

# 4th Annual BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals August 3 - 5, 2006



**RYAN MOSLEY**  
TEXAS MOTORPLEX, ENNIS, TX  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2006



The Oklahoma Chapter hosted their annual "Buick vs. Ford" event and the Buicks were flying!



Plenty of fast Buicks were on hand! On the left, Mike Garrison leaving hard off the line. Below left, Dee Hosack driving her convertible. On the right is a real beauty, Eric Ruge's wild tubbed-out '62 Buick. Below left, the front wheels were flying with Jerry Chamber's blown Skyhawk.. Bottom right is another beauty, Bob Peterson's wheel standing T-Type.



# The Buick Performance Group

Buick Performance Group  
1150 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
PO Box 614  
Marysville, Ohio 43040-0614

## Buick Performance Group Mission Statement

The Buick Performance Group (BPG) is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the performance, preservation, maintenance and restoration of Buick powered performance cars. The BPG offers a member focused, family oriented community environment that encourages and promotes: (1) the sharing of information; (2) the development of new products; and (3) interaction and participation between all members.

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The Buick Performance Group is a non-profit, member run organization. We value all input from our members, and would love to include your car, tech tips and any article that you would take the time to submit to us.

To submit an article or your car for a feature, mail your information and pictures to this address:

**Buick Performance Group**  
**1150 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**PO Box 614**  
**Marysville, Ohio 43040-0614**

All written inquiries and payments to the B.P.G Club be made out to: Buick Performance Group

[www.Buickperformancegroup.com](http://www.Buickperformancegroup.com)

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# ***2007 BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals***

The BPG Board of Directors is excited to announce the 2007 BPG Nationals will be held on August 3-5, 2007 at the National Trail Raceway in Hebron, OH. The Board is also pleased to announce John Chamberlain has joined forces with the BPG to promote and manage this event. The BPG and John Chamberlain have combined the two summer events (Buick Horsepower Nationals and BPG Nationals) into one event – The BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals) to better serve the interests of the Buick Community. National Trail Raceway (NTR) is located in Hebron, OH, 26 miles east of Columbus, OH and 5 miles west of Newark /Heath, OH. NTR has been the home of the NHRA Pontiac Performance Nationals since 1972. On the following pages we listed hotels and map locations. So try not to delay, call for your reservations today.

As far as the race classes, we are still hammering out the details. Top priority is the strong suggestion on changing the Quick 8 to a heads-up class, which may have only one rule, it must be Buick powered! That should be a very interesting and exciting class. As for the Show, Brad and Duane have been working very hard with others on making a final decision whether to change over to a judged show car field along with the separate Concours judged Class. We will let everyone know once race and show classes are set and any other updates.

## **Brief Rundown at National Trail Dragway**

- No electric in pits. A select few plugs at prime locations.
- Camping is permitted at the track. This is dry camping. No dump station. Arrangements can be made to have the port-a-john guy dump RV tanks. Water is available.
- Security - Night time security is included Thursday/Friday/Saturday night. Only one gate will be unlocked which security will monitor. People can stay at the track on Sunday evening but will have to move outside the gate.
- Tech - this is an NHRA track with NHRA ownership. NHRA tech will be enforced. You must have an NHRA certified cage if required along with up to date belts and helmets. No exceptions. If enough people are interested (4-5), a NHRA Chassis Certification will be offered.
- The Pontiac Suite will be made available to us in the tower. Handles 50-60 guests. Wristbands required to enter.
- There are 11 acres of paved pits. No one should be pitted in the grass or dirt. Should be plenty of room.



# ***2007 BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals Hotel Information***

The Board of Directors are pleased to provide the following information about hotels in the Heath/Newark area for the 2007 BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals. There are a wide variety of hotels from which to choose. All are within 10-15 minutes of National Trail Raceway.

## **Hampton Inn - HOST MOTEL**

**1008 Hebron Road  
Heath, OH 43056**

740-788-8991  
800-HAMPTON  
800-426-7866

Use 'BUI' for ordering. Rate is \$75 + taxes.

<http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/h...tyhocn=NEHHHX>

This is the newest motel in the area. Situated in the center of the "strip" within walking distance of restaurants and shopping center. Additional trailer parking will be provided in the Kroger parking lot next to the motel. Security will be provided by the Hampton Inn for the vehicles parked in the Kroger and motel lot. NO PETS.

## **Quality Inn**

**733 Hebron Road  
Heath, OH 43056**

740-522-1165  
1-877-424-6423

Rate is \$65 + taxes.

<http://www.choicehotels.com/ires/en-...ult=1&nchild=0>

This is an older "ex-Holiday Inn" with over 100 rooms. It has a courtyard layout with outdoor pool, restaurant and bar. A very short walk to the Cruise In. Sort of reminds you of a Holidome without the dome. Plenty of trailer parking on site. No additional security. Pet friendly.

