



THE HOOD SCOOP

October 2013

Gateway GTO
Association



GTO of the Month

My GTO

By Mark Melrose



As most authors of the *Goat-of-the-Month* start out talking about their first car, I won't vary from the pattern. At age 17 I needed a car in order to make the 20+ mile commute from Buffalo to school at Niagara University. So my first car was a 1965 Ford Falcon Futura, 4-door, 200ci straight-6, with an automatic transmission. I paid \$420 for it in 1970, it was a gold-green metallic color with only about 45,000 miles on the odometer but the Buffalo winters had not been kind to the car – both front fenders were rusted through just over the headlights and there were rust holes in the rockers and lower quarters. My dad knew somebody who did bodywork and I repainted the patched spots with aerosol cans of matching paint. (See the photo of me washing the Falcon right after I bought it and, yes, that's Sandra in the passenger seat) I drove the car hard for two years until I started getting nasty tick-



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harder than the Falcon and had a blast with it. Although the mechanicals were bone-stock, the Goat held its own against L78 Chevilles and 440/4bbl Mopars – at least between stoplights. Mustangs and Torinos were “easy meat” as were stock Mopar 340s and 383s. I had so much fun with the car that, even though I owned it for less than one year, the clutch and axle bearings had to be replaced. Some things had to be repaired so the car could be driven, others like replacing all the bias-ply tires I burned off the posi rearend resulted in my scrounging around in the disposal heaps behind the tire stores. I did breakdown and buy a recapped snowtire however. As if the skyrocketing insurance premiums

ing from the lifters and the radiator top tank started to separate from the core. It was a surprisingly quick car for such a small engine. Then I found out one night that the floorpan was rusted through when I ran through a deep puddle and it was like a fire hose had been turned on between my legs. I fixed that with some galvanized sheet metal and roofing tar but it was time for a newer car.

After some time spent checking the newspaper classifieds I found a 1968 GTO, 4-speed car, originally Verdoro Green but repainted a dark brown metallic color (Chrysler *Tahitian Brown*). Options included a Safe-T-Track rearend, power steering and brakes, black vinyl roof, Rally II wheels, hideaway headlights, Rally gauges, clock, console, rear window defogger and a courtesy light package with underdash lights, underhood and trunk lights. In addition to abuse, I added a tachometer and the obligatory AM/FM Stereo 8-track “deck” under the dash (stereo sound was a big deal in the early 70s). I drove this car much

assessed on musclecars weren’t bad enough, the first of several Arab Oil Embargoes struck in 1973 – gas prices tripled within 30 days and was being rationed (if your plate ended with an even number you were allowed to get gas on even numbered days, and odd for odd) if you could even find a station that had gas. If you think “Road Rage” is a problem, how about “Fuel Rage” – people were actually being shot after cutting into gas lines. At 8 mpg city and about 13 on the highway (on Premium fuel), all my beer money was going into the gas tank and for insurance premiums. I had paid \$750 for the car in 1972 and sold it about ten months later for \$650 to a kid up the street who was driving a rusted-out ’66 GTO. My dad sold his ’66 VW Karman Ghia (the car I learned to drive a 4-speed on) and I sold the Goat and we bought and shared a Ford Maverick. The Maverick was considerably more fuel efficient but it marked the beginning of my string of “boring” cars.

While I owned the GTO for less than a

year, it made a huge impression on me. After driving the Karman Ghia (with all of 58hp) I had no idea how much enjoyment could be had rowing through the gears when there were serious ponies under the hood. Naturally I regretted parting with the Goat almost immediately. Even though I had previously developed a tendency to push my vehicles to and sometimes beyond their envelopes, that GTO was really special. But other priorities took over as is so commonly the case – finish college, get a job, get married, start a business, have kids, put the kids through college and wait a minute!

Flash Forward to about 2002. My daughters are finished with their Bachelor programs, I have a little extra disposable income accumulated and decide I'm in the market for a classic car. Initially I was looking at late 1930s Cadillacs with their Art Deco styling and Cadillac cachet. When I realized that I still retain that tendency to push my vehicles and the one that had been the most fun to push was that '68 GTO, I switched my ebay favorite search from Cadillacs to GTOs. I had a buddy back in the day who owned a very nice '67 GTO, a 4-speed car with a bench seat and vinyl roof – black-on-black-on-white. The '68 model had essentially the same running gear but with curvaceous, sexier styling, especially with the hideaway headlights. Memories of my first '68 decided which model year I was after. I surfed ebay for almost a year and a half before in early 2003 a dark red, 4-speed, hideaway headlight car with a freshly rebuilt engine caught my eye. The car was in Coudersport, Pennsylvania about 180 miles north and east of Pittsburgh on the New York state line. I talked with the seller several times on the phone and won the bidding at what I considered to be a very reasonable price. I put a deposit on the car and bought a one-way plane ticket to Buffalo where a good friend picked me up and took me to Coudersport to checkout the car. On close inspection the car had a half-

