, which was in North Carolina. I guess it was a deal he felt he couldn't pass up. When the guys brought the car up here, they noticed the WE4, and ended taking it home with them, not in trade. They felt they couldn't go home with an empty trailer. This car took runner-up in Bracket 1 at the GSCA Nationals in Bowling Green, KY this year.

In the meantime, Steve Junior was growing up around these cars. He says his first experience with cleaning and detailing cars was when his dad had a 65 Mustang. His engine experience took place with the 87 WE4, which was the first turbo Regal that he raced. This first race was at the Grove, where he ended up blowing head gaskets on both sides!! (we know about being towed home from there!) Steve Junior immediately gained hand-on mechanical experience with Turbo Regals replacing both head gaskets.

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Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the GS Club of America, the Chicagoland Chapter of the GSCA, or any of the officers of these automotive enthusiast clubs.

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### Membership Policy & Dues

The Chicagoland Chapter of the Buick GSCA is open to all Buick enthusiasts and owners of Buick powered cars. Membership is \$20 per year, and includes a quarterly newsletter and much more. Apply online at the chapter web site or send dues with check made out to **CCGSCA** with membership form to:

Shari Bonecutter – Membership Chairman  
Chicagoland Chapter GSCA  
4010 Raymond Avenue  
Brookfield, IL 60513-1846

### Chapter Web Page

<http://www.chicagolandbuick.org>

### Member's Change of Address

Chicagoland members who move are requested to notify our membership chairman before the next newsletter mailing. We do not want you to miss a single edition of your newsletter. Please notify us of e-mail address changes as soon as you change providers.

### Membership Renewal

Please check the label on your newsletter. If your membership is up in June, this will be your second to last newsletter. Obtain an application from the website or past issue, and mail to 4010 Raymond Avenue, Brookfield, IL 60513, along with a check for \$20 made out to "CCGSCA." Please don't let your membership lapse!

### Volunteers for the Chapter

Contact Bob Nunes if you are interested in helping our Chapter continue our pursuit of Buick Motorsport activities for our members. It is very important to have fresh ideas introduced into the operation of the Club. Plus we need help to distribute the work so no volunteers get burned out. The tasks are easy generally fun and you will always have plenty of help.

### Upcoming Events

- Sept 8–10 MidWest Buick Challenge – Morocco, IN
- Sept 17 Plymouth Place Car Show – LaGrange Park, IL
- Sept 17 J.C. WHITNEY Car Show - LaSalle, IL
- Sept 23 Cruise at Hooters in Downers Grove Cruise
- Sept 24 Riverside Garage Car Show
- Sept 23-24 Fall Jefferson 2006 Swap Meet
- Oct 1 Marquardt Car Show – Barrington, IL
- Oct 7 BOP Race Cordova, IL
- Oct 8 Garage tour on the way back from Cordova
- Oct 14 Fall Dyno Session at Als' in Joliet
- Oct 17 Plymouth Place Car Show
- Oct 22 CCGSCA Race Series at Byron Dragway
- Nov 12 Meeting at Moose Lodge in River Grove, IL.

We need Race Chairmen for the Midwest Buick Challenge, inquire at the tent.

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Steve Senior's 87 GN Street Car buildup

GTQ-71 turbo / 83lb injectors  
 Champion GN1 aluminum heads  
 BGC intake with RJC power plate  
 F.A.S.T. Engine management  
 ATR headers with ATR dual 3" exhaust  
 218/218 cam by DLS  
 J&E pistons on ATR rods  
 Turbo 400 trans with Neal Chance converter built by Jimmy  
 Ford 9" differential 3.50 gear/spool/disc brakes  
 HRPartsNstuff rear sway bar  
 Aeromotive Elimintaor Fuel pump with sump tank  
 Cotton's front mount intercooler  
 6 pt roll cage  
 Heads/intake ported by HI-Flow Heads  
 Engine machine work by General Engine  
 Charged Air System Aluminum Radiator w/ ramchargers dual fan setup  
 Mickey Thompson E.T street 295/65R15

Steve Senior's 87 "Pro Street" GN buildup

10 pt. roll cage  
 Narrowed ford 9" differential  
 Strange 4 piston rear disc brake  
 4 link suspension setup  
 Turbo 400 with 3700stall TCI converter  
 F.A.S.T. XFI fuel management

Steve Jr. of course wanted a Turbo Regal of his own, and the opportunity come up this past spring. He bought his own 87 from Tom in New Lennox. They towed the car home, as it had coolant in the oil. The first thing they did was tear the engine

down, and they found the problem. It seemed that 2 owners ago, a wire going to the oil sender got pinched between the intake and the block, leaving a gap. It turned out to be a simple fix, which was good. Steve Jr. ended up driving the car to and from Bowling Green 2 weeks later. So far, the car has been problem free, and he's been pretty happy with it.



