



THE HOOD SCOOP

May 2019

The Story of my '69 Judge

By John Johnson

Gateway GTO
Association



In early April of 1969, a Carousel Red Judge hardtop was delivered to Kelly Pontiac in Columbia MO. 50 years later, it's still in the Mid-MO area, with an interesting story to be shared.

I've been a long-time Pontiac-er, having learned to drive in my parent's 1964 Catalina 2-door hardtop back in the early 1970s. I moved 'up' in the car world in 1976 when my Dad and I went in 'halves' on a used 1972 Grand Prix that a local man put up for sale when he bought a new Jeep pickup. For those of you not familiar with the 1969-72 Grand Prix's, they are essentially a GTO with 6 inches of extra frame in the front end, and utilized the GTO's drive-trains. This became my college car, and turned into 'our' car when Diana and I were married in 1978, and we still have it, waiting for me to win the big Power Ball to finance its restoration.

In the very early 1980's I had a chance to buy a Starlight Black 1970 Judge hardtop, which was my first GTO. The man that owned it lived north of Kirksville MO, and had it and a 1970 Olds Rally 350 sitting on the side of Hwy. 63 with "FOR SALE" signs on each. Turned out he didn't really care which one he sold, he was going to use the money from the sale of one to re-do the other. Since he had an Olds 455 in The Judge, we arranged a deal by which he kept the Olds motor and I got the Judge rolling chassis for a reduced price.

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THE HOOD SCOOP



Car of the Month



Several months after we got it home to Mexico MO, I signed up for Adult Education auto body-shop evening classes at the local Vo-Tech, put on rear quarter patch-panels, and repainted it from the orange it was to Starlight Black as it should have been. Once done, I ran ads in the local nickel-ad papers looking for a RAM AIR motor and other parts for the car.

On Thanksgiving Day 1982, while we had our family over for the big meal, I got a call from the Jefferson City MO area. The young man calling said that he didn't have any motor parts for sale, but he did have a 1969 RA-IV Judge for sale, and would I be interested in buying it? Well, of course I had to get more info! It seems that he'd recently bought a Ford Special Edition Bronco and his parents said The Judge had to go (once again, the purchase of another vehicle set me up to get a Pontiac, a recurring trend which happened again years later when Diana was able to buy a SD-455 T/A, but that's another story).

As I'd previously discovered, a lot of people say they have a RA-IV when in reality they don't, so I asked the obvious question "how do you know it's a real RA-IV? His reply was the expected "...because that's what the decals on the hood say". Well decals are cheap so I pressed the issue, and what he said next lent a lot of creditability the story. Seems like he'd hot-rodded the car a little and bent a push-rod. They went to the dealership to get a one and found the first one he'd bought didn't fit, they had to go back and special-order a different one. Since the RA-IV does require a unique pushrod, I knew I had to go see the car.

Several days later Diana and I drove to the young man's parent's home to see the car. As we walked down the steps to the basement garage, the right front fender and hood of the car came into view, and yes indeed, there were white RA-IV hood decals on the Carousel Red paint job. As we walked around the car, I noticed the car had black bucket seats but a white (Parchment) head-liner and door panels. I spied a clutch pedal wired down flat against the floor (which seemed really wrong) with an automatic shifter sitting on top of a very odd looking non-factory appearing console in between the seats. Another oddity was a 12-bolt rear end under the car, which meant someone had also changed that out at some point. When I asked about some of these unusual details, he said that's how he'd bought it.

He opened the hood and there were the tell-tale shapes of round-port heads with the correct short-runner exhaust manifolds, all sitting underneath a factory aluminum intake manifold, so there was certainly a lot of promise in the motor. Also noted was one of the largest dual-line, spread bore, double-pump, manual choke Holley 4-barrel carbs I'd ever seen!

After checking some #s and codes, I was sure the car had the correct 1969 RA-IV heads, intake and exhausts, but the block was a mystery as there is/was no visible block code on the front of the block. I also noted the block had 2 freeze-plugs (not 3) on each side as later blocks do, so my choices were a 326, 389, or 421.