way decent five year old paint job and still needed a fair amount of work, but did it run! The memories of cruising the streets in the Buffalo suburbs came flooding back and even though my three previous cars were all V-8s, I had forgotten what raw, visceral power was like. Based on the already applied dark red paint, the hideaway headlights and the muscle under the hood, I decided this car had the makings of what I would have turned my first Goat in to if I had had the financial wherewithal. Good thing I had brought the Cashier's Check with me.

After sealing the deal, I started driving the car to St. Louis a little before noon that same day. The thumbs-up salutes started before I even reached the interstate, that was a very different feeling that I had never experienced before and definitely addictive. By late evening I was in Indiana somewhere and considering whether or not to stop for the night. The car was running great and I was having a blast so I decided to drive straight through to St. Louis non-stop. I rumbled into my driveway at about 2:30 in the morning, and while I should have been exhausted, my level of excitement had yet to ebb. My son Clayton was waiting up for me and called his buddy up the street and we all went for a "Goat-Ride" in the wee hours. Apparently Clayton was as excited about our new toy as I was. The car was a fully functional and safe driver, except maybe for the stock 4-wheel manual drum brakes. It could be driven while being restified and drive it I do – averaging about 8,000 miles per year.

Per the PHS documentation the car was built in Meridian Turquoise with the WT-code block and #16 heads (standard for the 1968 GTO), options included the 4-speed M-20 Muncie transmission, 3.55:1 Safe-T-Track rearend, rally gauge cluster, dash tach, console, deluxe wheel covers on steel wheels and hideaway headlights. No air conditioning, power steering or brakes – no frills. Since owning the

car I have had some major work done – converting to power front disc brakes (a Godsend) with a kit from Ames, rebuilding the tranny, new Cragar SS wheels and tires, new Centerforce clutch and a new Ram Air IV camshaft, lifters, pushrods and timing chain after wearing off a cam lobe by using Mobil One in the crankcase instead of an oil formulation with the zinc and other compounds necessary for use with flat tappet cams. Fellow club member Chris Simmons took over redoing the interior including all new window glass, weather stripping, headliner, sail panels, visors, steering wheel, carpet, console and door handles. Chris also rebuilt all the window regulators and installed new front seats from a 2005 GTO as well as reupholstered the back seat to match. Just prior to the 2005 GTO Nationals here in St. Louis, fellow club member Cecil Morton painted and installed a new hood, hood tach, grills, hideaway doors and side mirrors. Then there's all the “little stuff” – replacing all four turn signal lenses, the license plate light fixture, front and rear window moldings, window tint, etc., etc., etc. Since I've owned the car I have spent at least what it cost to buy the car in refurbishments and mods. Owning these old cars is not for the weak-of-heart or the light-of-wallet.

But the car is really turning into one of those cars that looks like it's moving at Mach speed even when it's standing still as I had envisioned when I first saw it in 2003. I am probably the world's worst drag racer. I guess the adrenaline takes over and I don't hook up and my 60-foot times are generally pitiful. I bought an accelerometer which computes ¼-mile times (without reaction/60-foot time) and have achieved results in the high 12s, but my aforementioned difficulties at the track have netted me

“best” timeslips in the mid-14s. I don't race enough at the track to be able to effectively improve my times. But almost all of my enjoyment in the car derives from the feel of all those ponies pulling and the guttural wail that accompanies it. The fact that even without flexing its muscles the car always gets me at least a couple of thumbs-up salutes is icing on the cake. The car still has a long “to do” list but it's almost “there” and I have loved it since that very first test drive in Coudersport.

I had more photos of my Falcon and of my first '68 GTO but they disappeared in the shuffle of the household moves we have made over the years. The one constant through all these years is my wife. Sandra and I were high school sweethearts – we both got doused with puddle water driving the Falcon through the water that one night, and we spent a fair amount of time in the backseat of the GTO at the drive-in movies. I joke now that even if I could get her in the backseat of this car I'd probably need the Fire Department and the jaws-of-life to get me out. But her fond memories and support of my love for the '68 GTO is no joke – it makes all the difference in the world. Thanks hon!

As you probably know, we also own a 2006 GTO, but that's another story.





Presidents Scoop

The Presidents Scoop

By Mark Melrose

Hibernate?

