

THE LEGEND



Volume 28 #6
June 2010



**Something A
Little Different -
Gerry & Cindy
Zanger's '71 GT-37**

Plus:
Frank's Gift
GM Nationals
Easy Radio Repair
xXx Movie Flame Car GTO
MORE Never Before Published
Letters From John Sawruk



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1st Gear



Tom Szymczyk, editor

Showing My Age

Remember when you could go into an auto parts store and the guy behind the counter knew what you wanted without looking things up on a computer? In fact, you probably remember when there was no computer at the parts store -- just that amazing ten-foot long bank of parts books and catalogs, some of which had been there since World War II. You knew you were asking for an unusual part when the counterman had to resort to "looking it up" in one of those books.

Recently I went into a local outlet of one of the big automotive parts chain stores. So as not to get into trouble, I'll just say the name of the place begins with an "A." I say, "Hi, I'd like an AC Delco PF24 oil filter." "What's it for?" the counterman (well, OK, the counter boy) says, "I have to look it up by year, make and model." "Well," I reply, "you really don't need to look it up, but it's for a 1972 Pontiac LeMans with a 350 V8."

"Good thing I asked," the counter boy says, "You don't want a PF24, you want a something-something-something (he mentions a part number I can't remember). It's the same one that goes on my Blazer -- that has a 350 in it, too." "Yes, I say," but your Blazer has a Chevrolet 350 in it, right?" "Well, a Pontiac 350 and a Chevy 350 are the same..." he tries to say. "Well, no, they weren't, not back in 1972," I reply.

He looks at me like I'm from Mars, or at least a foreign country, because he sells oil filters for General Motors 350 engines all day long, and they're the same one that fits his Chevy Blazer. And he's been working here for years, so what's this old kook trying to tell him -- he's not in the auto parts business, he's just some crazy old customer.

So of course this is where I have to explain to him how Pontiacs, at least up to 1979, aren't the same as Chevrolets, which he only believes after he actually looks up the parts in the computer. Since I'm in the educational mode, we get into a discussion of how a Pontiac 326 block is the same as a 350, a 389, a 400, a 421, a 428, a 455, etc., and how heads and manifolds are interchangeable and no, Pontiac doesn't have a "big block" and a "small block," and so forth. You know the drill.

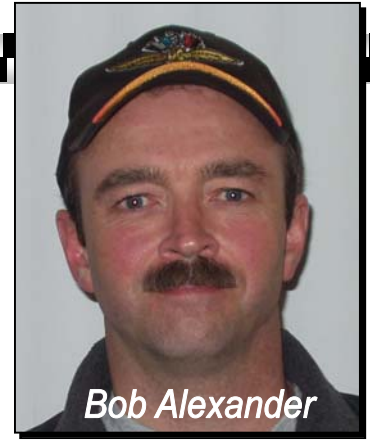
Eventually, we determine that the store doesn't have an AC Delco oil filter for my car, but would I like a Fram filter? "No thanks, I don't want orange," I tell him. Purolator? "Yellow? I don't think so." Now he's sure I'm a crazy old coot. I briefly consider asking for a set of points and a condenser, but then I think better of it and leave, feeling my age, and, I guess, my Pontiac craziness.

As Chevy Chase says in the movie *Caddyshack*, "See your future, be your future." Pontiac may have closed its doors in 2010, but many people forgot about it long ago. Or grew up in a world where it was "same as a Chevy" to most folks. That may be the saddest part of all.

As Always . . .

Your thoughts, suggestions, complaints, comments, letters, and ideas are always welcome. *The Legend* is a publication of the members, by the members, and for the members. So feel free to add your two cents -- articles, reports, and stories from the membership are what this newsletter is all about. My e-mail address is GoatGuyTom@aol.com and my phone number is (856) 439-0314. Feel free to call anytime up to midnight Eastern Time. As they say on TV, operators are standing by to take your call.

From The Prez's Pen



Bob Alexander

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Grille Badges For Concours Award Winners
- Original Owner Recognition
- New Chapter Awards

On numerous occasions over the past five years, I've emphasized the importance of suggestions and feedback from GTOAA members. Though I usually don't get much unless there is a controversial issue, the member suggestions that trickle in from time-to-time are usually very good ideas and the feedback is almost always helpful.

Speaking of good ideas, a few months ago, one of our members who belongs to another nationwide club suggested that we consider grille badges for our Concours award winners. The idea was that this extra award would be a means for an owner to proudly and publicly display the fact that according to the GTOAA, his/her GTO was among the finest in the country and the finest among GTOAA members.

With that in mind, the GTOAA Directors and I considered the idea and decided that such badges should be awarded to Concours Gold award winners in addition to the plaque that each winner receives. We reviewed several designs for the new badges and finally agreed on an oval shape and a distinct and striking design that will feature a portion of our logo and indicate "Concours Gold Award" on the badge.

Members earning "Best of Show," "Best Restored," etc., will also receive a special badge highlighting that fact. Starting next year, repeat winners will receive an add-on for their badge. Also of significance, each badge will have a serial number and thus the item will be carefully tracked by the GTOAA. Badge recipients will not be required to mount the award on their grille or anywhere on

their car if they do not choose to do so. I think those of you who participate in the Concours show will certainly appreciate the badge and I welcome your feedback relative to this new item.

Again, as a result of member feedback, we're going to implement another new program that will provide special recognition. This time the award will be for original owners of 1964-74 GTOs. As you know, the vast majority of us did not maintain ownership of our first GTO for more than a few years. A new model was introduced that we liked better, our family situation changed, or a car was damaged or destroyed in an accident. In each of the aforementioned scenarios, we move on to another vehicle.