Steve Junior's modifications include:

PT-51 turbo / 50lb injectors  
 MAF Translator with extender chip  
 Walbro 340 fuel pump  
 Terry Houston 3" DP  
 ATR 2.5 dual exhaust  
 SMC ALKY injection  
 Stock trans  
 Stock suspension/ differential  
 Stock block/ heads/ intake  
 Best E.T 12.41 @107mph

Need some Buick parts to complete your latest upgrade or have some parts to sell, please contact Beth Andrews to place an ad in our next newsletter.

Director's Garage

Loyd Bonecutter

Labor Day is a great time of year and means the end of traditional summer activities. Motorsport activities do not share the same fate and we traditionally have two months of great weather to enjoy our cars. I am hoping 2006 will not prove differently. Coming right up is the Midwest Buick Challenge which continues to be our chapters most ambitious event. We only see Bernie Rekus once a year now while he manages this great event. Hope to see you all there.

This summer I have had more car trouble than ever. Shari and I were able to attend a lot of events so maybe this was inevitable. At the GSCA

Nationals the GN was well off the mark in Tuesday's first run. Obtained a used ignition module, with the same results, then new ignition wires cured it, proven on the third pass. The next day on a warm start it would seemingly flood the engine. Changed fuel regulators since the pressure seemed high and adjustment would not bring down. This did not help, with the cure reinstallation of the original ignition module and coil pack. Life seemed good.

Exiting the east tollbooth of the Indiana Toll Road, on the way to Buick Race Day in Norwalk, the 2004 Rainer pulling the GN on the trailer stalled. On the coast to the emergency lane it immediately started, but this curious light on the dash the shape of the

battery was illuminated. At the next exit examination revealed the fusible link between the battery and the alternator was merely a hollow tube. We limped to Angola, Indiana where the Buick dealer turned out great, but did not have the alternator nor fusible link in stock to repair, so the Grand National came off the trailer and finished the trip that afternoon. Parts were over-nighted and the SUV was ready the next day, so we made the 100 mile round trip early Saturday morning to retrieve the hauler and trailer, which was all fixed under warranty. I might add the GN ran great on the street all weekend, but its one chance at the track was not good as fuel pressure issues continued to plague this car. I might add that Buick Race Day at Norwalk is one event that Shari and I will not miss in the future. After Norwalk a new fuel pump was installed, I'm now hopeful to have trouble free racing the rest of the summer.

Two weeks before Indianapolis we were towing the GN to Byron when the roadway surface changed and we were getting a lot of tire noise. Shari even noted how poor the road seemed, when I looked at the right mirror to see huge cloud of smoke was coming off the one of the trailer tires. Fortunately we were at an exit and pulled over on the emergency lane of the ramp. I unloaded the GN and we pulled the trailer to a closed business to survey the situation. At 7:15 there was not much open. I did find a Firestone store at the next exit, but we had to wait until 9:00 AM. They only had a passenger tire the correct size that would limp us to the track that turned out to not open due to sprinkles, and on home. It turned out getting the replacement bias ply D rated tire would later delay or trip to Indianapolis. As the first tire that came in was a radial trailer tire, that would not match the remainder and is not what I needed.

The Buick Horse Power Nationals at Indianapolis was a fantastic new event. Many of the folks that we met at Norwalk were there as well as the members we know so well from Illinois and Indiana. Wonderful times. One morning on the way into the track the GN was making peculiar noises when going over bumps. The immediate noise turned out to be something very simple, but in the diagnosis we discovered the few components in the front suspension in this 110,000-mile car that had not been replaced years earlier were junk. The idler arm, the inner tie rod ends and the center link needed replacement. Needless to say before the

trip to the BCA Nationals in Rochester, MN these components were changed.