## **Holiday Inn Express**

**773 Hebron Road  
Heath, OH 43056**

740-522-0770  
877-270-6397

No Rate Offered

This motel did not offer us a good group rate. Their advertised rates for August were over \$100 but were willing to give us an \$89 rate provided we guarantee purchase of 20 rooms. We did not put up the guarantee. The motel is adjacent to the Quality Inn. A short distance from the Cruise In. NO PETS.

<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/...lsearchresults>

## **Econo Lodge**

**1266 Hebron Road  
Heath, OH 43056**

740-522-6112  
No Rates.

<http://www.choicehotels.com/ires/en-...ult=1&nchild=0>

A small Econo Lodge with standard services. Limited trailer parking with no additional security. About ½ mile from the restaurants, shopping, and Cruise In. Pet friendly.

**Super 8****1177 South Hebron Road****Heath, OH 43056**

740-788-9144

1800-800-8000

No Rates.

<http://www.super8.com/Super8/control...Avail&rate=000>

Located about 1 mile from the center of Heath. We did not pursue getting a rate from the motel. Pet friendly

**Best Western – Lakewood Inn****122 Arrowhead Blvd.****Hebron, OH 43025**

(740) 928-1800

No Rates.

[http://local.yahoo.com/details;\\_ylt=...cb=KcrUesezDK7](http://local.yahoo.com/details;_ylt=...cb=KcrUesezDK7)

This is a 70 room motel located immediately off the I70 exit 129. New in 1999, they are in the process of switching from the Amerihost chain to the Best Western. Rates were not available. This motel is 7 miles from the Heath area.

**Red Roof Inn****I-70 at Lancaster Road/SR 37, Exit #126****10668 Lancaster Road Southwest, Hebron, OH 43025**

Phone: (740) 467-7663

No Rates.

<http://www.redroof.com/reservations/...px?searchtype=>

This motel is located at I-70 exit #126, the same exit as National Trail Raceway. The track is 2 miles from the motel and 10 miles from Heath. This is a truck stop motel located directly across from a TA truck stop. Exit #126 consists of truck stops and gas stations.

There are many other places to stay in the area. The following link will highlight those in the Newark/Heath area. We considered "The Place Off the Square" in Newark. It is in an attractive "town square" setting 3 miles from Heath owned by the Longaberger basket company. However, it is the only Hotel/Motel in the area. This is something to consider for 2008.

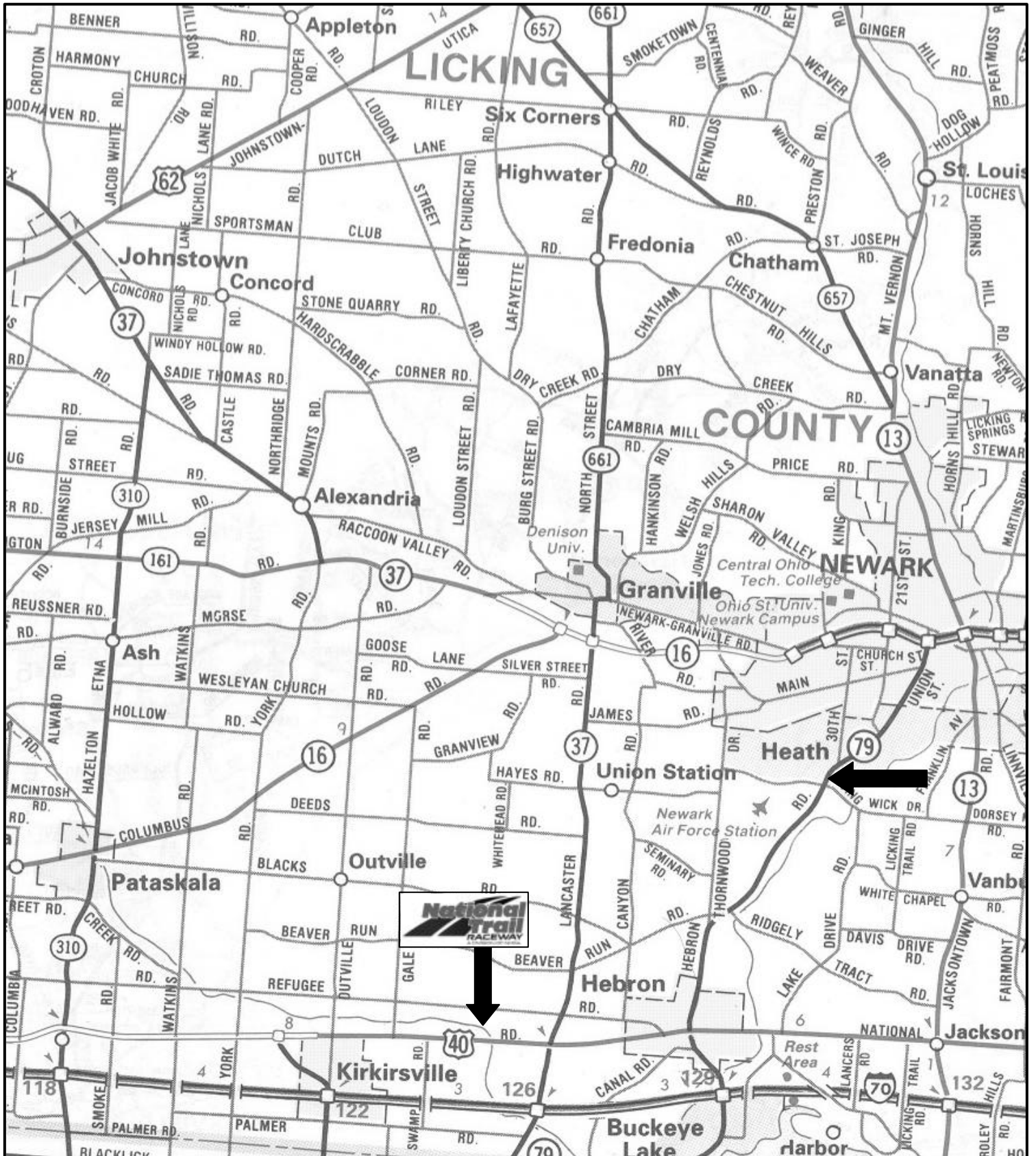
[http://keyword.netscape.com/ns/boomf...io\\_lodging.htm](http://keyword.netscape.com/ns/boomf...io_lodging.htm)