Since the choice presenting itself was buying a RA-IV Judge hardtop that ran and drove, or keeping a rolling chassis/shell of a 1970 Judge Hardtop, with Diana's agreement we decided to make an offer on the '69, and that we would sell off the '70. I offered him \$ 2,000.00 for the car (he was asking \$ 2,200.00) and told him he could keep the big Cragar mags, but he told me no. His price was \$ 2,200, he didn't have anything that the mags would fit on, and that I knew that was a good price for the car. And that's what happened.

A few days later we came back and completed the deal, and I drove the car home. As a side-note, at the first stop light I hit outside of Jefferson City, I got challenged by an El Camino! As I had no plates and only a bill of sale, I declined, and he roared off on his own.





As time went on, I did a lot of investigating of the block to try to figure out what it was. The casting date was April 15th of 1965, but that was all I could tell. Eventually another Pontiac-er was able to verify for me the block's foundry casting # was for-sure a 1965 421, so that answered my question without disassembling the motor. During my investigations and calls, I ran across an another long-time Pontiac-er (J. D. Roberts) in the Columbia MO area who I was told has a secret formula for making the cast-iron Pontiac connecting rods live under race conditions. When I finally got his phone # and called, he asked why I wanted to know, was I racing, or what? When I told him I was going to be trying to restore a 1969 Judge I'd recently bought, he said in passing that he used to have one of those. I mentioned this one has black bucket seats and an otherwise Parchment interior, and used to be a 4-speed, and he said that must be his old car because he'd taken out the while interior because it got dirty too easy, and put in a TH-400 because he got tired of shifting!

Lots of fun facts quickly emerged about the car. It was the car that Kelly Pontiac in Columbia MO had used as a dealership-drag-race car in the summer of 1969. They went through the original RA-IV block plus 2 other service replacement blocks during the season. A quarter-mile time of 12.97 seconds was obtained once that year, the rest of the time it was running low 13's. The car was sold off after the racing season ended to its first titled owner in Auxvasse MO (just south of Mexico MO where we live, according to the Protecto-Plate card that was still in the glove box.

Car of the Month

Mr. Roberts was a manager at the dealership when the car came back in for work in the early 1970s (the motor was ‘blown’ again), and he bought it from the 2nd owner and dropped in the 421 bottom end, one that he had the block code obliterated from the front face of it so no one could tell he was cheating! I was able to connect the dots from the names he knew that had owned it before him and to whom he’d sold the car to. It was determined that we were the car’s 6th owners, and that it had never left a 50 mile radius of Columbia MO for its ownership. (By the way, his ‘secret formula’ for connecting rods was to have the side-beams polished.)

We drove the car “as-is” for a couple of years, and even got a 5th place at a POCI show in Sapulpa OK, which was pretty good considering we had a flat on the way down and showed the car on its shabby looking spare tire! Finally in about 1991 we decided to have the car’s body-work done and repainted. Jim Novelli did the work, and the car still wears that paint job to this day. However, in raising 2 boys, the car fund was quickly emptied, and after he’d finished his work, we brought the car home and it sat in the garage until 2006, unfinished. Some parts were collected over the years (interior, weather seals, motor parts, etc.) but the car just sat in our garage with its car cover on, and the interior was used to hide Christmas presents from time to time.



Car of the Month

Fast forward to June of 2006- our youngest son Bryan volunteered his time that summer before he went off to college that Fall to help complete the car, and my Pontiac Firebird friend Paul Nixon (who had brought our 1970 GTO convertible project car back to life many years before) had just built a new 40x60 machine shed, and was once again interested in working on a project.



The chassis was completely taken apart, down to the last nut and bolt and bracket, and cleaned with chemical-stripper or a wire brush-cup drill attachment, or both. The body had the interior was re-done, and the body was mated back onto the re-done chassis in mid-December.

By year's end we had the car yard drivable with a rebuilt 400 CID



Car of the Month



Car of the Month

service replacement RA-IV short block (rebuilt by MJB Machine) and installed underneath the original RA-IV top-end, and I drove the car (for the first time in 15 years) around Paul's parking lot.