Considering this and the fact the newest original GTO is at least 36 years old and the oldest is at least 46 years old, I think that it is worth noting when a GTOAA member still owns the GTO that they bought new so many years ago. Our original owner award will not be a fancy plaque or trophy, but a nice certificate that you can proudly display in your home, your garage or near your car at a show. As soon as the design is approved, hopefully this year, we will distribute this award.

On a final note for this month, to show our appreciation and emphasize the importance of continued chapter support for the GTOAA, we are considering a special chapter award. To properly recognize dedicated and long-standing affiliated chapters at the 2011 Meet, we will initiate the presentation of a new special award or certificate. To be specific, chapters with 10, 15, 20, and 25

years of continuous GTOAA affiliation will be specially highlighted at the Chapter Night. If you haven't heard, Chapter Night is a two-hour event dedicated entirely to our chapters.

Considering the fact that the newest original GTO is 36 years old and the oldest is 46 years old, I think that it is worth noting when a GTOAA member still owns the GTO that they bought new so many years ago.

All chapter-related awards will be presented during Chapter Night and Chapter Coordinator Bill Vantuono will also feature activities from some of our 40+ affiliated chapters. Chapter Night will be a fun and entertaining event that you won't want to miss!

Time to close for this month. I hope to see you in July at the annual convention in Wichita. Please keep sending those ideas and suggestions.



Convention Corner 2010

IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE!

by Gary Gibbs

Because all cars at the 2010 GTOAA convention will be assigned their own, unique indoor space, the deadline for registering a car was set at June 1st. That **deadline to enter a car in the event has been extended** to Friday, June 11th for Popular Vote cars, and Friday, June 18th for Concours cars. Registrations must be RECEIVED by those dates to reserve your car's place indoors at the Convention Center; any cars accepted after those dates may be "display only," if space is still available. Cars registered after May 15th are subject to a late fee, but you can still get your car into the convention and have your own assigned space after June 1st.

Thinking about attending the event, without entering a car? Good news: **there is NO LATE FEE for registered GTOAA participants that do not enter a car in the event!** That's right, if you are not entering a car in the event, you can wait until the last minute to register with no late fee.

What about hotel reservations for those who register late? At this writing, late in April, the host hotel still had a few rooms left; to check on the status of the host hotel room reservations and overflow hotel accommodations visit our website www.gtoaameet.org. You can also call Kay or Jackie at the Hyatt during regular business hours, central time zone, at (316) 613-6284 or (316) 293-1234 or (316) 613-6277. In the evenings or weekends contact any of the following for information about the status of host hotel rooms and over flow hotel accommodations:

Gary (316) 260-1810 or (316) 648-7697 (cell) or e-mail: gary.gibbs@aghlc.com

Don or Janice (316) 747-2772 e-mail: gtocruzz@sbcglobal.net

Les (316) 788-6969 e-mail: trooperles@cox.net

Cap or Robin (620) 564-2639 e-mail: kowz@hbcomm.net

How about those tech sessions and seminar presentations? The 2010 convention will have non-stop presentations daily by experts in their field from 1:00 to 5:00 PM Thursday, and from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM on Friday and 9:00 AM until 4:20 PM on Saturday. Who are some of our presenters?

Jim Wangers will tell us "Who Killed Pontiac?" And how they did it!

Tim Dye, The Extreme Pontiac Memorabilia Collector; will show us and tell us about his extensive collection of all things Pontiac.

Mike Wasson, a vintage Pontiac Tri-Power expert, will educate us about Tri-Power performance and Jeff Lovich (a frequent *Legend* contributor) will show us how to make a 1964-1966 GTO Tri-Power 100-point original in detail.

Thom Sherwood, whose "Rally Reels" column appeared in *Smoke Signals* for a time, will amuse us with a humorous outlook on Pontiacs in the film and entertainment industry. Later, look for a special appearance of (and a separate session about) the (roofless) Pontiac 400 powered 1967 GTO special effects "Flame Car" featured in the 2002 Vin Diesel film *xXx*.

Tom Wilhite, who has built two 10-second race cars out of vintage 1958 and 1959 Pontiacs, will show us how he does it with the cars in the air conditioned convention center -- "How to build a race car to last." Later, Tom will lead a round table discussion of "Racing in the Super Duty Years" that will include Arnie Beswick, Jess Tyree, and other vintage racers.

Jim Mattison of Pontiac Historic Services will inform us about "The State of the Hobby," letting us know why a collector car buyer should "beware" of seller shenanigans. This is a "must see" session that you will not want to miss!

Jim Ewen, a retired Pontiac Designer and illustrator that worked on the early GTO and the first Grand Prix among other successful models, will tell us about the "Wide Track Attack," designing great cars during the wide track era.

