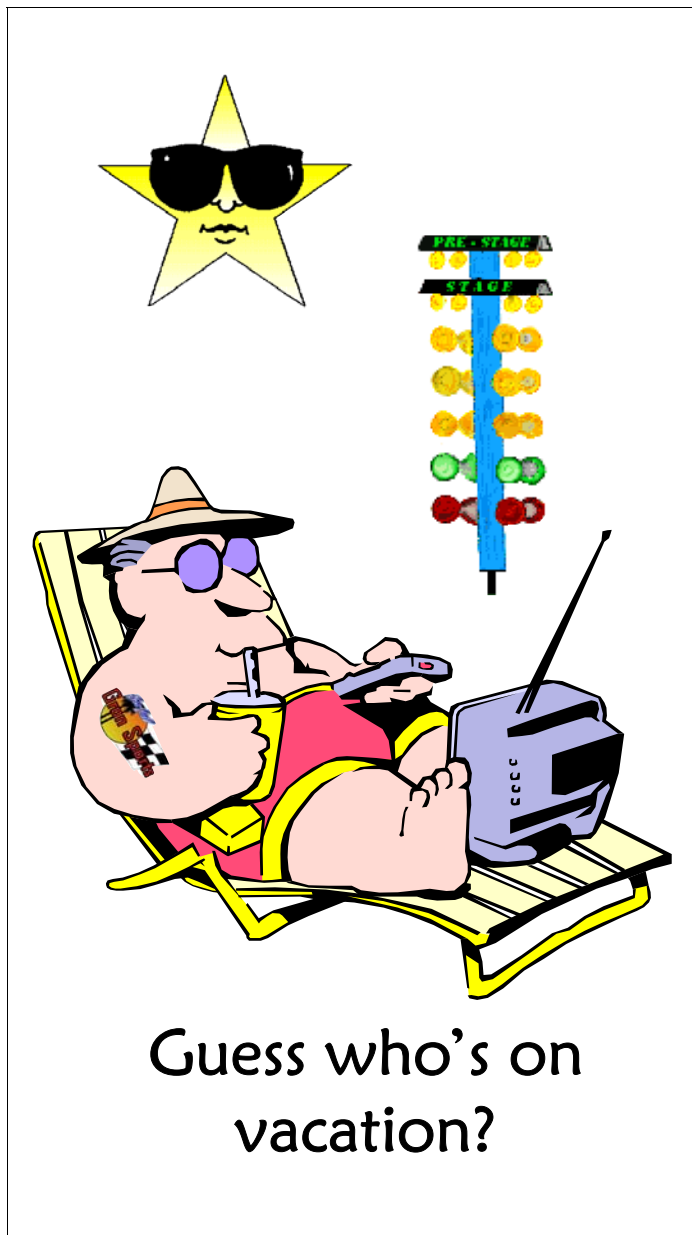
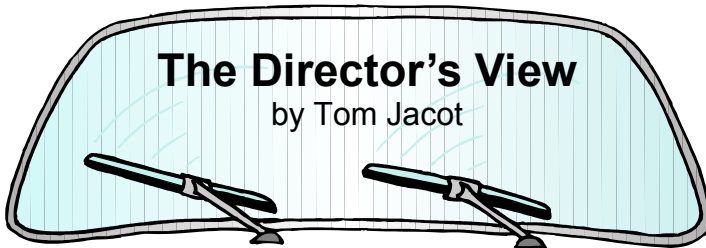


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### **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GRAN SPORTS**

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## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST CLUB MEMBERS



**Charles Capsel**  
Lancaster ('70 GS455)  
**Jim Hocking**  
Oceanside ('67 California GS)

Looks like Charles and Jim decided to start Y2K out on the right foot by joining So Cal GS. It sounds like a good idea to me. So, if you long-time members run across one or both of them at any of our events, introduce yourselves and make them feel welcome. The club has a lot to offer and I'm sure they do, too.



## Events Calendar

### MARCH

**5-Pomona** Swap Meet and Car Show-Fairplex-714 538-7091  
**12-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**19-San Diego** Car Show and Swap Meet-Qualcomm Stadium-858 484-9342

### APRIL

**2-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**8/9-Pomona**, Street Legal Drags, Raceway, \$10.00 to watch or \$15.00 to race. Pomona Raceway 24-hour hotline: (909) 392-4795 or www.nhrastreetlegal.com  
**14, 15 & 16-Palmdale**. BGNRA Buick Shootout & Team Challenge, Los Angeles County Raceway, For info call BGNRA at (714) 772-6201  
**15 & 16-Sonoma, CA** - Goodguys 12th Nitro Nationals Nostalgia Drags, Sears Point Raceway, . Muscle Cars, Race Cars, Rods, Customs and Classics thru '72. General Info: (925) 838-9876 or www.goodguysgoodtimes.com  
**16-Pomona** Swap Meet and Car Show-Fairplex-714 538-7091  
**23-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**23-San Diego** Car Show and Swap Meet-Qualcomm Stadium-858 484-9342