It's October and there is a chill in the air, the leaves are showing their colors and my 2013 car calendar is going dormant with only two Club events left. My favorite events are those that include driving some distance to and from unique destinations and activities. Only one such event remains on Gateway's calendar – the Club Wine Cruise on November 3rd. For some of us that means it's about time to add stabilizer to what remains in the fuel tank of our GTOs, connect the trickle-charger to the battery and drape the cover over the car until Spring. For others it's time to attack the seemingly never-ending restification "To-Do" list. For still others, colder temperatures mean better engine performance and all we wait for is the right weather and road conditions to continue to exercise our muscle cars.

But what's a body to do when the typical seasonal events run dry? I try to drive my cars regularly outside of Club events, but I find myself on the same roads going through the same scenery and making the same stops – unable to add much to the enjoyment of just driving. That's not to say driving these cars is the most enjoyable benefit of ownership, but for me the journey can be as much or more fun than the destination.

One of my favorite magazines is *Road & Track* which regularly publishes articles that line-out some great road trips – "great" as in challenging, twisting roads through beautiful and out of the way locales loaded with unique and enjoyable stops. The July 2013 issue of *R&T* features an article entitled *AMERICA, A Two-Lane Owner's Manual* which describes, maps and provides photos of six recommended routes in different regions of the country. Each of the six includes some alternate regional routes along with suggestions of where to stop and what to do along each route as well as the best time of year to make each journey and even what specific vehicle is best tailored to put a grin on your face. This is great stuff if you have the time and the need for a plan. But what about those impromptu urges to take a "different" drive on a beautiful sunny weekend afternoon? In the very same issue of *R&T* is another article, *The Great Fried Chicken Triangle* outlining the author's college-era cruise "planning" which goes something like this: Get three or four friends together, buy \$100 worth of fried chicken, put the spinner from a *Twister* game on the map at your location and SPIN. Get in the car, start eating chicken and drive in the direction of the spinner needle until you run out of fried chicken. Then get more fried chicken, spin again and head in the new direction. When you run out of chicken again, head back home. While decidedly random and probably a little juvenile, author John Krewson includes the entreaty "Think of the best things that have ever happened to you. You probably didn't see half of them coming." In my book, fried chicken beats trickle-chargers and fuel stabilizer every time.

Please don't forget about the club officer election process as I outlined last month. A nomination form is included in the pages of this newsletter and resulting ballots will be sent out following the November 6th business meeting.

Calling All Cars The *Gateway Wine Cruise* is November 3rd and the *Gateway Christmas Party* is December 14th.

For other upcoming area car shows & cruises see <http://clubs.hemmings.com/lakerscarclub/>



Official Gateway GTO Officer Nomination Form For 2013

This is the official Nominations form that must be filled out and Mailed to Will Bowers before the November Meeting.

Only this form will be accepted.

President

Vice President – MO

Vice President – IL

Treasurer

Secretary

GTOAA Chapter Rep

ONLY ONE VOTE PER MEMBER PLEASE

MAIL TO:

**Will Bowers
1 Goshen Woods
Edwardsville, IL 62025**

PLEASE PRINT THIS PAGE



Gateway GTO Meeting Minutes



GGTOA Minutes: 10/2/2013

7:05PM – Meeting Start – Old Business – 3 Nomination forms returned as of the meeting. Fill out the forms and mail them in as soon as possible.

7:07 – Wheels in Motion Show got rained out. Only a handful of cars showed up. The charity still made over \$8800. The GGTOA donated \$500 to the children's cancer society.

7:09 – The club picnic was excellent. It had a great turnout and perfect weather. Bob Blattel and Denny Gunn won the washer tournament.

7:11 – The Pontiac Illinois event had a fantastic turnout with 184 cars. The museum gained \$690 worth of new memberships. The show pulled in \$2543 with all proceeds going to the Pontiac Museum.

7:15 – The Poker Run will be delayed until next spring.

7:16 – The Olivette Baptist show was a really good time. The weather cut it a little short, but it was a very nice event.

7:17 – Cecil Morton spoke about the Route 66 Mother Road Festival.

7:19 – First Responder Show on October 5th. All proceeds will go to Responder Rescue and Backstoppers.

7:28 – Pizza Party in January may take place at Pirrone's in Florissant. Also checking other locations. Date currently will be January 12th.

7:31 – The last North County Cruise Night will be 10/11 from 6-9PM.

7:32 – Dick Levi show on October 20th

7:34 – 11/3 will be the annual wine cruise to the Augusta Montel Winery. 12/14 will be Gateway GTO Christmas party at the Hawkin House in Webster.