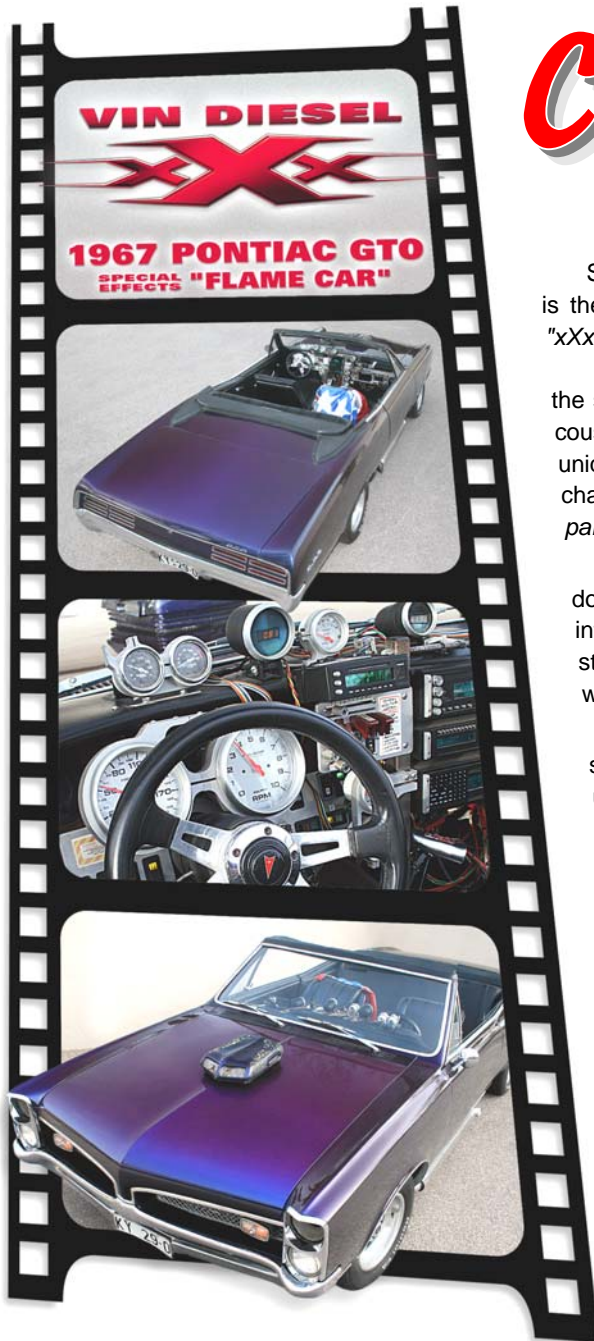
We are also fortunate enough to have great New-Gen GTO presenters: Jon Schwenn, the founder of LS1GTO.com, will show us photos and tell us stories from the design and engineering stages of the 2004-2006 GTO, "Project GMX281," while Chris Nichols of GForce will inform us regarding New-Gen GTO aftermarket performance and reliability products.

And don't forget the AUTOCROSS -- yes, again this year, Pedders is sponsoring the Autocross event at a large parking lot nearby the convention center. It will be Friday morning and feature separate classes for New-Gen and vintage GTOs.

So, IT'S NOT TOO LATE, to make a hotel reservation and register for the 2010 GTOAA Convention in Wichita! But don't wait much longer!

Be sure to check the updated Schedule of Events on the website (www.gtoaameet.org) for the latest schedule changes.

Convention Feature



Scheduled to make its first-ever GTOAA convention appearance in Wichita in July is the actual special effects "Flame Car" 1967 GTO from the 2002 blockbuster film "xXx" starring Vin Diesel.

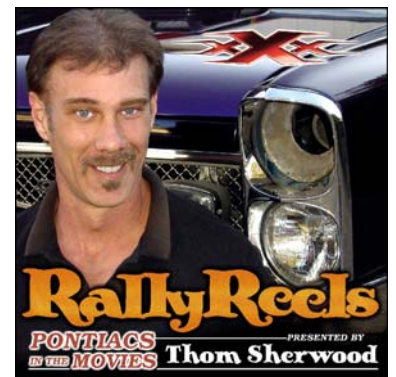
Thom Sherwood, a GTOAA member since 1989, proudly explains that this is *NOT* the same GTO that you may have seen at previous national events. It is its roofless cousin (and, yes, this is a *real* GTO with 400 Pontiac cubes!) outfitted with some unique Hollywood hardware that, in the film's finale, helps Diesel's secret agent character save the world. You know... typical things like *rockets, a flame thrower, a parachute, and ballistic weapons!*

Thom has been the car's custodian since 2005, and has been unrelentingly documenting the car's fascinating buildup and history. His research has netted interviews with dozens of key individuals associated with the film plus their amazing stories and behind-the-scenes photography. Musclecar and movie fans everywhere will be able to enjoy those tales in his upcoming book, "*Secret Agent G.T.O.*"

Convention attendees, however, will be able to get a sneak peak at the "xXx" story during one of two separate presentations that Thom will host in Wichita. First up will be "*Rally Reels Live!*" highlighting some landmark appearances of various Pontiac and GMC vehicles in film and television as told with a humorous edge. Be prepared for fun, Hollywood trivia, and prizes!

Second will be the technical seminar debut of "*Secret Agent G.T.O.*" which includes a top-secret briefing (slide presentation) of the behind-the-scenes "xXx" story plus an intimate "for your eyes only" look at the details of the Flame Car itself. For all you wannabe spies, be sure to bring your trench coat, dark shades, and a sense of adventure!

Please check your convention agenda and announcements for the official date, times, and locations of these and other great seminars.





by Gerry & Cindy Zanger

You might ask, “What was meant to be?” To answer that question, another question should be asked. “What are the chances of Gerry Zanger and his wife Cindy locating a 1971 Lucerne Blue Pontiac Lemans GT-37 in 2009 in excellent condition and almost identical to the 1971 Lucerne Blue Pontiac Lemans GT-37 they owned from 1971 to 1978?”

To answer that question, a third question should be asked. “Exactly how rare is a Pontiac Lemans GT-37?” Very rare! The GT-37 was introduced in the middle of the 1970 model year with only 1,419 cars assembled. In 1971, the final production year for GT-37s, only 5,802 were built.