### MAY

**14-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**20/21-Pomona** Raceway, Street Legal Drags, \$10.00 to watch or \$15.00 to race. Pomona Raceway 24-hour hotline: (909) 392-4795 or www.nhrastreetlegal.com  
**20/21-Pomona** Fairplex, Goodguys 11th Southern California Nationals, Muscle Cars, Rods and Customs thru '72. Giant outdoor show & shine. Indoor rod, custom & racecar show. General Info: (925) 838-9876 or www.goodguysgoodtimes.com  
**21-San Diego** Car Show and Swap Meet-Qualcomm Stadium-858 484-9342

### JUNE

**4-Pomona** Swap Meet and Car Show-Fairplex-714 538-7091  
**9 & 10 (Fri & Sat) Bakersfield**, BGNRA Buick Days at Famosa Raceway. Test & tune for the GS Nationals. Racers Hotel: Claritin (formerly Days Inn) in Bakersfield @ \$58.00/night. For info call BGNRA at (714) 772-6201  
**11-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**27-July 1-Bowling Green, KY**, 2000 GS Nationals, . The best, most exciting Buick event of the year. Info: Bennett Jones in Quitman, GA (912) 263-7935 or FAX (912) 263-8167

### JULY

**8/9-Pomona** Raceway, Street Legal Drags, , \$10.00 to watch or \$15.00 to race. Pomona Raceway 24-hour hotline: (909) 392-4795 or www.nhrastreetlegal.com  
**9-Long Beach** Hot Rod Hi Performance Parts Exchange-Veterans Stadium-800 762-9785  
**16-Pomona** Swap Meet and Car Show-Fairplex-714 538-7091  
**29/30-Pomona** GoodGuys 5th West Coast Hot Rod Happenin' (Raceway, Pomona, CA. Muscle Cars, Racecars, Rods Customs & Classics thru '72. Drags, show 'n shine & exhibits. General Info: (925) 838-9876 or www.goodguysgoodtimes.com



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## TO ALL THE GREAT BUICK LADIES

(From Indiana chapter  
newsletter "Gran Sport  
Report")  
Edited by Dan Gerber

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you for all the fun we had in this hobby over the years, but especially;

Thank You for:

All the times I caused dinner to be late while I tightened that last bolt, or finished the phone call from the guy who had the part I needed or who needed a part I had.

Listening to me tell all my stories over and over. Pretending not to know why we took all those Sunday afternoon rides that always ended up looking at another Buick.

Putting up with all those parts stored under the bed and behind the furniture while our cars were under restoration.

Helping hold parts, trouble lights and handing us wrenches.

All the times you waited hours in the car while I was to be "only a minute" to get something for the car.

Putting up with the grease under my fingernails or the smell of 30-weight oil.

Not getting mad when old Betsy had vapor lock in the middle of a four-way intersection.

Your continued support and encouragement when I wanted to take all my baskets that went with that basket case and put them at the curb because it finally turned out to be a jewel.

Helping me show the proper etiquette when someone said my car wasn't original.

Being my friend, my assistant mechanic, my confidant, my advisor, my guide on many road tours, my wise accountant when my wants exceeded my

balance sheet.

And for finding that extra buck when I really needed it

And yes, there is something more powerful than a Stage One

Something smoother the turbo whine of a GN

Something more elegant than a Park Avenue.

Something more substantial than the sheet metal in a 1975 Electra 225.

Those things are you.

Thank you for all your help in making this club a success.

**Thank you all for being Great Buck Ladies!**



## 2000 GS NATIONALS . . .

### One More Time

You've made your hotel reservations for the GS Nationals, haven't you? If not, you're going to find that the more popular hotels are already booked solid. Refer back to the November/December, 1999 "Wildcat Express" for a comprehensive list of hotels in the Bowling Green, KY area. The national GSCA club members have an even larger list of accommodations in the latest GSX-TRA at their disposal, too. The bottom line is, **make your reservations now...** even if you're only thinking about going. After all, you can always cancel them later.

This year's event runs from Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. Stay over Saturday for the best airfares. In case you need a break from Buicks, there's plenty of 'tourist-y' stuff to do, too. If you have any questions about accommodations, you may also call Tom Jacot, our new director, at (714) 539-7599.

## March/April Wildcat Street Legal Drag Status

Contributed by Dan Gerber

February 20, 2000 by Jim Partridge

I want to thank all my friends at the races for your support. We can all be proud of helping develop the world famous Street Legal program. What started out as somewhat of a novelty has become a major segment of the sport of drag racing. The program that was founded and developed at Pomona Raceway now serves as a model for all other tracks to follow. Today, virtually every track in America has a Street Legal program.

