

Member Spotlight

Larry Longworth

By Monica Ledwon

This month's Gateway Gazette features Larry Longworth, a stalwart member who's also the Chairman of our smaller Buick Performance Division. Larry loves all GM G bodies and owns a 1986 Buick Regal with the rare T-Type style.

Born in 1955, Larry's roots originated on Sidney St. in South city. But in 1961, he moved with his family to experience small town rural life in Huzzah, Missouri (halfway between Steeleville and Potosi). Growing up on a farm, he cut his teeth on tractor repair and began tinkering when he was old enough to hold onto a wrench. Fascinated by how things work, he once dismantled his parents' bed down till the last mattress slat lay on the floor. Larry remembers his behind did sting for a while after that!



After returning to South city again in 1969, he graduated from Cleveland High School. Right after, Larry began his life's work as a mechanic and welder fabricator. He met his wife, Nancy, in high school and has been with her ever since, married for 45 cherished years. Their two grown offspring are Brian and Dawn.

Larry's first cool car was a '55 Chevy. Later, he turned to the drag racing scene driving his childhood buddy's '69 Camaro and working together on the car's performance engine. He fondly recalls those track races affectionately called, "Run What You Brung".

In the 80's, Larry acquired a 1957 Buick Roadmaster 2dr HT and joined the Gateway Chapter briefly. He also collected some Buick and Chevy G bodies during that time. This interest led to him owning several generations of Montes during the mid-eighties. One included the unique '87 Monte Carlo SS Aero. An Aero was an option of having fastback rear window glass with a beveled aerodynamic roundness.

Larry also took in an '86 Regal Gran National which was somewhat a basket case formerly owned by member Harold Raukow. But, as child rearing consumed his time and focus, Larry

became a bit burned out on trying to do a frame-off restoration on this Regal. It went on the back burner. He decided family comes first, sold most of his collectible fleet and dropped out of the Gateway Chapter for a time.

After the kids were on their way to adulthood, Larry decided he wanted a turnkey Regal Buick. He knew Harold had an '86 T Type 95% original with 45K miles on the odometer. After contacting him, negotiating, and bartering the Gran National with parts, a deal was made. Larry trailered the T Type to his home in Arnold, Mo. and has been consistently dedicated to keeping it in original condition.

Joining the Gateway Enthusiasts Club for a few years, Larry investigated coming into the BCA as a satellite group belonging to the local Gateway Chapter.



Both groups agreed that comingling the clubs is a fine idea and the Performance Division of the Gateway Chapter was born. Larry holds the position of chairman.

Being partnered up with Larry for so many years, Nancy, too, has always wanted her own GM G body--a Monte Carlo model. So, recently, Larry hunted down an '86 Monte Carlo Luxury Sport Edition and found one rust free with 32K in Connecticut. He truly based his faith in the seller's positive comments about the car and hitched up his empty trailer to make the cross country pick up. Now they each drive their GM sisters which Larry says are so alike in build that their frames match up!



Being in retirement these days, he enjoys fishing and boating on his property at Goose Lake, Missouri. But, ever passionate about the cars and the melding of our clubs he believes a Buick is a Buick. We should be parked together at events and not made separate. Larry invites all Gateway Chapter members to also join in at the Performance Division's meetings the second Sunday of the month to expand our great camaraderie. Car club enthusiasm seems to just bubble up from Larry Longworth!