The remaining details were wrapped up in April of 2007 and we got the car licensed and on the road just in time for the 2007 GTOAA Nationals, which were in Columbia Ohio that summer. There the car scored a Silver Award in the Concours Modified Car Show, and we were thrilled us to no end with that result!

Car of the Month

Over the next few years, we have taken it to other local shows, and a few other GTOAA Nationals, most recently the 2017 event hosted by the Gateway GTO Association in Springfield IL

Future plans include a re-finishing-up of the undercarriage as it seems corrosion and rust never sleep! As for my first 1970 GTO Judge, we did sell it shortly after we bought the 69, but that's another story for a different day.





Presidents Scoop

The Presidents Scoop

By Terry Schott

May has finally arrived and there are car shows around town almost every weekend. The weather has gotten a lot nicer, but we just can't seem to get out of the rain. Although it's a hassle for us trying to plan events, it pales in comparison to the real problem a lot of people have with the flooding. The Mississippi, Meramec and Missouri rivers are all creating a lot of problems. Let's hope the rain stops soon for everyone's benefit.

The weather for the Easter car show was excellent this year, a lot better than in 2018 when it actually snowed some of the day of the show. There were more than a dozen cars from both Gateway GTO as well as the Arch Chapter of POCI. Everyone there enjoyed the beautiful day.

Those of you who missed our May meeting missed out on a great speaker. Thanks to Earl Lewis, Rich Dinkel, "Roamin' Rich", our guest speaker, gave a great presentation at our meeting. Rich is head of the St. Louis Chapter of the Route 66 Association and very active in restoration projects on Rt. 66. He showed most of a 1 hour video that he completed over the course of 2 years. It is aerial views taken from a drone of Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica. The aerial views give a different perspective of the road and allow you to see portions of the unpaved road that most of us never get to see. He is very knowledgeable on the "Mother Road" from its early beginnings and knows a lot of stories of the towns and events that took place over the years. His talk lasted almost 1 ½ hours, but everyone seemed to really enjoy it. I held a very brief meeting afterward to cover a few things.

On Saturday, May 4, the Immanuel Lutheran St. Charles Parade was scheduled to start at 10 AM. Our club was asked to provide cars again this year to give rides for Veterans in the parade from the church on 6th Street in St. Charles to Blanchette Park. We had a commitment for 10 cars which was what they had requested. As everyone knows, during the week prior to the event, it rained every day. The forecast was for clear on Saturday but as the week progressed it changed back to morning showers. Saturday morning it was still raining in some areas. I didn't get the final word on the parade status till 8 AM. Even though some of the group had to start out driving in the rain, everyone showed up to make the event. By 9:30 the weather had turned out beautiful and the roads had dried. The people there continued to thank us throughout the event. They really appreciate us transporting the Veterans and claim that the event seems to get bigger every year. They feel that having our cars there is a big part of the continued growth. I want to thank everyone who came out to the event to make it a success. We had more cars than we had Veterans, but they wanted to be sure if more Veterans were available, we could fill their needs. The support of our membership is the reason why the Gateway GTO Club continues to





Presidents Scoop



be one of the best chapters in the GTOAA. The members in attendance were Marty Howard, Ron Wildebrandt, Frank & Cheryl Chapman, Chris Winslow, Tom Oxler, Earl Lewis, Harry Timmermann, Craig Glenn, Jon Havens and myself.

Our next club event will be a road rally hosted by Mark & Sandra Melrose, on Saturday, June 1. It will have cars from Gateway GTO as well as the Arch Chapter of POCI. These are always fun events. Mark your calendar and we will be sending out more information as it becomes available.

On Sunday, June 2nd, there is an "Orphan Car Show" at the Museum of Transportation on Barrett Station Road. I will send out more info on it, as well. Hope to see you at both events.



Be sure to note that the convention site is up and can be accessed at www.gtoaa.org





Gateway GTO Meeting Minutes



Minutes 5/2/19

7:01PM – Meeting Start – Guest Speaker
'Roamin' Rich Dinkela put on a presentation and showed a video about Route 66.

8:30 – Old Business –

Will Bowers talked about the Easter Car Show

Chris Winslow talked about a hacker problem with the club's website.