The BCA Nationals was my second one attended since Kokomo years earlier. For those of you who's interest in Buicks include the full diversity that this marquee has offered in the past 100 plus years this is an event to see. My problems continued on the way to this event. Had work to do in western Illinois so my path took me through Plattville, WI. For Bears fans this is a very familiar place as their former spring training ground. Just outside this fair town is were the 5-year-old water pump for the CAS three pass radiator decided to fail. It locked up totally with the squealing fan belt reporting the failure very efficiently. Pulled the car to a stop, popped open the hood to see smoke rolling off the pulley and decided this was as far as the car would go under its own power for the time being. Luckily enough Harveys a local full service station was up to the task of putting me on the road within a couple of hours. The water pump itself was fine, with the failure a plate welded to the back of the impeller to raise the output pressure of the pump. This plate had succumbed to the stress and folded against itself locking up the pump. If you have the modified water pump it may be time to take it out. The remainder of this trip was fun although very hot.

For the BPG Nationals in Salem we took Shari's car since it has been neglected this year. That turned into our next disaster for 2006 as on the drive home Thursday we had the front bearing in the water pump disintegrate. There were bearing pieces in the water pump pulley when we dismantled the car. Found that short shaft water pumps were not that easy to get, and had to go back to the track to get the trailer. We secured a used pump (thanks Eggman) and installed it in the middle of the car show field. Poor water pump has not seen an easy second life as the first pass later that day yielded a 12.99 at 102 and it just got better as the day went on.

So after a summer like this it has to be easier in future auto sport seasons. Hopefully or luck does not follow up through the rest of our planned events this year. These include the MwBC, BCA's Marquardt Car Show, the BOP Race in Cordova, IL, the Fall Dyno Session at Als' in Joliet and the Plymouth Place Car Show and finally the final CCGSCA Race Series event at Byron Dragway.

### Drivers Pet Peeves – Jim Mateja, Chicago Tribune

Hagerty Insurance of Travers City, Mich, decided to survey the nation's motorists to learn what their pet peeves were:

- #10. Drivers who leave their turn signals on for miles
- #9. Men shaving and women applying makeup.
- #8. Motorcyclists who race down the middle of a lane between cars. (Illegal in IL)
- #7. Road Rage
- #6. Hasty drivers who change lanes without signals
- #5. Drivers who speed up to keep you from changing lanes.
- #4. Drivers who weave through traffic to gain one or two car lengths so they can arrive at the next stoplight 10 seconds before you.
- #3. Pushy drivers who tailgate
- #2. Slow drivers in the fast lane, sometimes going 20 m.p.h. more slowly than the flow
- #1. Drivers talking on cell phones, drifting from one lane to the next while they chitchat.

### Membership Prattle Shari Bonecutter

Hey, everyone! This issue is coming out when the cruises are winding down, and the shows are dwindling down to a few. Where did summer go?? I know I didn't go to many things during the heat wave. And we missed some shows because of events elsewhere. The ones we've gone to lately have been fun, though. I hope some of you took advantage of them.

So our summer in review.... We went to the race weekend at Norwalk, OH the beginning of June. What a fun event! Being a Buick event, it rained most of the days but there was such a fun bunch of folks that it didn't matter. Roberta Vasilow, Bill Wills, Robin Stevens and crew do a first-rate job of putting on the race and car show. We'll be back next year!

Next was the Cascade Drive-Inn outing. The movie choice turned out to be perfect – Cars opened up that weekend, and we were in the front row to see it. We had a fair showing of cars that met at Angostinos first for dinner and then drove in, en masse. The Corvette club was there a few rows back, so folks there had a few different things to look at. It chilled off, of course – usual for when we go there. So I think a lot of folks got cold. I know we ended up in the car for the 2<sup>nd</sup> feature.

The picnic took place during the heat wave, and we had about 12 folks show up. We always have a good time talking Buicks and other things, and eating. But I think this event is going to get shelved for a few years, until there is an interest again.

Next came the Buick Horsepower Nationals in Indianapolis. This was the first time for this event, and it had some growing pains. We went there on Wednesday, with Thursday being our first day at the track. Attendance was light, but increased every day. We enjoyed it, and will be back next year, if John has puts it on again. I know we saw a few of you all there. With this being so close, you missed a good show.