It is the intent of the BPG to give those attending as much information about the area as becomes available. The BPG is working with the Licking County Convention and Visitors Bureau to make your trip to National Trail Raceway as pleasant as possible. We have chosen Heath because of its convenience, location to the track, and services available.

National Trail Raceway is about 20 miles east of Columbus on old U.S. Highway 40, one mile north of Interstate 70 at the Kirkersville exit. From Columbus, take I-70 to Highway 158 north and follow the signs, or take I-70 to Highway 37 north to U.S. Highway 40 and follow the signs.

Regarding the distance to all of the hotels, which are fairly grouped close together. If you Map Quest the distance from the Host Hotel to National Trail Dragway, located at 2650 National Road SW, Hebron, Ohio you will find it just over 8 miles. We hope that the map on the proceeding page will also be helpful.

Detailed map, vicinity of National Trail Dragway, Hebron, Ohio  
Host Hotel, Hampton Inn, Heath, Ohio  
Map Quest distance between the two is 8.42 miles



## ***Editors Comments***

By Rick Martinez

Welcome to 2007! Here at the BPG we would hope that everyone had a very safe and enjoyable holiday and New Years. Now that 2007 is upon us I am pleased to say the Buick Performance Group is stepping up with some major changes to this years event. First off as most of you have heard we have joined forces with John Chamberlain, merging the BPG Nationals with the Buick Horsepower Nationals. The next huge change is our new venue. We are now calling National Trail Dragway our new home. Salem Dragway was a great facility, but with the looming track sale hanging on us every year the BOD started searching for an alternate home. All of the pieces seemed to have falling in place together, as we have listened to the members regarding what we can do to improve our event. We listened and we acted! The new merging with John Chamberlain's Buick Horsepower Nationals is a win-win situation for the entire Buick community! First off one of the major problems was there were way too many Buick Events for everyone to go to. All of the events were hurting. So by joining forces with a new name and a new track it is like we all just stepped up to a higher standard for our National Event. National Trail Dragway and the town of Hebron, Ohio, which also hosts the Mopar Nationals is greeting us with open arms, they want us there and they are working with us so that everyone will have a great time! This should be a huge success this year, as we are all working hard at it.

The Car Show and Race Classes are still being ironed out, and we will have them posted very soon along with a pre-registration form. We will have some changes to the race program and will be posting them. One change for example, is the Super 8 Class. This class will be changed to a heads-up class on a pro-tree. For this class all vehicles must be Buick powered, anything goes! Any Buick bodied vehicles or any non-bodied vehicles such as dragsters are open for this heads up class. This will truly be the Top Dog Race Class! Another major change will be that the entire race program must now be Buick powered vehicles, with the exception of the Quick 16 which will remain the same as Buick powered and Buick bodied. As for the Show, there will be the Concours Show Class. We are still working on options regarding the entire Show Car field.

So please check out the hotel listings and make your reservations today! The feed back so far has been extremely positive so no doubt most hotels will start filling fast.

## ***Changing Of The Guard***

By Rick Martinez

This past fall as some of you already know, Jim Haas resigned from his position of Event Director and position in the Board of Directors. Jim has been with the BPG since its creation. He has shown time after time his limitless dedication, integrity and honesty on working with others making the BPG a viable and healthy Club. These are traits that in today's day are extremely hard to find in most people and we were fortunate enough to have Jim on board giving guidance's keeping the Club true to its mission statement along with him unselfishly giving the Club countless hours and money, never once asking for anything in return. He had one mission, and that was the success of the BPG.

Unfortunately a bi-product on running a large scale club such as the BPG, is that you end up just getting burnt out. This was the case with Jim. We all have our own limits and Jim had reached his, he wanted out, he wanted a time to relax and enjoy the club as just a member, to get away from all the political pressures. Can't blame him at all, as sooner or later each one of us will reach that point when it's time to give it a rest and let some new blood come it and help run the club. It is a tough job no doubt. But the fruits of our labor will hopefully be seen at this year's BPG Buick Horsepower Nationals. I am sure Jim can now relax, attend and proudly see what he had help create.