8:32 – New Business –

Terry Schott talked about Immanuel Parade Ride for Veterans.

Terry Schott talked about D and O insurance now being available from Hagerty. We will get a quote.

8:33 – Upcoming Events –

5/18 – BacStoppalooza Car Show. 10:30-5:00PM at Chesterfield Premium Outlet Mall

6/1 – Road Rally, POCI and Gateway GTO

6/2 – Museum of Transport Orphan Car Show. Upper Lot 11:00-2:00PM

6/25-6/29 – GTOAA National Convention in Lawrenceburg, IN (CSE)

6/28 – Street Legends Reunion Breakfast – 2019 GTOAA Convention

8/2-8/4 – Ames Tri-Power Nationals, Norwalk, OH

8/24 – Meals for a Million (CSE)

9/8 – Wheels in Motion Charity Car Show (CSE)

9/21-9/22 – Pontiac Regional event, Pontiac, IL (CSE)

10/6 – Gateway GTO Club Picnic (CSE)

12/7 – Gateway GTO Christmas Party (CSE)

8:38 – GTOAA –

Tom Oxler talked about total national membership and statistics about members.

8:41 – Tech – Terry Schott talked about light bulb issues on his GTO

8:42 – Club Personals –

Jon Havens is recovering from surgery

Barb Lewis is retiring

Jeff and Debbie Bond are moving to Florida

Chris Simmons' mother passed away

8:45 – Motion to Adjourn by Paula Winslow, seconded by Craig Glenn.

50/50 of \$31 won by Joe Mayweather



GATEWAY GTO ASSOCIATION

Membership/**Renewal** Form

(Please print clearly)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Associate Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Cell Phone: () _____

E-mail Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Year & Body Style of Car(s) **ALL PONTIACS:**

Auto related interests, hobbies or talents:

GTO Association of America membership number: _____

GTO Association of America membership renewal date: _____

(found on address label of *Legend*)

PLEASE FILL IN ALL FIELDS

And mail with check to:

Will Bowers, Treasurer
Gateway GTO Association
1 Goshen Woods Lane
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Membership dues are \$35.00 per year, which includes you and one associate member (spouse, girlfriend, etc.) and your GTOAA yearly membership.



Route 66 Cruise Day 14

GTOAA ROUTE 66 STREET LEGENDS CRUISE

BY G. TOM OXLER

Day 14

September 30, 2018

Kingman, AZ to Needles, CA



We begin our last day, Day 14, losing our remaining Arizona friends and picking up a Grand Prix from Nevada for a total of 26 vehicles. The weather looks great and the members planning to go to Santa Monica will follow us to Needles and then continue on into California to spend the night closer to their destination.

We have a later start today as this is our shortest day at just 75 miles but it may prove to be one of the best with the Road to Oatman. Several of us meet at Mr. D's Diner for breakfast and then proceed to our Driv-



Route 66 Cruise Day 14



ers Meeting at the Powerhouse Museum which is also the Route 66 Visitors Center for Kingman, AZ. We all take the Museum tour and then get our group picture with Sharon Wildebrandt showing off here new shirt.

Once outside Kingman, we begin our trek on the Oatman Highway. Our first stop is at Cool Springs which was built in 1926 and was used in the Van Damme movie Universal Soldier. The scenery from here is unbelievable and the GTOs and Pontiacs out front just add to the great photos.

The Oatman Highway was made famous in the Henry Fonda film, Grapes of Wrath. The film depicted the difficulty the old cars had getting up the steep and twisted road on their way to California. Some legends say they went backwards because reverse was a lower gear or the reverse clutch was better or the fuel was gravity fed and they would run out of fuel going forward. Needless to say, the GTOs and Pontiacs had no trouble getting up with their huge amounts of torque but the hairpin turns tested the turning radius of several cars. No one had to back up but the Pink Cadillac came close.