Pontiac Motor Division introduced the GT-37 as a low-cost alternative to the GTO and to help keep skyrocketing insurance costs in check. This stripped down muscle car typically sold for \$300 to \$500 less than the GTO. Sometimes referred to as the “Poor Man’s GTO,” GT-37s were made with bench seats only and came standard with vinyl floor covering instead of carpeting and no floor insulation to minimize heat and sound. Elimination of the hood insulation pad, the Pontiac emblem in the front grille and one of the interior coat hooks were other ways to cut costs. The 350-2bbl

V8 engine came standard in the GT-37 as another cost saver, with the 400 and 455 cubic inch GTO engines offered as options to those who desired more power. These cost cutting ideas also reduced weight, which in theory gave the GT-37 an advantage over a GTO with a comparable engine size.

The GT-37 was a base model T-37 with the WU2 GT option that consisted of:

- Vinyl accent stripes
- Rally II wheels - less trim rings
- G70X14 white letter tires
- Dual exhaust with chrome extensions
- Heavy duty 3 speed manual floor shift transmission with Hurst shifter
- Body color outside mirrors – LH remote
- Locking hood pins
- GT decals on front fender
- GT-37 nameplate on deck lid

In June of 1971, Gerry Zanger returned to his home in Winamac, Indiana from Izmir, Turkey after serving three years in the U.S. Army. Still single and 21 years old, one of his first priorities was to buy a new car. With savings from the Army totaling all of \$3,200, he spotted a new Lucerne Blue GT-37 with blue cloth and vinyl interior in his price range at the local Pontiac dealership. Except for the WU2 GT option package,

the car was standard in every way with a sticker price of slightly more than \$3,400. Equipped with the standard 350 2-bbl engine, the only extra options on the car were the AM push button radio, rear seat speaker, and power steering. Despite the lack of desirable options, the car’s brilliant Lucerne Blue finish and silver sword stripes were enough to satisfy Gerry. The “high” sticker price required some negotiation after which Gerry purchased the car for \$2,996 cash.

Two months later Gerry met Cindy, his future wife. They enjoyed many Saturday nights cruising through town in his GT-37 with the windows down and the AM radio turned up. Sunday afternoon rides in the country and trips to the Indianapolis 500 infield on race days were all part of their dating experience. They married in 1972 and continued driving



the GT-37 until 1978 when it was traded in for a new yellow Chevy van. However, as the years passed, Gerry regretted their decision to part with his car and kept his eyes open for another one.

Thirty-one years later, in June of 2009, Gerry's son called from California to tell him that there was a 1971 Lucerne Blue Pontiac Lemans GT-37 with silver sword stripes for sale on the Internet. After many phone conversations with Paul Lesiczka, the current owner, Gerry flew from Arkansas to New Hampshire to look at the car. The car was in pristine condition and had gone through a remarkable restoration. It had the original, numbers matching engine and drive train, and with the exception of a few options, was a near duplicate to the first GT-37 that Gerry had owned. Unlike the standard 350 2-bbl engine in the first GT-37, this car had the more desirable 400 4-bbl, 300 horsepower engine of which only 572 were made. The car was

purchased from Paul and his wife Lynn and came with extensive documentation, including all PHS documents.

The GT-37 began its long journey to Fayetteville, Arkansas on April 26, 1971 in Pontiac, Michigan and was delivered to Brown County Motors in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The original sticker price was \$3,720.34. In addition to the WU2 GT option, the following options were also included:

- 400 4-bbl V-8 with 300 horsepower
- 3.55 Safe-T-Track differential
- Push button AM radio
- Rear seat speaker
- Chrome door edge guards
- Chrome wheel moldings
- Power steering
- Floor mats
- Soft ray tinted windows
- Ride handling option, including springs and shocks
- Rally gauge cluster with clock



Over the course of the next 18 years, the car was sold to a friend of the original owner who then sold it to the original owner's son. In June of 1989, responding to a newspaper ad in the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, Richard Tessmer of Schofield, WI, purchased the car from the original owner, who was selling it for his son. The GT-37 had 101,385 miles at the time. It had been extremely well cared for with most of the original parts still intact. A set of aftermarket headers and an aftermarket stereo system were the only additions not original to the car. Shortly after Richard purchased the car, he received a note from the previous owner stating, "Take good care of what used to be my pride and joy."

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And that's exactly what Richard did and more. For the next ten years, he kept the car in a garage and drove it only on weekends. During that time, Richard collected used and NOS parts and began an extensive restoration process in the fall of 1999. The car was taken to a local body shop, disassembled, and then stripped to bare metal. It was painted in the original Lucerne Blue in base coat/clear coat, wet sanded and buffed to a show quality finish. Richard also had the body shop paint the engine compartment's inner fenders, firewall and radiator core support with the correct semi-gloss paint.

Ten months later, in August of 2000, Richard brought the car home and continued the restoration process in his garage. He replaced the aftermarket headers with the original exhaust manifolds and installed a totally new exhaust system with NOS chrome extensions. He detailed the engine compartment and rebuilt the original alternator. He also installed a new fuel pump, starter, water pump, and hoses. The trunk and the interior were detailed and new carpeting was installed. A set of Cragar wheels was the only non-stock item that Richard added to the car during the time he owned it.

At this point, the finished GT-37 was ready to show. In the summer of 2001, Richard drove it from his home in

central Wisconsin to both the POCI and GTOAA shows held in Red Wing, Minnesota, where it won first place in the Popular Vote class in both shows. In 2002, it also placed first in class at the Don Miller Pontiac POCI show, the last time that Richard showed his car. In May of 2004, Richard decided to sell his GT-37 and placed a very extensive and detailed ten-page ad on eBay.

Paul Lesiczka, a Pontiac collector and restorer, was so impressed with the detail of the eBay ad and with the car's rarity that on June 7, 2004 he purchased the car sight unseen and had it transported from Wisconsin to his home in Plaistow, New Hampshire. After taking possession of this outstanding vehicle, Paul decided to take it to the next level by removing the entire drive train and performing a concours restoration by completely detailing the engine, transmission, driveshaft, and rear differential. Paul also spent considerable time and effort on the suspension and brakes, detailing the trunk, installing a new package tray, and replacing the gas tank.