We got back in time to help Frank with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July car show – and what a nice day we had for it, for a change! There were over 200 cars that attended this year. I want to thank Barb and Mark, Beth and Dana, Paul, Chris, and Steve Russo for their help. And of course Frank, for doing the year-long-bs that goes along with this.

There were a few other BCA car shows and cruise in between, but since it was so hot, I didn't go. I know Bob Kostuk and Chris Gatch won a trophy or two, as did Bill Grupp. Congrats to you guys!

The Buick Performance Group Nationals were mid-August, in Salem, OH, as per usual. You know Loyd and I – we pretty much have fun whenever there is a Buick meet. We had a good time, and the weather there was awesome, too! Much better than what was at home, from what we understand. My car did it's best times, so far – more to come, I'm sure.

We had the Cigar Cruise in Villa Park, next – the first time we tried this. This was kind of a go-get-your-own food event, and sit around in the parking lot and talk. We had a nice showing of GS's that night – thanks to Kim and Frank and Steve for bringing out the toys. And to Rich and Alex for bringing the GNX's – two in one night! Awesome!

Big thanks to our regular crowd, too – Bob N., Paul and Linda, Beth and Dana, and Frank J. I know the owner would like us back another time.

And lastly was the Westchester cruise. Unfortunately, this has become so popular that it's tough for us to park together, so Buicks were all over the place. I heard there were over 200 cars there, that night. By the time this comes out, their cruise season will be over. I hope this one will continue next year – it's a lot of fun!

Racing – well, we've had a few of those this year. Not a big turnout, but the folks that have come have had fun. Maybe it's because most of the races are at Byron? I'm sorry about that, but our Racing Director did the best he could before moving out of state.

**New Members – Welcome to the following:** Daniel Haack of Chicago, IL has an 87 T-Type. Garrett Morris of Bensenville, IL has a 73 Apollo. Davie Skwarek of LaGrange Highlands, IL has an 86 Grand National. Rick Lutz of Mokena, IL has an 87 Grand National, and Steve Harlow of Glenview, IL has an 87 Grand National, also. One very important new "member" is Brett Gatch, born mid-July. He's doing very well, and the parents are appropriately sleep-challenged.

Please check your mailing label – if it has June 06 on it, your membership dues are PAST DUE. Please see the application in this newsletter somewhere, and send it in to me with your \$20 dues. Or come on to the Midwest Challenge and renew there – you'll be paid up through the end of 2007, then.

So the season is winding down. The next biggie is the Midwest Buick Challenge. This is Sept. 8-10, at Morocco, IN. Please see the enclosed flier. Some things not mentioned yet is a ladies race for cash on Sunday, goody bags for the first 30 cars in the car show in Saturday, and a possible pig roast on Saturday night. Also – please note that the next points race for the club is taking place here on Saturday afternoon. Now the club usually kicks in some cash towards the bracket racing prizes here. And a lot of years a good portion of it has gone to out-of-staters. It would be nice to see more Chicagoland members racing on Sunday.

We also need volunteers – for running the racing both days. If you come and help us out, we'll pay you back your general admission. Please help – Loyd and the guys can't do it all. If you have a Motorola radio, please bring it with you so that we can communicate with you.

While I'm on the subject, we could also use volunteers for just about everything, including some board member positions. Our treasurers, Wayne and Marilyn Bachar, moved to Montana, and Bill Grupp has taken their place. Mary Ferrari moved to Arizona, and I've taken back the license plate job. I could use someone to help with this – and no, Beth and Barb – you do enough. The race director – Bryan Campbell – moved to Tennessee, and that job is vacant, too. If the few of us have to do all these jobs, we're going to burn out. Please, please – volunteer to help us out. Why folks feel they have to move out of state to quit, I'll never know – hee hee! Maybe Loyd and I will have to move.....

There are other things coming up this fall, too. The Plymouth Place car show in LaGrange Park, our social at Hooters, in Downers Grove, IL, and the Marquardt car show with the BCA in Barrington, IL. I know some of us are going to the Buick-Olds-Pontiac race in Cordova, IL – this is one of my favorite races. The drive there is at a very pretty time of year, and the track is very cool. I can't wait for this one! Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> is the fall dyno session at ATR in Joliet. This is a lot of fun, too – like indoor racing along with bench racing and pizza for lunch. This is \$50 for two pulls, and sign up is on our website or by calling me or Paul Brelie. Our last race is again at Byron, on October 22. This is one of those times when we have the cooler air that the cars love so much!