7:37 – Tom Oxler talked about GTOAA changing policies for members of the club that have a Pontiac but not a GTO. Instead of requiring full membership, they only have to pay \$5 to help cover the club's insurance policy. Also the GTOAA club store will be handed over to an external vendor, and GTOAA will pull in revenue from there.

7:44 – Tech Session – Will talked about a pilot bearing problem with his Catalina. He also told a cautionary tale about not working under your car while no-one is around, involving concussions and ER trips.

7:49 – Steve Hedrick spoke about working on Denny Gunn's GTO. There was a comedy of errors due someone putting a Pontiac motor together like a Chevy motor causing serious problems.

7:55 – Harry Smeltzer has a story about someone else who put the rods in backwards. He also found out that you can get a license plate that matches the year of your car. It's limited to 1000 miles per year and car shows. You have to keep a mileage log.

8:04 – Club Personals – Barb Lewis went to the hospital for abdominal pains. She will require surgery for a perforated colon.

Tootie May has been having dizzy spells. The doctors are still not sure what the issue is.

Shauna Wollmershauser said that "The Snake and the Mongoose" is currently playing at Ronnie's. She also got to meet Antron Brown from the NHRA, and she got a Friday night photo pass for the NHRA event.

8:19 – Motion to adjourn by John Taylor, seconded by Harry Smeltzer.

50/50 of \$34 won by Cecil Morton





Gateway GTO Activities



GTOAA Regional All Pontiac Cruise & Show

September 21-22, 2013 in Pontiac, Illinois

By Mark Melrose, Gateway GTO Association

It was with no small measure of anxiety that we drove through a driving light rain from St. Louis to Pontiac, IL on Friday afternoon to set-up and prepare for the Second Annual GTOAA All Pontiac Cruise & Show. Car shows are fickle and totally vulnerable to the weather and, while the weather for our events beginning on Saturday and running though Sunday afternoon was predicted to be “beautiful”, we’ve all heard that before we have found ourselves huddled under umbrellas and trying to find shelter for our classic vehicles.



But this time the weather co-operated and our event was blessed with weather about as perfect as could be. Hosted by GTOAA, the Gateway GTO Association and Heart of Illinois GTOs chapters, the Pontiac-Oakland Museum & Resource Center and

the City of Pontiac this was our second annual effort at an event-filled weekend to raise funds in support of the only active Pontiac Museum in existence. Some extra promotion, great weather

and support from other chapters and clubs brought in 184 vehicles registered for Sunday’s car show – over 100 more than participated at this same event in 2012.

Saturday’s events kicked off with tours of the Pontiac-



Gateway GTO Activities



Oakland Museum (with a new display of two 1964 GTOs honoring the model's 50th anniversary), the Route 66 and War Museums. By 11:30AM over 50 cars were lining up for the Route 66 Cruise which travelled about 50 miles south along old Route 66 to Atlanta, IL. Most cruisers ate lunch at the Palms Café in Atlanta and toured the Grain Elevator and Atlanta Route 66 Museums and posed for pictures with their cars in front of the large Paul Bunyan statue before returning to Pontiac. At 4:00PM in Pontiac we headed to the main pavilion at the city's Chautauqua Park for a presentation discussing the incep-

tion of the GTO and other Pontiac models by Ben Harrison, noted Pontiac Engineer & Product Planner. Mr. Harrison's very informative talk was followed by a catered dinner in the pavilion serving an excellent fried chicken, pasta, potatoes and salad meal followed by an Ice Cream Social dessert bar. The evening was capped off by a musical revue "At The Hop" performed by Pontiac's Vermillion Players, which became interactive with the audience and was terrific fun.



Gateway GTO Activities

Sunday morning brought about 100 additional cars to Pontiac for the Car Show. Almost without exception the 184 displayed were “2+” vehicles including some very rare Pontiacs indeed. Thirty-three trophies were awarded in eleven classes and four special awards were made to a Kids’ Pick, Most Original, Mayor’s Choice and Museum’s Choice cars. While the Kids had no difficulty making their selection, Mayor Bob Russell, Museum Curator Tim Dye and the two hosting GTOAA chapter presidents were faced with tough decisions choosing among the beautiful Pontiacs.



Proceeds from the two-day event yielded over \$3,200 in memberships and donations to the Pontiac-Oakland Museum – adding to their fund raising efforts for vehicle storage, display



Gateway GTO Activities

fabrication and archival activities. Plans are already being laid for next year's Third Annual event and with the gracious hospitality and tireless work of Pontiac's Mayor, Director of Tourism and Tim and Penny Dye of the Pontiac-Oakland Museum it will surely be a success.