We were fortunate to have the world-class Pomona facility available to experiment with program formats. Together we learned what it takes to provide the best racing experience for the street legal "hobby" racer. The program has enjoyed huge success, as proven by the overwhelming numbers that come out to race. The street racing scene now seems like a waste of time after racing at the track, where there are "no turns, no traffic and no trees". Just try bragging about how quick your car is now without a time slip from Pomona Raceway to prove it.

Unfortunately, as most of you know, the program at Pomona Raceway is going away at the end of this year. It was no surprise to most of us that were working on the program. But, despite our proactive efforts to minimize the impact on the neighbors to the North, this is the last year of street legal racing at Pomona Raceway. I won't go into what I feel is right or wrong about all of it, but I do want to make it clear that we did our best to keep the program alive. And, the staff at NHRA and Fairplex also worked very hard to find a solution that would keep the Street Legal and the Junior Drag League programs alive. However, the agreement between Fairplex and the city of LaVerne dictates what can and can't be run at the raceway.

With that being said... Due to the realignment of departments in NHRA and in an effort to more effectively manage the many programs at the raceway, the Street Legal program at Pomona Raceway is now under the direction of Stan Adams for the remainder of the season. I want to wish him the best.

WHAT CAN YOU DO! Keep the faith. The Street Legal program is not dead (only at Pomona it will

be). There is an ongoing effort to find suitable sites to develop a new street legal track. I have been working closely with the staff at NHRA and others to find an alternative location. I cannot give any details on the progress of the effort, but be assured that by this time next year there will be at least one new track in Southern California to go Street Legal racing. Will it be the same as at Pomona? Yes it will. We (you and I) worked very hard to formulate the program in a way that satisfied the most without sacrificing the important elements. So it only makes sense to continue with what worked best.

Many of you have asked if there was someone you could write letters to. While I don't believe it would change anything at Pomona Raceway, your letters of support would go a long way in helping secure our next track. Believe it or not, many public officials don't know much about drag racing and don't realize what positive and wonderful people enjoy our sport. Having a fist full of letters of support from all of you would really help our cause.

I don't want to put words into your mouth, but your letters should indicate you are looking forward to finding a new location to race. We want to convey to our future hosts that we are good people who will benefit the city in a positive way.

In your letter, please tell a little about yourself. The city will want to know that you are a good citizen, so tell them about how much your family loves to watch you race (or how much your family loves to watch you leave home to go racing). The city will want to know how much drag racing means to you, so tell them how many years you have been racing and what having a place to legally drag race means to you.

Also, mentioning what you do for a living convey to the city that we are their peers and not the people that unfortunately seem to make the nightly news by racing on the street illegally.

You were all very good at quickly dropping me a note of support. If you could be as quick to send me those positive letters, I could sure use them in the next few weeks. You can mail them to:

Jim Partridge  
c/o NHRA  
2035 Financial Way  
Glendora, CA 91741

Or if you prefer, you can e-mail them to me.

Jim@nhrastreetlegal.com

Thanks again and I will see you at the races.

Thanks,  
Jim Partridge



## BUICK PERFORMANCE & REFERENCE INFORMATION

by Gordon Hanson

Just a few weeks before my employer, Lockheed-Martin Skunkworks, felt compelled to terminate Internet and outside email capabilities to its employees who use a computer (and that's a whole other story), I came across a website which should be of interest to all us GS (and Regal) enthusiasts. The website is [www.dickmillerracing.com](http://www.dickmillerracing.com). Probably some of you have already found it.

Dick Miller is a long-time Oldsmobile racer and enthusiast, based in Memphis, Tennessee, I think, who has raced almost everything from stockers on up. Since Oldsmobile intermediates area a close first cousin of our Skylarks and Gran Sports, a lot of Dick's information is applicable to us.

Besides marketing suspension components for coil spring cars, his website carries an in-depth technical article (in three parts) about how a drag racing coil spring suspension car works and reacts to changes made through modifications and adjustments. This article was also in Popular Hot Rodding Magazine about a couple of years ago or so.

Please check out this website for lots of good information applicable to our cars. I think you will find it useful and informative.

On another matter, in early 1996, Donna and I, along with a few others from our church, drove down to Los Angeles and visited the Petersen Automotive Museum. All the exhibits, displays, cars, history and chronology of the American automobile and its history relating to Southern California was extremely interesting.

Just before we left to have lunch and return home, we browsed through the gift shop and book section of the museum. While poring

through the various publications, I came across one which I ended up purchasing. Authored by Bill Holder and Philip Kunz, the book is entitled Buick Muscle Cars, and is available through Motorbooks International in Osceola, WI.