I have personally known Jim for close to 15 years and I have to say that he is truly a man of convictions. He gets an idea and he runs with it giving it 100% and I can say that Jim is the type of man that tells you up front and truthfully and he is one that will always be there to help out watching your back to the bitter end. He is a true friend indeed, a true friend for life. So when you do run into Jim at one of the various Buick events, be sure to thank Jim for a job well done because he definitely deserves it.

Thank you Jim for all you have done on help to creating and maintain the success of the BPG! Your help and devotion has been second to none! Job well done Pal!

# ***And They Came To Race!! October 28, 2006***

By Dick Walker

For the twelfth year, the Oklahoma Buick Performance Club hosted "Team Buick vs. Team Ford Heads up Shootout" at Thundervalley Raceway Park, Noble, Oklahoma. The 'run what you bring' door slammer event again lines up the slowest to fastest qualifiers in a sudden death shootout against all comers. Seventy-one pairs answered the call for the Finals, leaving nine additional Team Ford members with no competitors. Another eleven Fords were sidelined with issues along with eight Buicks unable to answer the call. In all, one hundred and seventy cars made qualifying runs in hopes of filling a spot for their team. In the Finals, the Ford Team bested the Buicks with thirty-nine wins to the Buicks thirty-two. Some of the top qualifiers were: Bob Peterson, St Paul, Minnesota, 8.271, John Schmidt, Wintersville, Ohio, 8.30's, Lawrence Conley, Humble, Texas, 8.536, Jerry Chambers/WC Taylor, Edmond, Oklahoma, 8.59, Bones Hayhurst, Dumas, Texas, 9.129, Eric Ruge, Eureka, Kansas, 9.551, Mike Garrison, Topeka, Kansas, 10.20, John Nguyen, North Richland Hills, Texas, 10.264, John Martin, Plano, Texas, 10.275, John Plog, Nebraska, 10.445.

For all the results, go to [www.okbuicks.com](http://www.okbuicks.com), to see all the "Shootout Results". Because of an NHRA rainout make-up race, our Friday night test and tune was replaced by a gathering at my home in Oklahoma City. Friday and Friday night where some last minute tuning, done by Jack Cotton on James Kiddy's 1987 Turbo T, from Cabbot, Arkansas, and some cold ones and brisket were consumed by many. Some of the 'long haulers' making it to the gathering were: Bob Peterson, George Sweezy, from Minnesota, John Schmidt from Ohio, Jack Cotton, from Massachusetts. Our surrounding States of Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas were well represented.



**Above shot is Dick Walker leaving the line hard**



**Mitch Smith shown above getting some daylight under those front runners!**



**Kathy Emberton spanking those Fords!**



**Eric Barmettler running those Fords down!**



## **More Shots – Buick vs. Ford - Oklahoma Buick Performance Club**



**Matt Gordon leaving the line.**



**The Kansas group taking a time out from a busy day of racing.**



**Butch Deacon at the wheel of his GNX**



**John Schmidt's Opel leaving hard off the line.**



**Between rounds, Matt Gordon prepping his GS**

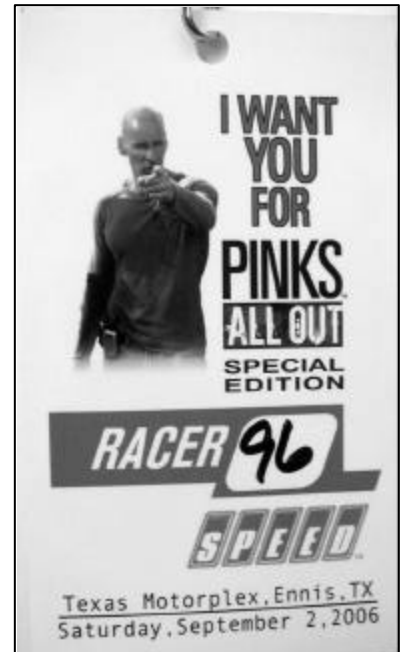


**Bob Peterson, George Sweezy and Fred Baker**

# "Pinks" All Out On SPEED TV

By Dick Walker

Buicks participate in the first "Pinks" All Out on SPEED TV at the Texas Motorplex on September 2, 2006. This Event was aired on Thanksgiving evening, November 23, 2006 and condensed the 7am to midnight activities into a one hour presentation. A selection, by the Staff, of sixteen cars in the low ten et range was made from the 300 plus participants to compete for the \$18,000 cash purse put up by the promoters of "Pinks". Two Buicks were chosen in this group, a 1987 Grand National, owned and driven by John Nguyen, North Richland Hills, Texas, and a 1987 Turbo Regal, owned and driven by Ryan Mosley, Houston, Texas. Ryan was taken out in the first round with a blown head gasket, and John made it into the number four spot before rolling into the lights without the newly installed transbrake set in the 4L80E tranny. Several others of the group from Oklahoma and Texas were briefly shown anonymously. Others with Buicks participating in the event were Jerry Chambers, Edmond Oklahoma with his 1971 Skylark, David Newton, Richardson, Texas, with his 1987 Grand National, and myself, Dick Walker, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with my 1987 Grand National. Our supporters and crew members can be seen in some of the shots.