PRESENTATION OF THE PROCEEDS FROM THE 2ND ANNUAL GTO ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA REGIONAL EVENT AT PONTIAC ILLINOIS TO THE PONTIAC OAKLAND MUSEUM





NEW AGE GTO CONCOURS PROJECT

The GTO Association of America has initiated a project to create a set of photo records on the 2004 to 2006 GTO in anticipation of a time in the future when these cars will participate in the annual GTO Association of America Concours car show.

Gateway GTO has been chosen as the chapter to assemble these photo documentaries.

The project requires six **BONE STOCK** new age GTO's - One manual transmission and one automatic transmission car from each model year.

Ground Rules for Eligible Cars:

- Car must be bone stock with NO aftermarket parts or modifications. The only exceptions are batteries and tires.
- Factory parts, such as the sports appearance package and 18 inch wheels, are allowed.
- All parts the car was originally supplied with, such as the spoiler, must be installed. (Exception: Parts removed to install other factory parts such as the sports appearance package or 18" wheels.)

Once the cars are identified, a photo session will be scheduled.

If your car meets the requirements of the ground rules and you are interested in participating, please contact Chris Winslow.

**This is your chance to make your GTO the standard
against which all new age GTO's will be judged!**

Still looking for a 2005 Automatic Car - All other slots have been filled

Gateway GTO Association Points Submission Form

Member Name _____

Month _____

Club Sponsored Events and Monthly Meetings

Event	With GTO (40 Points)	Without GTO (20 Points)

Total for Club Sponsored Events _____

Non Sponsored Events

Event	With GTO (10 Points)	Without GTO (5 Points)

Total for Non Sponsored Events _____

Other Activities

GTO Regional/National Event	With GTO (100 Points)	Without GTO(70 Points)

GGTOA Event Worker/Helper (50 Points) _____

Car Featured as GTO of the Month (50 Points) _____

Write an Article for *Hood Scoop* (50 Points) _____

Sign up a new GGTOA member (25 Points) _____

Have GTO featured in a National Pub (40 Points) _____

Total Points for Month

Submit completed form at GGTOA monthly meeting or to:
 B. O'Sullivan
 10637 St. Phillip Lane
 St. Anne, MO 63074

2013 GATEWAY GTO CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November

3 – Club Wine Cruise, to Montelle Winery in August, MO. CLUB SPONSORED

6 – Meeting at JJ's. CLUB SPONSORED

December

14 – Club Christmas Party at Hawken House in Webster Groves, MO, details to follow. CLUB SPONSORED

SEE THE FULL CALENDAR AT WWW.GATEWAYGTO.ORG

Gateway GTO Classifieds

For Sale

#62 Heads - \$150

Contact Tony Bezzole

(314) 737-6534



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Advertising Guidelines

Classified ads up to 50 words are free to members; add 10 cents per word for any ad over 50 words. Payment is due upon submission. (members need to update ads at 3 month intervals or ads will be dropped). Classified ads up to 50 words for non-members are \$5.00 per issue.

Gateway GTO Club Information

The Gateway GTO Association was initially formed in the summer of 1984 by a group of seven. They all had a common interest in the Original Muscle Car, the Pontiac GTO. As a form of communication we publish a monthly newsletter called "The Hood Scoop". The purpose of this newsletter is to keep our members informed of all upcoming activities as well as providing interesting event coverage. The club meets every first Wednesday of the month at J. J.'s Restaurant, 1215 S. Duchesne Rd, St. Charles, Mo. 63301.

Membership dues are \$35.00 per year and all renewals are required to be paid by December 31st. You are allowed to have one associate member.

Club Sponsor

2 Locations:

6041 North Lindbergh
Hazelwood, MO 63042
(314) 731-7999

10100 West Florissant
Dellwood, MO 63136
(314) 868-2000

Tow Service:
314-427-8697



**As a Gateway GTO member please consider joining the
GTO Association of America**

**The Gateway GTO Association
is an official chapter of the
GTO Association of America
www.gtoaa.org**

**Visit us at
www.gatewaygto.org or
www.gatewaygto.com**

Gateway GTO Association Photo Album

If you have photos of past events or if you take pictures of future events that you think would be good for our Photo Album, please send them to the newsletter editor.

The Hood Scoop is published as an informative news bulletin to keep our members up to date on past, present, and future events.

Advertising rates are:

\$100 – Full page (Color or Black and White) ad in monthly *Hoodscoop* newsletter for 12 months, your logo on our Website Sponsor page, and a link to your website from our Related Website Link space.

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