

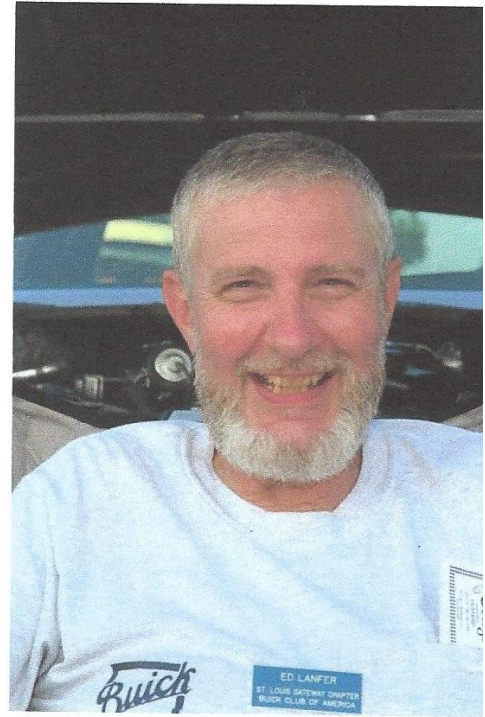
Member Spotlight

Ed Lanfer

By Monica Ledwon

This month's Gazette features Ed Lanfer, an easygoing guy who is not seen often at meetings but is routinely amicable and helpful. When my '85 Regal needed an idler arm a few years ago, he was spot on in getting me the correct part from a Moog warehouse that was being cleaned out where he worked. Ed is an old-time member who's come back.

Ed was born and raised in the city of St. Louis and attended St. Joan of Arc grades K - 8 and graduated high school from the intellectually renown Augustinian Academy. Growing up his interest in cars began quite early, sitting on his Grandma's front porch. He knew many of the makes by 6 years of age, so he would count Fords and Chevys driving by in a five or ten minute time period to determine the winning brand.



The family car was '54 Chevy Bel Air 2 door. And, after he gained a little brother, the coupe would not do. So, Ed began scoping out possibilities for his dad and was smitten with the 1956 Chrysler simply because of its great rear end styling. After harping on his dad to buy this automobile, which was too much for the family budget, Ed got the car—a 1956 toy hobby model to assemble himself!

They finally did go shopping for a four-door vehicle and hit every dealership up and down Kingshighway in one single night. Ed's dad settled on a '57 Chevy Bel Air sedan stripped down with no options other than a radio and a heater. But the car did have the venerable V-8 engine. Ed passed his driver's license test on the first try in this Chevy.

By serendipity, Ed did not serve during the Vietnam War years. Even though he was ranked 1A, his birthday date number came up 326. So, he went on to Washington University here in St. Louis and received a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering. Since he'd worked part time for Moog during school, he easily transferred to fulltime in 1970 and began a thirty plus year career. There he did a variety of tasks in parts service from sketching new parts for OEM books to cataloging parts to traveling around the

country working as a contract vendor. Ed installed prototype parts on cars in a lab at for Moog that tested new parts on employees' cars for research. He still has the old OEM parts books from GM Ford and Chrysler from the 60's to the 80's.

For many years Ed had a '61 Dodge wagon as a daily driver to which he added the luxury of an aftermarket under the dash AC unit. His first really cool car was a '66 Catalina purchased from Mr. Moog's son-in-law in 1970.

In 1993 Ed went to a Buick Club meeting without a Buick at the old Rock Rd. Chuck a Burger and met Jeff Watkins who was director at that time. By getting to know the members of our club, Ed bought his first Buick. It was member Ralph Knost's '62 2dr Skylark. Although not road worthy with the tranny and brakes out, he still owns it today. Ed went on to hold the position of Assistant Director for the club from 1998 to 1999 when we used to meet at Lemmon's.

Ed's interest in Buicks grew and he owned '67 and '68 Electra 225s for a time. When taking the '68 to the BCA National in Plano TX in 04, he won the Driven Award for driving an all original condition vehicle to the show. But he also drifted to Chrysler products. In 1997, when a coworker at Moog told him about a sealed bid auction for a 1975 Plymouth Fury station wagon at an estate sale in a Clayton highrise, Ed submitted his amount and won. Today he keeps the Fury in its good original running condition as when he bought it. But then his interest turned to the long-gone unique American Motors line of Gremlins and Pacers. He began several journeys collecting them.

He started with buying a '78 dark green Gremlin. When driving it to get a haircut, he was followed by a persistent purple Gremlin. The driver chased him down to ask him to join the AMC club. After that, the chase was on for Ed.


In 2005, working weekends part time at Fiesta Car Storage on North Kingshighway, he spied a rare '77 Pacer wagon in deep maroon. The car had been abandoned, so he was able to buy it at a low price. A friend found him another '77 Pacer wagon bright red with woodgrain side panel inserts setting in a scrap yard in Jefferson City. And, finally in Sparta, Missouri, he found a green '76 Pacer coupe setting out in a field for 10 years. Though these vehicles do not run, Ed cherishes their vintage 70's design and history.

Ed was briefly married and has a daughter 35 and a son 38 who gave him five grandchildren. Ed has moved around in St. Louis City and County throughout his life and now has settled into retirement in Sullivan, Missouri. He and his daughter with three children live in the same apartment complex. So, grandparenting duties keep him busy daily. His other hobbies are organizing and collecting automobile literature and being a member of the national chapters of the Plymouth, Chrysler, and Desoto Clubs. Though Ed lost a contact with the Gateway Chapter for some years, in 2018 he re-joined and is once again listed in our roster. We're looking forward to meeting up with him again.

2004 NATIONAL MEET - PLANO, TEXAS

Drivers

CLASS



183

ENTRY NO.

1968

YEAR

Electra


MODEL

Brown

COLOR

Ed Lanfer

OWNER'S NAME



27440

BCA #

St. Louis

CITY

MO

STATE