# **HELICOPTERS TO HOT RODS (OR HOW I LEARNED TO LOVE THE BUICK)**

By Larry Eads

I spent a few years in the service of our country, in the U.S. Army. First as a draftee out of Southern California (another fugitive from Oklahoma), then, after cleaning a few grease traps, becoming a Military Policeman, going to Field Artillery Officer Candidate School, then, after being commissioned as new Butter Bar (2<sup>nd</sup> Looie), I sought to raise my horizons! I applied for and was accepted to the Army's Rotary Wing Flight School in May of 1968. I was to quickly learn that for me, learning to fly a Helicopter was the most terrifying,



humbling and traumatic sequence of events I ever experienced. Somehow I made through Flight School without killing my Instructor Pilot, or myself, and graduated in February of 1969. I survived a year in Vietnam, serving an obligatory six months on an aviation battalion staff and then flying almost daily Combat Assaults for the 335<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company (Cowboys) in the Mekong Delta during my last six months. To make a long story short, after Vietnam, I fell victim to a force draw-down called a RIF (Reduction In Force) and was ushered out of the Army as a senior Captain after eight years of service.

I piddled around a couple of years, saw the handwriting on the wall, went back to school and graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1979. I promptly was hired by General Motors at their Oklahoma City Plant and worked there until a corporate draw down got me again. While I was working there I bought a two-toned blue 1979 Buick Sport Coupe, my first Turbo car. Wow, what a great little car it was. I was sad to part with it after a couple of years in order to buy a new Buick. I became good friends with Ray Brooks who worked in the company car garage, maintaining the executives company cars. One day Ray drove up in a spanking new black thing like no car I had ever seen before, a 1987 Buick Grand National. After slobbering all over it for an hour or two, I told Ray that if he ever wanted to sell that gorgeous hunk of machinery to please give me first shot at it. Well, to make another long story shorter, Ray sold me the car with 754 miles on it about six months later. He also tried to buy it back a couple of times. I drove the car daily for quite a few years before joining the Buick Club in Oklahoma City. I started racing it soon after and, as I recall, my first few trips down the quarter mile were less than impressive, in the mid 14's. Now after a few year and a lot of common sense modifications, the car runs in the mid to high 11's, with no plans to make it any quicker unless they (NHRA) changes the rules regarding mandatory roll bars/cages. And there it is folks, from Helicopters to Hot Rods, if I can't fly high, then By Gawd, I'll fly low.



# ***Proper Storage Of Your Buick***

By Brad Conley

There have been many articles on the proper storage of a classic or "show" car and I am sure many of you already take steps to properly tuck your baby away for the winter. In this article, I will tell you the methods I use to store my cars for their long winters nap.

Every caretaker of a car should take steps to make sure their car is preserved in the best possible manner, if nothing else for future generations. After all, we're all here on this earth for a short period of time and it is up to us to make sure future generations will have the "real deal" to peruse after we are gone. This always begins with the facility in which the vehicle is stored. It does not have to be the Taj Mahal but should be dry, secure, and free from pests. I will touch on each of these subjects in this article.

A concrete floor is a must, in my opinion, but there is a problem with concrete. It will release moisture up under your car unless you take steps to protect your car from that release of moisture. I do the following: I first lay down a layer of Visqueen, a heavy duty plastic sheet, as a moisture barrier. I tape it down on all four sides with heavy duty tape directly to the floor. This is your first layer of defense from moisture. Secondly, I go to the carpet store and ask them if they have any end of rolls or leftovers they want to get rid of cheap. Usually they are happy to make a few bucks on something they otherwise would have to pay to throw out in the trash. I place the carpet on top of the Visqueen, taping it down also. I now have my foundation complete and any moisture from the concrete is contained and unable to reach the underside of the car.

