

Member Spotlight

Mark and Sheree Kistner

By Monica Ledwon

Mark and Sheree Kistner, the newlywed car couple of the club, are featured in this month's Member Spotlight. Often seen pulling up to events with an eye catching aqua 1967 Buick Special station wagon, both own premium collectible automobiles.

Mark was born and raised during his early life in East St. Louis but later moved with his family in the 80's to Fairview Heights. He went to Belleville East High School and then continued his education at SIU Edwardsville. There, he attained a degree in Marketing and Economics. His career spanned working for companies such as Emerson Motors, Lincoln Industrial and Hotsy Corporation. Working the last 20 years for Ameren Illinois Power, Mark now holds a night shift position as a gas tech emergency trouble man. He manages the areas of E. St. Louis, Cahokia and Washington Park therefore not straying far from his roots.



Mark with his 70 GS455 Convertible at the 2018 Heartland Regional in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he won a "Gold Award"

When he was fifteen, his dad, being a car guy, found a 1972 Skylark in the classifieds and told him that it would be a nice set of wheels for him to have as basic transportation. That was the spark that ignited Mark's interest in Buicks. A fondness for the brand developed as he felt Buicks were somewhat held in an underdog status on the road. He bought this first Buick with money saved from cutting grass and delivering papers and drove the car throughout his high school and college years. But one was not enough. His muscle car interest took over the wheel.

Mark carefully added GS models to his collection while still a young man. First came a 1970 GS Convertible and then a 1970 GS Hardtop. Each of them have been maintained and refurbished throughout the years to stellar show status. The hardtop GS is so flawless, Mark rarely takes it out for a run. Being a certified Class I pipe welder also enhanced his skills at classic auto upkeep.

Then, later in life Mark met Sheree. She recounts the summertime party they both attended through mutual friends. Sheree says she had no interest in meeting anyone as was her host's matchmaker motive for the event. But once introduced to Mark, she became very interested! They found they had much in common on the old car front. For many following years they have shared a love for car shows and swap meets to buy parts and road trips to buy cars that could be scraped out. A bond between the two was formed. They married in October 2018 and have a blended family of three grown sons Matt, Kyle and Collin.

Sheree also grew up in a car guy environment with her dad. Upon his retirement he bought himself the Chrysler trophy of a 1969 Plymouth GTX to experience the high of Mopar power. And now Sheree has become heir to his prized automobile. Once, when entering it into a show, she won an award on the very day her father was born.

In 2013 Mark was signed up into the Gateway Chapter Buick Club by John Lasinski, who he'd known through networking for 70's era Buick parts. What really attracted Mark to the club was its charitable spirit. He was especially impressed at the club's turnout for the funeral of fire fighter Captain John Kemper in July 2017. Mark remembers the convoy of Buicks arriving was an awesome sight and tugged at his heart.

But with all the pristine vehicles in Mark and Sheree's garage, they needed a classic runabout Buick to drive at casual club events. Enter the 1967 Buick Special station wagon in nostalgic aqua with white roof. It was found in Winfield, Missouri several years ago. The Special retains all original paint with the exception of the roof. Interior and running gear are original and untouched with an odometer reading at 62K when joining the Kistner motor pool. Aside from dings and shopping car battles, this former grocery getter is in excellent shape. Mark and Sheree drove it to the GS Nationals in 2017 where they purchased a factory made GS hood and Star Wars air cleaner assembly to spiff up this very cool ride.

Mark is also interested in any renovation and collection of antique auto memorabilia. He collects gas pumps, and metal advertising signs as projects to restore and keep. He and Sheree are welcome and loyal members to our club.



Mark and Sheree's '67 Special Wagon at the 2017 Laura Buick show. Notice the white painted roof with a roof rack.



Sheree in her '69 GTX proving that girls can have cool cars too.