



Gateway GTO's Annual Christmas Party

By Chris Winslow



The final event for Gateway GTO for the year is always our annual Christmas party. It is a time for all of us to get together for fun and some great food.

For many years Sandra Melrose, with help from Mark, has been the driving force behind this event. Sandra officially retired from this role in 2022, so for this year Paula took on the daunting task of planning the event. With some helpful pointers from Sandra, and some party planning guidance and assistance from Laura Fox (who plans parties for Tom's fire department gatherings), Paula dug in and planned a great event.

The theme for this year was Bring Your Sparkle to the Winter Wonderland so sparkle was the order of the day. This included both the decorations for the event as well as outfits for many of the attendees.

Attendance this year was excellent with 51 members at the event. Some members, including the Sullivans, the Finkenbinders, the Wildebrandts and the Sideners came a long way to attend.

The food for this year came from Kendrick's and it was excellent. Everyone must have agreed as there was very little food left over at the end to take home.

After dinner, I made a few announcements. First was to recognize Rich Hentschel from Hagerty. Although Rich has since left Hagerty, before he did he once again got Hagerty to chip in \$500 to our party. This is a huge help as this event is very expensive. I also reminded everyone that the official date for the Gateway GTO Pizza Party for 2023 as January 14th. In addi-



GTOAA 2024 Convention Preview



tion, I recognized some of the people that regularly help me during the year to keep Gateway GTO running smoothly. Recognized were Gail Schott who has been proofing the newsletter for a number of years now, Marty Howard for helping to organize a number of activities in 2023, Jim McCarthy for keeping the club roster up to date, Earl Lewis for all of his 50/50 and other fund raising efforts, and Tammy Hedrick for her work helping us with the tabulating of our Regional Car Show in Pontiac.

I also announced the results of the officer elections for the 2024/2025 slate of officers. All of the current officers were re-elected with the exception of Tom Oxler as the GTOAA Chapter Rep. Tom has decided to step back on that role so Steve Hedrick will be taking over starting in January.



One of the things Paula struggled with for a while was a good game for the party. Ultimately she found a game called Build a Snowman. It was a hit at the party and several members have since asked for the details so that they could play it at their family parties.

Following that, we had our traditional rob your neighbor gift exchange. This year the most popular gift was a Route 66 neon sign. It changed hands a lot. I even had it briefly, but ultimately it went home with Tom Oxler.

Our party this year was a great event and everyone really enjoyed themselves. Thanks to Paula and Laura for their hard work to plan such a fun party!