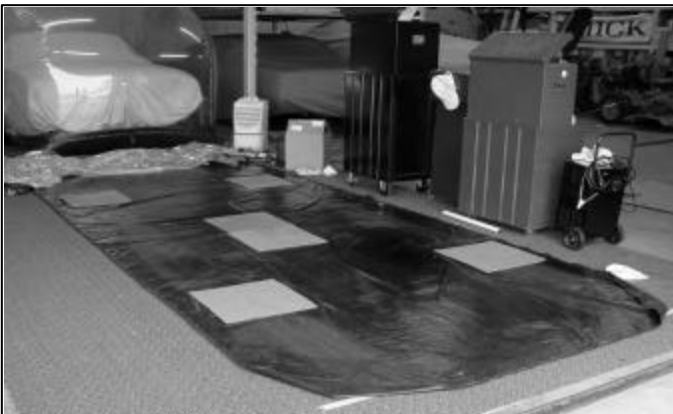
The next thing to consider is the environment in which the car is stored. It should be temperature controlled, both summer and winter. Yes, I air condition my building and some say that is overkill but remember we are trying to prevent moisture from attacking any and all surfaces of the car, not just the underside. Humidity control is the key in preservation and to control humidity, you must also control the temperature; otherwise your car will attract moisture from the air much like a cold bottle of pop will on a humid day. I also use a dehumidifier in my situation to keep the air as dry as possible. Ohio is known for having high humidity during certain times of the year and I have to, in those times, further control the humidity with the dehumidifier. In winter, the building is heated, again to control temperature swings and prevent the formation of water on the surfaces of the car. In winter, the outside air is generally dryer and it is much easier to control the humidity in your storage area. When air is heated, it tends to dry out, but if you allow the air to become too dry, bad things can also happen like seals and weather-stripping will become aged. For that reason, everyone should have a hygrometer, or humidity gauge, in your storage building. You should have between 35% and 50% humidity in the building on a year-round basis and in some times of the year you may actually have to introduce some humidity into the facility by leaving out a pan of water or sprinkling the floor (not covered by your "foundation") with water in order to raise the relative humidity inside.

Pest control is another consideration as vermin such as mice will attack your car damaging everything in their wake. Moth balls, slices of Irish Spring soap, Bounce dryer sheets are all common methods of dealing with mice. I have never found those ultrasonic plug-in-the-wall things to work, so save your money on them. There are other kinds of pests...the two legged variety, who will do things we don't even want to think about. All those people with a valuable car should consider a central station alarm system. They are not very expensive, but do require a monthly fee for monitoring that is very reasonable for the peace of mind it gives. Most alarm companies will install an alarm system at very little cost as they really make their money in the monitoring fees. I, for example, pay about \$30 per month to have my entire home and building monitored for both fire and break-in. Most people spend more than a dollar a day on a pop from a vending machine, so use that money to protect your belongings. Report your alarm system to your auto and homeowners insurance company. There are discounts available for having a central station reporting alarm system installed. One more thing on alarm systems, have the alarm company install a cellular backup instead of solely depending on the telephone line to dial the monitoring station. This only costs a few dollars more per month, but if the bad guy clips your phone line, you're still covered.

Now, on to car covers. I have used everything from a 100% cotton cover to storage bags to “bubbles”. If you are going to just use a cover, the best one’s out there now are made by Covercraft and use a material called Dustop. The covers using the Dustop material will prevent dust and other nasty things from going through the cover and laying on the painted surface of your car. They are NOT waterproof, so you still need to use care with anything “wet” around the car (brake fluid, gasoline, etc) but they will prevent dust from going through the cover like a cotton cover will allow. Cotton covers are “old tech” dust bags and should not be used as a barrier on your car. They can cause more harm than good.

The next type of cover is a bag. You simply unzip the bag, drive your car in, throw in a couple of bags of desiccant and zip it back up. Their advantage is they are very portable and can be used even away from your storage facility such as at a car show, to protect your investment. Mice don’t seem to like them and they will completely seal off your car. Once your car is inside, you should not open the bag up until you are ready to drive the car again. For that reason, showing off your pride and joy to friends and family is not very easy once the car is inside and tucked away.

The last type of cover isn’t really a cover at all, it’s a bubble. I use a bubble on each of my GSX’s to protect them from all kinds of trouble. (Shown below) They are clear plastic with a “basement” made of heavy duty material that not only protects the top of your car, but also the undercarriage from moisture from the concrete it sits upon. They use a small electric fan that keeps the plastic from touching the surface and also allows air to circulate in and around your car. The manufacture advises that you keep your windows down and trunk lid ajar to allow the air to freely circulate. Friends and family can view your trophy through the clear plastic without you having to unzip. The car is also protected from small objects that may be accidentally dropped on the car; they simply bounce off the bubble! The manufacture advertises that you can drop a 5 pound sledgehammer on the bag and it will not touch the car or cause damage to the bubble...I personally have not tested this theory but can say for certain that handles from leaf rakes, shovels, etc. that have been accidentally dropped will bounce off and not strike the car inside. They use less than 25 cents of electricity per month to keep the small fan running and the bubble inflated. Mice do not like the vinyl it is made from, so they leave the car inside alone.



*Shown on the left is proper preparation when setting up the inflatable car bag. Moisture is totally sealed out. Below once the car is in place and prepped, it is sealed up and ready to plug in the small fan that inflates the bubble bag while filtering the air from dust particles.*





*Upper left photo shows the fan that inflates the bubble and on the upper right the GSX is all wrapped and stored. Below Brad's GSX is all set for the winter storage.*



Two last things: Batteries and gasoline. By now, everyone has heard of Sta-bil gasoline stabilizer. Use it. The gasoline today will go stale in as little as 3 months or less and cause real harm to your tank and fuel system. If you do not "use up" the gas in your tank in one year, remove the fuel and use it in your lawn mower or something else and re-fill your tank with fresh fuel and Sta-bil. This should be done at least on an annual basis for cars not driven enough to use the fuel in the tank.