While Paul owned the car, it was a serious show contender, winning a Best-In-Show Award at the Bay State Antique

Auto Club's Annual Show on the lawn of the Endicott Estate in Dedham, Massachusetts. Later in Topsfield, Massachusetts at the North Shore Old Car Club Event, Paul's GT-37 scored 394 points out of a possible 400. And if that was not enough, in January 2006 Paul trailered the GT-37 to the annual World of Wheels indoor show at the Bayside Exposition Center in Boston where it was awarded a Best-In-Show award in class with special accolades and recognition for Best Engine in a restored class.



Whether the GT-37 participated in a local cruise night with Paul and his wife Lynn or judged in a show, Paul continued to educate judges and spectators alike on this rare car. With the exception of a few Pontiac connoisseurs, most had never seen a GT-37.

In April of 2006 Paul said goodbye to the GT-37 when he sold it to a new owner in Chesterfield, Virginia, who



then sold it to a car dealer in Richmond, Virginia in June of 2008, who then sold it back to Paul in November of 2008. The GT-37 returned to Paul's home in New Hampshire where he started making plans, at the request of Pontiac historian John Sawruk, to show the car at the POCI/ GTOAA Co-Venture in Dayton, Ohio in July of 2009. However, that never happened. Instead, Paul sold the GT-37 to Gerry and Cindy Zanger, completing its long journey to Fayetteville, AR in August of 2009.

In the few months they have owned the car, Gerry and Cindy have joined Richard Tessmer and Paul Lesiczka in taking their GT-37 to the next level. Concentrating on the car's interior, the seat covers have been replaced with the same blue NOS vinyl and cloth fabric. Rear seat side panels have been recovered with duplicate blue NOS vinyl while the headliner, front door panels, and dash remain original. A set of refin-



1971

ished 14 X 7 Rally II wheels and white letter tires complete the original overall appearance of the car, which is nothing less than stunning.

You might ask, "What has this car done for its new owners?" Despite its showroom appearance, their GT-37 is not a "trailer queen." Believing a car is meant to be driven, Gerry and his wife Cindy enjoy taking a weekend cruise with the windows rolled down and '70s music turned up, just as they did nearly 40 years ago with their first GT-37. Taking a step back in time, they truly feel that this "was meant to be."



2010

As a side note, Gerry and Cindy are planning to bring their GT-37 to the GTOAA convention in Wichita this July. Stop by and say hello.

Would you like your GTO featured in *The Legend*? We think you would! For details on how to proceed please contact:

Tom Szymczyk, Editor
Phone: (856) 439-0314
E-Mail: GoatGuyTom@aol.com

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Love Letters From Pontiac About Pontiac

excerpted by Marge Sawruk from letters to her originally penned by John M. Sawruk

July 1, 1967

I had an interesting experience yesterday. We took out a '67 GTO for a high rpm test (the pig only turned 5,750 rpm) It had a '68 experimental engine in it. After the test was over we were cruising on the freeway returning to the engineering building. One exit away while doing 45 or 50 mph and 2,200 rpm the engine exploded. Arrgh. What a mess! We had to call our repair shop and be towed in. It was an "old," by our standards, engine, so it did better than expected. It will be torn down Monday to try to determine what happened. You can tell your brother that our first inspection from outside the engine makes it look like an oil pan failure -- namely several connecting rods are through it. Have to have the oil pan boys shape up! (And make oil pans out of armor plate!)

I no sooner returned to the office when I am handed my next assignment. Drive a '67 2+2 on the freeway for quite a way at a high rpm. I have been assured that the engine is most likely going to blow up. One of the other engineers will follow in a chase car which has a big motor and a strong tow rope. Oh, by the way, the engine which blew up was worth \$50,000. Where else could you destroy a \$50,000 piece of equipment and have people be happy about it (because they feel something is learned from it).

The Firebird looks the same and does not have disappearing wipers.

July 6, 1967

I now realize that the reason Pontiac has about the smallest engineering dept. is because everyone works like a dog -- but I like it anyway.

The reason the 88V-400A2 fell apart (spell that "blew up") was that a bearing on a rod journal froze up. This was caused by the fact that when this GTO engine was built, someone goofed and installed a 326 oil pump. For about 20 cents a \$50,000 engine is shot.

Piece of connecting rod of \$50,000 engine (one of 10 pieces of engine) enclosed. I would have sent a piece of the bearing, but it is permanently fried onto the crankshaft). I have been assigned to determine what type of oil will be used in cars (new) when they are assembled. This affects about 1 million cars only. The fact that I am given this responsibility should indicate how much has to be done here.

July 16, 1967

As long a magazine writers do things like missing shifts and blowing up clutches and engines, we will be busy on Saturday trying to straighten out the cars for the "big shots" on the fourteenth floor.

I am learning an awful lot about what cars will be like in later years. I had a Catalina the other day that had a 1971 driveline in it. It felt alright. On the other hand we have a station wagon with the 1970 suspension and steering in it and it is a disaster.

July 18, 1967

See John drive the "PFST" (try to pronounce that!) yesterday. (*editor's note: PFST stands for "Pontiac Firebird Sprint Turismo" which was a modified Sprint Six Firebird coupe*). It had the Webers put back on. It is an engine group car -- the only other group connected with it is chassis development and

they haven't done too much with it. See all the telephone repairmen turn to see what is coming. Hear the PFST go "Rump-rump." See the Bell Tel men gape. See the PFST fly for a six. It is unreal! Could it be that the exhaust is just a little loud? Well, yes, it does have mufflers even if it doesn't sound like it.

