

Member Spotlight

Kitty Lasinski

By Monica Ledwon

This month's Member Spotlight shines on Kitty Lasinski, wife and partner in loving classic cars with John Lasinski. Kitty's smiling face and cascading long brown hair is her trademark appearance at our monthly meetings and events.

Kitty was born and raised in St. Louis and attended Parkway North Senior High School. After graduation she went on to Mizzou with a 1976 Super Beetle to sprint around campus and attain a degree in Media and Communications.

Due to her father's model preference, Kitty experienced a long line of AMC products throughout her upbringing.

She remembers having a Matador and the funky models such as the Green Hornet and the Gremlin Levi version. Burned in her memory is the Levi Gremlin's riveted denim interior which would burn your rear end on a hot sunny day.

As a young woman, Kitty would hang out at Parties in the Park in Clayton with friends who had other friends and met her future husband, John. They both had an affinity towards classic rock music and classic cars and married one year later in 2001.

John inspired her more to modify her daily driver, a purple PT Cruiser. They tricked it out with a lowered body, 18" wheels and painted flames swirled on the body panels.

Settling into her role as John's sidekick, they drove a '56 Chevy Wagon as their first classic ride. But later, when visiting Fast Lane Classic cars, they were smitten with a fire engine red '71 GS Buick convertible. It had been modified with a Stage I engine and was in beautiful, eye-catching shape with white leather interior and white top.



Visiting local cruises with their hot Buick was John and Kitty's fun time past time. By chance, when pulling into one of the Fenton Cruise nights, they met the original owner of their red GS. He introduced himself and told them it was he who had transplanted the Stage I into their car. And, if they perhaps wanted the original engine back, it was in his garage at home! So, John took his car back to a stock 455 Buick. I asked Kitty what she like most about the family muscle car and she replied:

"I love the look and the power of the old muscle car Buicks. Our 455 is an awesome car for a long cruise, but it does a great burnout, too. :-) We always get comments wherever we go on the Ferrari red paint - in fact, that's what caught Dennis Gage's eye at the GS Buick Nationals the year he interviewed John and featured our GS on My Classic Car."

In 2003, being the adventurers that they are, John and Kitty took their GS on a partial Power Tour. Kitty was even expecting at that time her first born daughter, Sabina. Due to the crawl of traffic through the small towns surrounding New Orleans and the scorching southern temps, the Buick started overheating. They barely limped into a nearby gas station garage that had no resources to replace a 1971 Buick radiator. From there, a AAA driver then towed them to a repair shop in New Orleans proper who knew specifically what mechanic could help them get back on the road.

When exploring the Wally Berger Buick car cruise in Alton, they met Bob Brasses and the Lasinski's signed up to join our Gateway Chapter Buick Club. From there grew their history of Gateway Chapter participation. John held the office of President for several years and Kitty volunteered throughout the past regional, local, Wheels in Motion and Shriners' shows. Kitty's girls even enjoy selling sno-cones out the vintage sno-cone machine.

Their dedication shows on one eventful Holiday Party in 2008. Though Kitty, who was experiencing some warning signs during that day when expecting her second-born child, John insisted on attending the dinner. He was in charge of bringing the door prizes. But when the salads were served, the Lasinski's made a hasty exit and sped off to the hospital coming back home with their second daughter, Anna!

Kitty has enjoyed other Buicks that John has brought in and out of their garage throughout the years. They took in member John Walz's GSX Gran National for a while and also challenged themselves with a gold '71 GS 2dr HT in rough shape from eBay.

Kitty's hobby is a family hobby—traveling. She hopes to get back on the trails to new places soon especially to Destin, Florida where they have a rental. She is a valuable member to the Gateway Chapter and an all-time player for our club.