There will be a tech session Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> at the Moose Lodge in River Grove, IL. I think we'll be having our club holiday party in January again, either Jan. 13 or 20. Stay tuned for info about this one....

In closing, I want to wish you guys a great fall season. It's one of my favorite times of year. Enjoy your cars before the snow flies!!

We need help Sunday afternoon at the Midwest Buick Challenge keeping the drag racing even running smooth. Communication with the tower to let the racers know which lane they should be in and to make sure they know what is going on. See Shari or Loyd at the tent at the event, and thanks.

## Cruise News

-Chris Gatch

Greetings Buick Enthusiasts!

I can't believe that the summer came and is almost gone. Where did the time go? It seems like just last week we opened the season at Suburban Buick for the BCA spring dust off! Now, as I look at the calendar, the Midwest Challenge is right around the corner!

Well, there have been plenty of shows and cruises that many of us have and have not attended, so let me fill you in on all the fun and activities that went on if you missed it! Let me start by saying a big thanks to all of those who went to the many cruise nights that I did not get a chance to attend due to the newest addition to our family. In mid July Anna and I were blessed with the newest member of the Buick family as Brett Anthony was born! I can't wait until he can clean the car so that will then give mommy a break from cleaning it!

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gorilla Days car show was held on its usual day, July 4<sup>th</sup>. This is always a great show. Big thanks go out to Frank Jackowiak and everyone who helped to make this show go smooth for another year. The weather was great this year, and for all of those who attended I'm sure that you had a great time, and for those who didn't, well, shame on you! We had approximately 200 cars this year show up and around 50 of them were Buick's. Once again thanks, Frank you did a great job; it's much appreciated and thanks to all the club members that spent their holiday with us!

I heard that Loyd & Paul braved the heat at the Brookfield car show. This is always a fun event that is held in downtown Brookfield. I was planning on going to this event but let me tell you that it was HOT! From what I hear both of the brave souls won awards in their classes with their black cars.

Our mid summer BCA show was Loren Buick. This is always a great show and there were plenty of Buick & Pontiac's to look at this day! This year there was also a class for non Buick & Pontiac and let me tell you there were some gorgeous cars there. So next year even if you don't have a Buick or Pontiac come on out! You can't beat it! Free food, entry fee and fun! Congrats to Bob Kostuk and Dana Andrews who won in their respective classes!

I would like to thank Paul Brellie for setting up and orchestrating the first annual cruise night at 8 to 8 cigars in Villa Park. This was a neat event and we had about 12 cars stop by for this event. The hosts were very gracious and want us back next year. Hopefully next time we can get a few more cars out there! Another thing about this event is that it's not Buick specific so if you or someone you know wants to come on out, please let them know! I'm sure we will have this event again next year! Thanks Paul!

We have a few more cruise nights scheduled before the end of the year, so come on out and have fun and enjoy before winter is here and you can't! It seems that this year there were more wash outs for shows and cruises than usual but it's always fun just to get out and enjoy the car and the day so hopefully we can get a few more in before it's all over!! Well, there is one more show before the end of the year which is at Marquardt Buick and is going to be held on Sunday October 1<sup>st</sup>. Please make sure that you check the website to see what future events we have added or taken away due to unforeseen circumstances.

With the summer almost over there is not too much time to bring those great cars out and enjoy them. If you think that the first part of summer went by fast where do you think that the rest of it is gong? Well, I hope to see you out there and remember to drive safe and to *Keep Going Fast With Class!*

### Classified Ads:

1971 Buick LeSabre Custom 4 Door Sedan - \$4500 Contact Adam Martin via the V8 board

Mostly original 1987 Grand National: Purchased from original owner (woman owned) one year ago. Asking \$20K Phil at 312-320-4415 or ptenca@sayers.com

1987 GN 21,800 Miles/Lightly Modded Runs 11.30's @118 mph - Asking: \$23,500 / Dave at 630-627-3192

1972 Buick GS Stage1 Flame Orange Numbers match! Asking \$32,000. troyacton@lightbound.com

70-72 GS Parts (some NOS) and 15by7 Buick rally wheels contact Tom Rix at 815-675-3188