The Oatman Highway is 19 miles to Sitgreaves Pass then 4 more twisting miles into the town of Oatman, AZ. Oatman has a population of 128 and has maybe more burrows than people. Oatman started as a mining town in



Route 66 Cruise Day 14

1915 when miners struck gold. The miners brought burrows to help haul the gold out of the mines. When the gold played out, the burrows were set free and are now wild, breeding and meeting everyone who comes into Oatman. They are quite tame but be careful as they fight over food and as Dave Sindelar can attest, they can kick quite hard if you get in the middle of one of their squabbles.

Our lunch destination was the Oatman Hotel where all of the walls and ceiling are lined with dollar bills. There has to be several hundred thousand dollars on the wall as the hotel and restaurant are fairly large. You can take the tour of the hotel and go up to the second floor to see the room Clark Gable rented with Carol Lombard on their honeymoon in 1939. The hotel was originally built in 1902 as the Dublin Hotel but it burned in 1921 and was rebuilt as the Oatman Hotel in 1924.



The entire town is nothing but gift shops, restaurants and ice cream stores. The ladies were all over the gift shops while the guys were watching Sue Vie avoid the presents left in the street by the burrows.





After about 2 hours in Oatman, we herded up the GTOs and Pontiacs and continued the 23 more miles to Topock, AZ which lies on the eastern shore of the Colorado River. We cross the river and backtrack to the very western point and view the Old Trail Bridge. This is a steel arch bridge built in 1916 that used to hold old Route 66 as it crossed the Colorado River from Arizona into California. When the Interstate came through, the old bridge was no longer needed so the car deck was removed and a pipeline was added.

We continued into Needles, CA and our destination, the Best Western Colorado River Inn. Several more of us continued further on into California on their trek to Santa Monica and they sent us a picture of their Drivers Meeting from the Pier at Santa Monica. A well-trained bunch of Route 66 Cruisers. It was sad to see them go as we were now realizing our fantastic trip along Route 66 was coming to an end.



After a dip in the pool we headed for dinner at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant just across from the motel. Here we had our last helping of fried food, potatoes and gravy. I was really go-

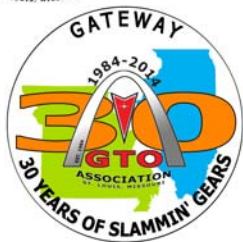
Route 66 Cruise Day 14

ing to miss eating like this but my pants and belt were constantly letting me know it would be weeks of dieting when we get back home.

We all joined in around the pool after dinner for our usual get together and night cap. It was a little sad as we had now made many new friends all over the country and we realized we might not be seeing them again for a while.

The only mechanical issue to report was that I spotted a puddle of oil in the parking lot at the hotel under Mark Melrose's 68 GTO. Several of us looked his GTO over and could not really see where it was coming from. He monitored oil consumption on the way home and took it to his local mechanic and found it was a bad oil plug in the oil pan





Year Of The 9's



Calling all owners of 1969 GTO's!

**In 2019, in celebration of:
50th Anniversary of the 1969 GTO**

The Hoodscoop will be featuring Car of the Month articles on the anniversary year

If you own one of these special cars, please get to work on your article(s) and get them to Chris Winslow



Gateway GTO Association Points Submission Form

Member Name _____

Month _____

Club Sponsored Events and Monthly Meetings

Event	With GTO (40 Points)	Without GTO (20 Points)

Total for Club Sponsored Events _____

Non Sponsored Events

Event	With GTO (10 Points)	Without GTO (5 Points)

Total for Non Sponsored Events _____

Other Activities

GTO Regional/National Event	With GTO (100 Points)	Without GTO (70 Points)

GGTOA Event Worker/Helper (50 Points) _____
Car Featured as GTO of the Month (50 Points) _____
Write an Article for *Hood Scoop* (50 Points) _____
Sign up a new GGTOA member (25 Points) _____
Have GTO featured in a National Pub (40 Points) _____

Total Points for Month

Submit completed form at GGTOA monthly meeting or to:
B. O'Sullivan
10637 St. Phillip Lane
St. Anne, MO 63074

To access form from GatewayGTO.com, click below
<http://www.gatewaygto.org/clubpoints.html>