July 22, 1967

This project involving which break-in oil should be used in our cars has turned out to be much bigger than I expected.

Ha-Ha, ha-ha. HA-HA! See the pretty piece of cast iron. It is called a high flo, high-rev engine. Look at the funny camshaft -- it has those old, ridiculous mechanical lifters. Look at those funny pipes on the side of the heads. They are called tubing headers. They cannot be good because they make a lot of noise. See the funny looking things on top of the engine. These are called dual four-barrel carbs. See the funny piece of cast iron turn 7,200 rpm. See the funny HP reading. It is not a racing engine. It is for people who wish for superior performance in their car. Such people as Curtis Turner, Marvin Panch, etc. Heh-heh, ha-ha, and so forth.

See the funny car. It is bigger than a Tempest but smaller than a Pontiac. What can it be? Ha-ha, ha-ha, HA-HA (it isn't a Firebird either).

We are busier than ever. This hush-hush Hi-Flo thing is taking up a lot of time, we are rejoicing because we finally got a Ram-Air to stay together for 25,000 miles (the warranty is 50,000 miles, however) and there is a hot new project which involves something called the xx (censored) which occurs once a



year in the state of xx (censored) in the beginning of the year, which involves xx (forbidden word) which someone you know very well goes to every year. Unfortunately I have to admit, our chances of being able to do something spectacular in this xx (forbidden word) are next to nil unless some kind of miracle occurs, which is unlikely.

Blah to Ford. We sent Skip McCully, an engine development engineer, one of the original Ram Chargers, and one of my friends here, to try to buy a 427 Fairlane to compare against our xxx cu. in GTO, ha-ha. Good luck. He was investigated and was told he was unable to order one because he didn't have a NASCAR license. We sent other people down and they were told the same thing. It seems it is a "limited production, special order, limited availability engine." Ford advertising is apparently pushing a hot-air engine. Remove one worry from PMD's head.

July 24, 1967

There is no 448 cu. in. V-8 as all the books are predicting. There are some other goody engines coming, however, with more goodies to follow in '69.

The F-bird will not have three 2-bbbs at this moment. This is in opposition to *Motor Trend's* prediction. The PFST always needs new parts, mainly because it is driven so hard -- like new rear axles, trans, etc.

July 28, 1967

I got to drive in the cold room today. It was 60 below zero. We are doing carb checks on the '68 models. The test is as follows: the car is allowed to soak in the cold for 16 hours to 3 days; we get in

and try to start it. We crank until it starts -- the battery is given no rest.

The GTO we had today took eight seconds to start and this was considered poor! Immediately after it starts the throttle is floored. This is exceptionally good for engine life. The severity of the test here is amazing. The test then continues on through a set schedule.

I took a '68 GTO and a '69 Sprint out on the road and it is amazing how few people notice them -- but the ones that do go crazy. The '68 GTO has to be one of the best-looking cars ever made.

You can tell your brother the PFST put out 253 honest HP when it had the 230 cu. in. engine. It now has an xxx cu. in OHC; it flies. We also have something going which I do not consider fantastic, but which is interesting. It is a censored. We also have a censored censored which looks like a disaster, but is admittedly a good idea, don't you agree?

July 29, 1967

I had some fun the other day. Hartzell & I went out in a '67 LeMans with a '68 xxx HO cu. in engine, with me driving. On Joslyn Ave., where the

engineering building is, we stopped for a light. Next to us appears a '67 LeMans with a 326 HO engine. Hear the rump-rump. See Hartzell and me wipe out the stock '67. See the surprised face in the rearview mirror grow smaller. Ha-ha.

You can tell your brother that it is alright that Curtis Turner isn't racing, because Pontiac isn't either. Ho-ho. I can't wait for the fun to begin and it will if nothing comes along to mess it up.

We ran the first '69 engine last week. It is a 428 HO and it put out quite a bit of HP on the engine dyno. The first '68½ Ram Air will be running this week in a dyno room and I will get to be there to observe it. I have also found out that the GTO engines are conservatively rated -- and the present Ram-Air is super conservative at 360 HP in the GTO and 325 in the F-car, although each uses the same engine. It actually puts out CENSORED horsepower!

We thank Marge for transcribing all this material from John's original letters. There will be more to follow in upcoming issues of *The Legend*, so stay tuned.

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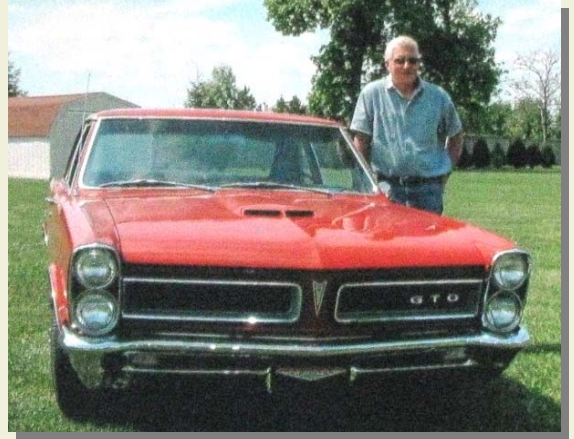
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Now & Then

Our "Now & Then" series showcases GTOAA members' cars from the early days of ownership contrasted with their current GTOs. To be considered for future segments, send good quality digital photos (above 500 MB) of your current GTO along with good quality scans of your original photos (please don't send your original prints) via e-mail to GoatGuyTom@aol.com. Include some info about yourself and where and when the photos were taken. A couple paragraphs would be nice, more if you want.