**Batteries. DO NOT KEEP YOUR BATTERIES IN THE CAR WHILE THEY ARE STORED!!** You should remove the battery from the car and attach it to some type of maintainer. I use the Battery Minder brand that keeps the battery at full charge and also desulphates the battery while it is stored. Sulphation is the leading cause of battery failure and the Battery Minder is the only charger/maintainer on the market today that will desulphate the plates of your battery.

There you have it. This is exactly what I do and my cars were restored now over 10 years ago and look as good today as they did when they first rolled out of Dave Kleiner's shop. If you follow the simple steps above, your car will look as good in 10 years as it looks today!

# 1970-72 Buick A-Body Fan Shroud Alignment

By Duane Heckman

Have you ever put the front end of a 1970-72 Buick GS back together and either had trouble installing the fan shroud, or wondered why it “sat” so far away from the radiator fins? Or wondered why the car had a tendency to overheat when it never did before? Well I have, and if the same things have happened to you, then maybe this article will help you solve these problems.

First, lets look at some history, and see if we can find any changes. (I will use the 455 equipped models as my examples, as I am most familiar with them.) We know that at the start of the 1971 model year the Buick engineers lengthened the water pump shaft by something like  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” or so. This change would have caused the water pump pulley to become misaligned, in relation to the other pulleys; and necessitated changes to either the pulleys and/or brackets of the various accessories bolted to the engine. Also in 1971, they changed to a different fan blade design, but retained the same thermostatic clutch assembly.

The result of all this, is that the fan blades on the 1971-72 motors are approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” farther away from the engine then they are on the 1970 models. However, there is one important thing to note, even though the water pumps changed length the relationship between the fan blades and the fan shrouds remained the same. That is on both the 1970 and 1971-72 cars the fan blades stick out of the fan shroud by approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ ”.

Now that we know what’s going on with the engine side of the equation, lets turn our attention to the area in front of the motor, namely the radiator core support, radiator, radiator top cover, and the fan shroud.

The radiator core supports did change in 1971, but this was in the headlight mounting areas only. All other mounting points, i.e. where it attaches to the frame, or where the fan shroud, radiator, or top cover attaches remained the same. Therefore, for this discussion we will consider the changes as irrelevant, as the changes had nothing to do with radiator or fan shroud alignment.

As far as the radiators themselves are concerned there were many different ones available for the 1970-72 model years. They differed in core size and tank configurations, however you could exchange any radiator for any other one and it would fit perfectly, so again we can disregard the differences.

The radiator top covers also changed each year, with two different varieties for the 1970 model year alone, but these changes were strictly cosmetic. All mounting points for the core support, fan shroud, and radiator remained the same, so again the changes are not an issue.

Now looking at the fan shrouds we see some big changes between the 1970 and 1971-72 styles. Disregarding the cosmetic differences, the main differences for this discussion, are in the way they mount to the core support/top cover and the front-back depth of the shroud. If you look at the pictures on the following page, you will see that the front edge of the 1970 fan shroud (left picture) sits flush with the back edge of the top cover, while the front edge of the 1971-72 fan shroud (right picture) steps back from the front cover by about  $\frac{1}{2}$ ”. The oval mounting slots cut into the bottom of the 1971-72 style fan shrouds are also repositioned to allow for this same amount of rearward movement.



**Pictures showing the upper mounting tabs of a 1970 big block (left) and 1971-72 big block (right) fan shroud. (Note the position of the leading edge of the fan shroud.)**

The other noticeable difference is that the 1970 shrouds are very deep, while the 1971-72 styles are much thinner, in the front to back dimension. What this means is that the position of the rearward facing edge of the shroud, in relation to the motor, was changed starting in 1971.

At this point I knew that starting in 1971, all kinds of parts were changed, but I still could not answer why some shrouds were loose while others were tight against the radiator. Something was causing the radiator to move forward or backward, in relation to the fan shrouds, and I still had not found the part that was responsible for this. So I decided to look at the only other part in the radiator mounting system, the rubber pads.

The first thing I did was to check the Assembly Manuals. They showed that the insulator part numbers were changed at the start of the 1971 production year, and remained the same throughout the 1972 model year. Then I went to my parts stash, dug out some originals, and found the "culprit" responsible for all the fan shroud mounting problems.



→ Front of car

Engine side®

***Below is a picture of the underside of both a 1970 and 1971-72 Radiator Insulator. You can tell from the picture that both look identical on this side.***



→ Front of car

Engine side®

***Above is a picture of the topside of the same two insulator pads. The insulator at the top is from a 1970 while the bottom picture is from a 1971-72.***

From looking at the above pictures, you can see that the "cradle" for the radiator was moved back towards the engine for the 1971-72 cars. This goes along with the other changes seen in the 1971-72 cars, and also explains the problems I have seen with installing fan shrouds. Case in point, I will list two possible scenarios that can occur from mixing different year parts to explain what I mean.