2019 GATEWAY GTO CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

- 2 - GTO MEETING 7PM at Sports Café (CLUB SPONSORED)
- 4 - Immanuel St. Charles Church Parade - Details to follow
- 5 - Model T Club's 51st Annual Swap Meet and Car Sale at Gateway Motorsports Park
- 27 - 31st Annual Cobblestone Nationals at Fast Lane Classic Cars

June

- 1 - Road Rally with POCI - Details to follow
- 2 - Museum of Transport Orphan Car Show - Upper Lot, 11:00-2:00
- 6 - GTO MEETING 7PM at Sports Café (CLUB SPONSORED)
- 25-29 - GTOAA Nationals in Lawrenceburg, In (CLUB SPONSORED)

July

- 10 - GTO MEETING 7PM at Sports Café (CLUB SPONSORED) **NOTE THIS IS A WEDNESDAY FOR THIS MEETING ONLY!!!**

August

- 1 - GTO MEETING 7PM at Sports Café (CLUB SPONSORED)

SEE THE FULL CALENDAR AT WWW.GATEWAYGTO.ORG

Gateway GTO Classifieds

**WANTED: Hurst 4 Speed Shifter That Will
Fit In The Console
If you have one, contact Craig Glenn
at 636 293-9765**

Other Cars For Sale



1940 Ford

**350 Chevy V8
9 Inch Rear End
3 Speed Auto
Air Conditioning**

**Call Joe Mayweather
314-210-7391**

Asking \$29,000



Steve Hedrick
1516 Parkway West
Festus, MO 63028
314.640.4020 (cell, text)
636.937.3200 (office)
sthedrick@aol.com



Auto
Insurance



Home
Insurance



Life
Insurance



Renters
Insurance



Business
Insurance



Motorcycle
Insurance



Recreational
Insurance



Umbrella
Insurance

***Let us protect your life and those things you need to
make it work, we'll leave the cruising to you!***

(314) 838-5533

Jon's Tri-Power Service

Jon F. Havens
Owner

126 Afshari Drive
Florissant, MO 63034
jfhavens@sbcglobal.net

(314) 496-7368

Jonathan's Q Jet Service

Jonathan Havens

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[CLICK HERE FOR GATEWAY GTO APPAREL CLUB STORE](#)



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Advertising Guidelines

Classified ads up to 50 words are free to members; add 10 cents per word for any ad over 50 words. Payment is due upon submission. (members need to update ads at 3 month intervals or ads will be dropped). Classified ads up to 50 words for non-members are \$5.00 per issue.

Gateway GTO Club Information

The Gateway GTO Association was initially formed in the summer of 1984 by a group of seven. They all had a common interest in the Original Muscle Car, the Pontiac GTO. As a form of communication we publish a monthly newsletter called "The Hood Scoop". The purpose of this newsletter is to keep our members informed of all upcoming activities as well as providing interesting event coverage. The club meets every first Thursday of the month at Sports Café 3579 Pennridge Dr, Bridgeton, MO 63044

Membership dues are \$35.00 per year and all renewals are required to be paid by December 31st. You are allowed to have one associate member.

Gateway GTO Association Photo Album

If you have photos of past events or if you take pictures of future events that you think would be good for our Photo Album, please send them to the newsletter editor.

The Hood Scoop is published as an informative news bulletin to keep our members up to date on past, present, and future events.

Advertising rates are:

\$100 – Full page (Color or Black and White) ad in monthly *Hoodscoop* newsletter for 12 months, your logo on our Website Sponsor page, and a link to your website from our Related Website Link space.

\$50 – ½ page (Color or Black and White) ad in our monthly *Hoodscoop* newsletter for 12 months, your logo on our Website Sponsor page, and a link to your website from our Related Website Link space.

\$25 – Business Card (Color or Black and White) ad in our monthly *Hoodscoop* newsletter for 12 months, your logo on our Website Sponsor page, and a link to your website from our Related Website Link space.



As a Gateway GTO member please consider joining the GTO Association of America

**The Gateway GTO Association
is an official chapter of the
GTO Association of America
www.gtoaa.org**

**Visit us at
www.gatewaygto.org or
www.gatewaygto.com**

644 Emge Road
O'Fallon, MO 63366