On the left is a picture of Richard Hester's first 1965 GTO, which he bought in 1966. It is a Midnight Blue, 2 door hard-top with a 4-speed and 4-barrel. As a lot of other guys did, he sold it a few years later for something else. In 2006 he got back into GTOs when he bought a red '65 2-door post with Tri-Power and a 4-speed in the photo on the right. He kept that car about three years then sold it. He now owns a red 1964 GTO 2-door post with Tri-Power and a 4-speed pictured below. Rich finishes up with, "I looked long and hard but I finally got the one I wanted."



CONVENTION REMINDERS FOR CHAPTERS

Chapters – don't forget you have two chances to strut your stuff at this year's convention.

You can bring a **Chapter Display**, showcasing your club's history and accomplishments, club banner, awards, whatever. Be imaginative and show the world what a GRRRRRreat group you have.

Or, you can show off your chapter's T-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, or whatever in our **Chapter Apparel** contest.

We recognize that not every chapter can bring an entire club display to the Nationals, especially if the representative(s) of that club are flying to the Meet. But everyone can bring an extra club T-shirt or hat with them, regardless of how they travel to the convention. Some basic rules:

- A club may enter up to 3 apparel items.
- Any item entered must have the club name or logo on it.

So let's have a great display of club apparel and other items at this year's convention!

Radio Repair

Do You Listen To The Ads?

by Tom Oxler

At one of our Gateway GTO Club meetings last year, I stated that I was going to send the old AM-FM radio from my '66 GTO to someone back east who advertised he would replace all of the old capacitors and make my radio as good as new all for \$190 plus shipping. It sort of made sense to me at the time as many capacitors contain an electrolyte which is sometimes a liquid and I assumed that over time, the electrolyte would dry up and that was causing my radio to "drift" making me constantly adjust the station.

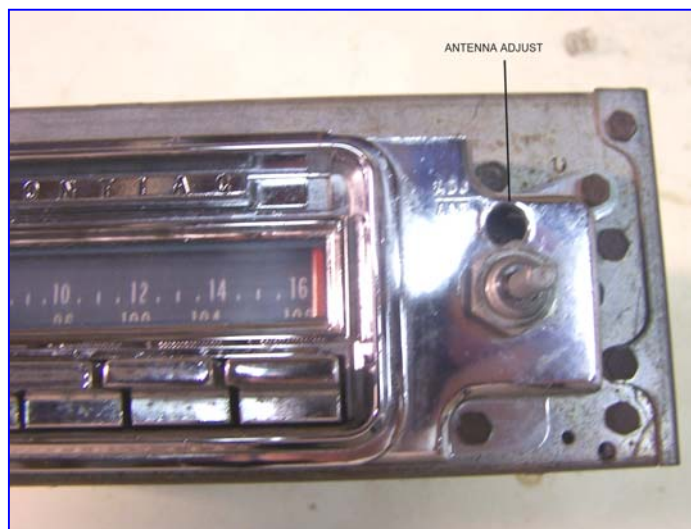
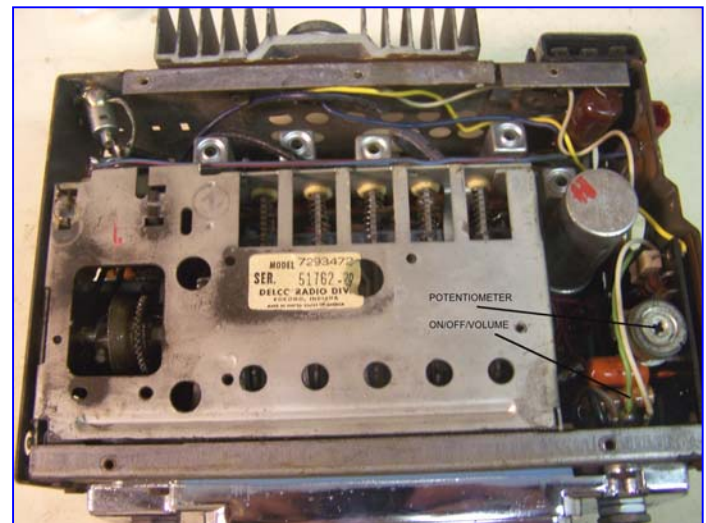
I pulled the radio a while ago and was talking with one of our "resident experts," John Novelli, about it. John said that he was skeptical about the radio repair people claiming the need to replace all of the capacitors as he thought they were all ceramic and thus would not dry out. He said all it probably needed was some contact cleaner and it would be as good as new.

I went to Radio Shack and purchased some contact cleaner and lubricant and sprayed the on/off/volume control, the AM/FM switch, one potentiometer located on the circuit board and the antenna trimmer reachable from the face plate. I wanted to try it out so I called John and he said to bring it over as he had his radio on his work bench running on a battery and speaker and to bring mine over to try it out.

Well, it worked great. No scratches as you turn the volume control or switch from AM to FM and after leaving it play for a while, no more drifting off station. As we were talking about radios, John got out his manual on GM car radios and sure enough, all of the capacitors were ceramic and none of them really needed to be replaced. All the old radio needed was a good cleaning and a lube job.

As we looked at the manual, we noticed that my radio was out of a '67 GTO and John's radio was out of a '66 GTO. I have a '66 GTO and John has a '67 GTO. Do you see a "deal" coming? Yes, we swapped radios and we both are very happy.

This episode is exactly why I joined GTOAA and the Gateway GTO Club. There is always someone willing to help you when you are not sure what you are doing or know how to fix something. Thanks John for all of your help and advice.