**Scenario #1;** You install a 1970 fan shroud and use 1971-72 style insulators. The result is the insulators “move” the radiator closer to the engine/fan shroud than originally designed, and now you have to physically force the fan shroud to fit. The problem here is the fan shroud is now slammed tight against the radiator core and may damage it over time. This also has a tendency to “push” the fan blades further into the shroud opening, and can lead to overheating problems.

**Scenario #2;** You install a 1971-72 fan shroud and use 1970 style insulators. The result is the insulators “move” the radiator farther from the engine/fan shroud than originally designed, and now you have a ½” gap between the fan shroud and the radiator core. The problem here is that air will be sucked in from around the fan shroud instead of through the radiator, and this could lead to overheating problems.

*Now, in the above two examples the assumption was that the correct length water pumps were used. If we keep everything “year” correct, but install the wrong year water pumps/pulleys, we end up with the next two scenarios.*

**Scenario #3;** You install a 1971-72 (long) water pump on a 1970 car. The result is the fan blades “move” further into the radiator shroud opening than originally designed for. This moves the fan blades from their optimum position and can lead to overheating problems.

**Scenario #4;** You install a 1970 (short) water pump on a 1971-72 car. The result is the fan blades “move” further away from the radiator shroud opening than originally designed for. This also moves the fan blades from their optimum position and can lead to overheating problems.

## **Conclusions**

The first is that even though the majority of the parts mentioned above were changed for each model year, the only parts that really impact the radiator/fan shroud fit are the radiator insulator pads.

The second is to maximize the cooling capacity of the vehicle the following conditions must be met,

1. You must match the correct year water pump with the correct year fan shroud. This will insure that the fan blades are positioned correctly in the fan shroud opening.
2. You must use the correct year radiator insulator pads for the correct year fan shroud. This will insure that the radiator core is positioned correctly against the forward edge of the fan shroud.

To help everyone verify they have the correct components on their car I will list the part numbers for the original pieces used for the 1970 thru 1972 model years. Also, to keep costs down, Buick only used 2 different insulators for any model year, and placed them at different locations, therefore I will list these locations along with the insulator part numbers. I will use the designations “LT” (left top/driver side top), “LB” (left bottom/driver side bottom) etc. to indicate the locations.

Enjoy.

## **1970 Components**

Water Pump, 350 all, short shaft, # 1374877

Water Pump, 455 non-AC/Std. Cooling, short shaft, # 1372812

Water Pump, 455 AC/H.D. Cooling, short shaft, # 1386961

Radiator Core Support # 1231398 (Number stamped into the upper bar)

Top Cover, early style # 1232819 (Plastic with Steel end caps)

Top Cover, late style # 1234369 (All Steel)

Fan Shroud, Small Block # 1232996

Fan Shroud, Big Block # 1233000

Rubber Insulators # 1387423 (LT, RB) (Cast into part)

Rubber Insulators # 1387422 (LB, RT) (Cast into part)

## 1971 Components

Water Pump, 350 all, long shaft, # 1235958  
Water Pump, 455 non-AC/Std. Cooling, long shaft, # 1380118  
Water Pump, 455 AC/H.D. Cooling, long shaft, # 1233531  
Radiator Core Support # 1237210 (Number stamped into the upper bar)  
Top Cover # 1237506 (All Steel)  
Fan Shroud, Small Block # 1234555  
Fan Shroud, Big Block # 1234484  
Rubber Insulators # 1236777 (LT, RB) (Cast into part)  
Rubber Insulators # 1236778 (LB, RT) (Cast into part)

## 1972 Components

Water Pump, 350 all, long shaft, # 1235958  
Water Pump, 455 non-AC/Std. Cooling, long shaft, # 1380118  
Water Pump, 455 AC/H.D. Cooling, long shaft, # 1233531  
Radiator Core Support # 1237210 (Number stamped into the upper bar)  
Top Cover # 1240323 (All Steel)  
Fan Shroud, Small Block # 1238972  
Fan Shroud, Big Block # 1238973  
Rubber Insulators # 1236777 (LT, RB) (Cast into part)  
Rubber Insulators # 1236778 (LB, RT) (Cast into part)

I want to thank both Dave Kleiner and Rich Garland for helping me gather the information needed to write this article.

## Contest Winners!!!

We would again like to thank everyone for their response and their guesses on who was the lovely club member sunning herself on her Buick.

We had four winners. Unfortunately, we ran out of Club shirts only having medium and smalls and our Dennis Manner DVD is not completed yet. All winners this time around instead will receive BPG hats.

The answer to the contest? The lovely lady is Dee Hosack out of Texas. A oldie but goodie photograph☺



### Winners

1. Glenn Biggers
2. Patty Charney
3. David Newton
4. Greg Schmeizer





Above left Mike Jameson showing some class against the Fords. Above right Bob Thomas



Cindy Garrison showing her husband Mike the correct way on heating them up!

Below Scott Hedzel waiting to be called to the lanes.



Below the OK Chapter Web Master, Rene'