Within its pages are chapters on Buick history, the Century, Skylark, Wildcat, Riviera, Centurion, Gran Sport, GSX, Turbo Regals, Grand Nationals, pace cars, etc. I purchased this book for \$19.95 at the time, and have found it to be extremely interesting and informative. I will try to bring it to the next club meeting so you can check it out.



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## Buick Power Prevails at Monterey

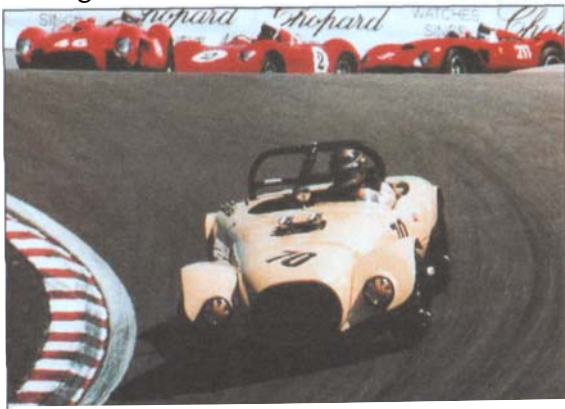
Contributed by Chris Lee

The morning of the 26th annual Monterey Historic Automobile Races dawned like so many others along the California coast just north of Big Sur - foggy, cool and threatening drizzle. But by the time the legendary late-'50s vintage Old Yeller 11 Buick Special took to the track for its class race, the day had warmed and spectators were eager to see these classic machines go head-to-head.

Old Yeller II, owned by Ernest Nagamatsu, was joined in the heat by two other Buick-powered racers of the era as well as the usual contingent of Jaguars, Aston Martins and Ferraris. In addition to Nagamatsu's machine, two other nailhead-powered Old Yellers from Max Balchowsky's stable competed—Old Yeller III and Old Yeller IX.

Buick power prevailed in the race. While Old Yeller II suffered a broken accelerator pedal and finished at the back of the pack, Peter Shea's Old Yeller IX led the class from start to finish.

More Buick power had hit the track in the preceding heat as competitors included Richard Seifried's 1995 Kurtis Murphy Buick and Bob Lytle's Buick-engined 1953 Allard J2X.



Old Yeller 11, piloted by owner Ernest Nagamatsu, leads a pack of European exotics in a 1997 race at Laguna Seca.

On display at the races but not competing was Tom McRae's replica 1930s-era Buick-powered Shafer 8 Indy racer.

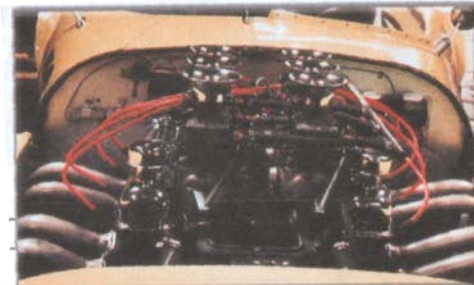
The show of Buick iron at Monterey demonstrated Buick's strong heritage of creating powerful and reliable engines, a trait that continues today with the Series H 3800 V6 found in the Buick Park

Avenue, LeSabre and Regal.

The Old Yeller story began in the late 1940s, when Balchowsky moved from West Virginia to Glendale, Calif., and decided to pursue his love of cars. He opened Hollywood Motors, a conversion shop that mixed hot rodding and the budding field of sports car racing.

In those days, sports car racing took place at makeshift tracks and was dominated by European machines. Balchowsky and his wife, Ina, developed the perfect match of raw horsepower/torque and nimble handling that would allow their cars to compete with the best Europe had to offer.

Balchowsky first dropped a Cadillac engine and transmission into a channeled '32 Ford roadster. Later, he replaced the engine with a Buick V8 and christened the car the Bu-Ford Special.



The potent 401-cubic-inch Buick V8, with its unique nailhead design, still powers the car.

The Bu-Ford Special produced 310 horsepower on 91 octane gas and was so successful that it set the stage for many Buick Specials to come.

Old Yeller was born in the mid-1950s when Balchowsky bought a Morgensen Special with a Plymouth engine, which he replaced with a modified 364-cubic-inch Buick V8. With its variety of junkyard parts, the car was a mongrel, but it eventually bested all the finest European cars in every major sports car race on the West Coast. So, with a nod to the car's "junkyard dog" heritage and the popular Disney movie of the era (and the Balchowsky's' own golden retriever, Ted), the Morgensen Special became known as the first "Old Yeller Buick Special."

In 1959, an all-new Old Yeller II, with a Buick 401-cubic-inch nailhead V8, was rolled out. The car featured a grab bag of parts from Pontiacs, Studebakers, Jaguars and Morris Minors, with a hand-formed aluminum body, and attracted such attention on the racing circuit that it was piloted by some of the best drivers of the era. Among them were Dan Gurney, Carroll Shelby and Bob Bondurant.