To the **GTOAA ...**

I'm sorry, but at 91 I just can't make it up that mountain any more. The motor runs but my chassis and suspension just don't cut it! Also, I've developed serious allergies to airports and the deadly TSA virus. While I'll miss the conventions and our meetings, what I'll really regret most is leaving that fun to Wangers and all the rest of you other young people.

Art Fitzpatrick



P.S. But I'm still in business, selling prints and painting car pictures. Prints range in price from \$85 to \$275, and you can see over 200 of them on the website. If you don't see exactly what you want there you can ask me about it.

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*Jen Lipka's 2006 GTO
by Bill Vantuono*

Virginia Beach native Jennifer Lipka loves puzzles, ceramics, baking, shopping – and performing smoky burn-outs in “Elaine,” her Torrid Red 2006 A4 GTO, before flying down the quarter mile. “I love my GTO like I have never loved a car,” she says. “Even my friends know that she’s very special to me, and that no one better hurt her or they will have to deal with me.”

Jen’s deep-seated feelings for her GTO are rooted in a profound personal loss. In April 2007, her husband Frank, 54, a car enthusiast like his wife, died unexpectedly. The money she used to purchase the car came from his life insurance policy. “I consider my GTO a gift from him,” she says. “The GTO is very special to me for that reason, and I know he would have wanted me to have it, although I’m sure he would have objected to me wanting to drive it every day if he were here.”

Jen’s son Robert Fenimore, president of the GTO Owner’s Association of Tidewater (757GOAT) chapter (Jen is club secretary), played a major role in her decision to acquire this GTO. “Robert had been admiring the new GTO since he saw the New Generation concept car,” she recalls. “He bought every

car magazine he saw it in, and I heard about it for years. I have always loved speed and fast cars and was intrigued by the GTO, but felt it was out of my price range. The only fast car I had owned was a Ford Thunderbird Super Coupe. It was very fast and I loved it, but I eventually gave it to Frank to drive. When he died, I felt I needed to replace my Mercury Cougar.”

Robert, recently discharged from the U.S. Marines after four years in the infantry (including two tours in Iraq), also owns a late-model GTO. He kept encouraging his mom to look at the 2006 GTO. “One December afternoon, we were riding down Virginia Beach Boulevard, which is lined with car dealerships. I happened to see this bright red GTO parked in front of a showroom. I hollered for Robert to make a U-turn and go back. We test drove the car and I fell in love with it, so we went back to the dealership. I paid cash. Elaine is the first Pontiac I have ever owned.”

Jen’s first experience with her GTO was a little nerve-wracking. After Jen had paid for her new ride and was leaving the dealership, the salesman warned her “to be careful because he had previously sold one to a lady and she had

pulled out of the lot and wrecked it,” she says. “I was fine until he said that, then I got nervous. The last thing I wanted to do was wreck my brand new car!”

“That evening, even though it was raining, I decided I really needed to know how to handle the GTO in any weather condition. Robert and I decided we would go to an empty parking lot so he could show me a few things. What better parking lot than that of our church? When we got there, the first thing Robert did was put the car into a spin and show me how to recover. I got in the driver’s seat and gave it a whirl. It was awesome – I had so much fun sliding around on the wet pavement! I did it with and without the traction control engaged so I could see how the car would feel and react.”



The next day was Sunday. Jen and Robert headed to church. Her father greeted them at the front door and asked about her GTO. "I said, 'I love it!'" she recalls. "Just then a police car pulled into the parking lot, and my dad, referring to it, said, 'There he is.' I said, 'Who?'" He replied, 'Oh, the police. They are out here all the time because you would not believe the things that go on in this parking lot when no one is here.' It felt like my heart stopped for a minute, but then I just smiled at my dad and said, 'Really!'



I chuckled the entire day about that because my dad had no idea what I had done the night before!"

The real fun soon followed. With Robert's help, Jen did some basic modifications to help Elaine's 6.0L, 400-hp LS2 reach its full potential. She installed SLP headers and an SLP catback exhaust system with the stock stainless steel exhaust tips. She then added a Volant Cold Air intake, which Robert insulated. "The insulation allows my IAT (intake air temp) to stay near ambient, reducing heat soak and allowing more power all the time," she notes. "I also have MSD superconductor spark plug wires, along with NKG TR5 iridium spark plugs."

Jen also had a dyno tune done by a local LS-series engine tuner, but the results were "lacking." So she took Elaine to Jerry Klaus of Klaus Performance Engineering (GTOAA's 2004-2006 Tech-

nical Advisor), who did a street tune under actual driving conditions.

Jen, Payroll Manager at Lake Taylor Transitional Care Hospital in Norfolk, and her GTO regularly drag race at Virginia Motorsports Park. "I was really nervous the very first time. I did a really pitiful burnout because I was so worried I would wreck the car. I have since perfected my burnout. With my previous tune, my best time was a 13.1 ET @ 106 MPH. Now, with Jerry Klaus's tune, I am looking forward to some 12-second



time slips." Jen has more modifications planned, including having Robert port the GTO's factory LS2 intake manifold and install a mild cam.

Jen enjoys the many activities in which 757GOAT participates. "We do a wide variety of events including track rentals, local car shows, and Pontiacs in the Park," she says. "We also do monthly cruises to a variety of places. It is so enjoyable to see the faces of people as we all roar by while out on a cruise. I think most people aren't familiar with the new GTO, and when they see us all out together they stop and stare or come up and ask about our cars."

This year will be Jen and Elaine's first show season. "I had always thought that a car had to be unique to show it," she says. "Now I realize that, because of Pontiac's shutdown, I do have a unique car. This year I plan on entering a few shows to see how I do. I hope to win at least one trophy. Who knows? I may catch the bug and never want to stop." That's exactly how Frank would have wanted it.

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