

Member Spotlight

Bob Windal

By Monica Ledwon

Longtime member, Bob Windal, has been a steadfast worker in club events and a faithful meeting attendee for over twenty years. His classic green '70 Buick GS 455 convertible is his signature set of wheels.

Bob was born in Chicago Heights but moved at age four to Webster Groves. After moving again to deeper south county with his family and four sisters, he ended his high school years at Lindbergh High.

He was only thirteen years old when he bought his first mode of transportation, a Yamaha 100. Later at 14 he procured a '66 Chevy Carryall and had a legal aged friend act as his driver to take the bikes out to the countryside to ride the hills together.



Bob and Fiancé, Barb Rehling, at the Love Park picnic.

Bob has held a variety of jobs throughout his life and was able to experience a variety of cars. When he was a cook at Hacienda he was able to buy a '69 Charger 383 Magnum. Working at ABS Security he drove a '76 Honda CVCC and got an incredible 55 miles to the gallon during the gas crunch. He went on to own a '73 Nova SS, a '70 Porsche, and '66 Mustang.

For a while he took a break from a conventional lifestyle. He hitchhiked around the country as a freewheeling man. Then, he was hired at Stenson Electric, a generator manufacturing company where he held the record in most alternators produced on the line. After leaving Stenson he became an electrician at Burkhold Electric. But it was there that his back was damaged moving a transformer which then scaled back his work life.

Throughout the years, his family owned the 1970 GS, a car purchased by his uncle who later gave it Bob's father. Bob drove it occasionally and kept all its maintenance up to a gearhead standard. He remembers his grandpa saying of the car, "You don't need air conditioning with a convertible". Eventually, as time went on, Bob became the owner of the car. It has 176,000 miles on the odometer now and the engine has not been rebuilt. Bob's goal is to keep the car as original as possible. Despite its being somewhat inundated more than once during the heavy rains that caused flooding around his home in Kirkwood, Bob always gets the GS back on the road.

At the BCA Nationals in 1997, Bob met the officers at that time of the Gateway Chapter. Once joining, he attended meetings at Chuck-a-Burger on the Rock Rd. He helped other members such as Hank Degelman, rebuilding motors and refurbishing interiors on his cars. Bob says it was here, that being in our club, he met the nicest people ever, family style people.

His other daily classic drivers are a '96 GMC Crew Cab Sierra and a rare '93 Chevy Step Side Sport partially built with fiberglass body parts. He is enjoying a relaxed lifestyle now taking care of his mom during the week with sisters filling in for the weekends.

Bob's hobbies include collecting old radios and doing charity work for Kids with Cancer. He is an all-around handyman and enjoys helping everybody with their cars from body work to engine to interior refinishing. When Bob walks into our meetings, the room lights up with his presence and his witticisms of the moment every time!

