

GTO of the Month

Dave and Diane Huesgen 2005 GTO



I'm Dave Huesgen and my wife Diane, who is for me "beyond comparison" for just over 30 years, are both co owners of a "**totally stock**" 2005 Phantom Black Metallic GTO with the manual 6 speed and 17 inch wheels ... lotsa fun and cool at the same time!

We are also the very proud parents of two daughters ... Jennifer and Julie! At 26 years old, Jennifer is our oldest and after first earning her degree at SLU is a Registered Nurse for over five years caring for tiny newborn babies at Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center in their Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Our other daughter Julie, is following in her older sister's footsteps and is in her last year of Nursing School while also working in the same Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Cardinal Glennon ... considering all of their daily life saving challenges ... I'd rather be driving my GTO ☺!

In the meantime, I am the Director of Materials Management and Purchasing for a direct selling, nutritional food products marketer/manufacturer operating as Reliv International ... and Diane is a registered Real Estate Agent working right here in St. Charles county for Susan Brewer's Service First Real Estate Company.

My history as a "car guy" started with a '69 Chevy Nova that also started out "**totally stock**" but was eventually filled with a lot of fun car stuff like a Holley Carburator, Hooker Headers, Aluminum Slotted Mag wheels and Gabriel air shocks that jacked up the back end and provided great fun for cruzin ... once I had my new Eight Track Player, that is!! I'm sure you all recall what an affordable pastime "cruising" was when gas prices where less than 50 cents per gallon! Friday and Saturday night cruises always included trips around town going from various Steak N' Shakes to Jack In the Boxes, to the White Castles and back to yet another Steak N' Shake! Don't ya'll recall how much fun a night full of hot-roddin' around with other "car guys" and their other Muscle Cars of that time, like the Trans Ams, SS Chevy's, Boss Mustangs and Plymouth Road Runners? BUT ... the one Muscle Car that seemed to stand out above and beyond most, if not all of the rest of that era ... at least in my

mind ... was the '69 GTO Judge! How cool it was with the functional Ram Air, all of its "The Judge" decals and hood tachometer. While my Nova was never a challenge to "The Judge", my Mom's '70 Dodge Challenger with the 340 cid motor provided its own fun amount of "oomph" off the line ... that is, whenever she'd let me drive it for the night! ☺

After graduating from UMSL, and considering all of the "detuning" of American Muscle Cars that was going on during the middle '70's, I considered it a perfect time to also graduate up to what would be my first red, two seater sports car. It was a 1976 Triumph TR7 from England, and wow, it was ever fun to drive with its aerodynamic styling and pretty quick 2 liter motor with dual carbs ... and it sat so low! Heck, with all of the performance "wing clipping" that was happening back then, I was elated with the performance of my little red sports car. Did you know that it was also ranked by one of the major national car magazines like Road & Track as having one of the fastest combination times of 0 – 60 mph and 60 – 0? While the TR7 was pretty quick off the line, it's brakes were just excellent and it would virtually stop on a dime (or if you prefer mate, a British Pound)!!

Then in the early '80's, Pontiac redesigned and developed the third generation Trans Am ... of which I had to have one! So in 1983 Diane and I picked out a black Trans Am with the big gold screaming bird hood decal on it! We loved our very own "Knight Rider car" for a whopping total of only 3 months ... that is until I lost the battle up against a telephone pole.



That was a real bummer, 'cuz while the new Trans Am was totaled, we had to replace it with a Buick Regal ... for obvious insurance purposes! Who woulda thought that a Buick first got me way back then and now, got me once again, since GM has in essence replaced all Pontiacs with Buicks ... OUCH!

After driving the Buick Regal forever (seemingly ☺), we drove up to Behlmann Pontiac in 1995 and found hidden away in an offsite warehouse, a bright white 1995 Grand Prix Special Edition. It had the GTP package "boasting" 210 horsepower in a "hopped up" 3.4L V6 DOHC 24V FI Engine ... I say "hopped up" because I found it ironic that this "little six" had 35 more horses than was in my 1983 Trans Am's 5.0 liter (305 cid) motor! Mechanically speaking, my Grand Prix was excellent ... other than changing oil and tires, repairs were non existent. As a matter of fact, it still had the original exhaust system on it after 125,000 miles. Considering that this was my best overall car experience, that is since my original Chevy Nova, the Grand Prix Special Edition ended up being my first chance to get back into a Pontiac ... of which it ultimately ended up being my warm up car for the next arrival in the Huesgen's garage ... the 2005 Pontiac GTO.

They say that timing is everything. My Grand Prix just happened to be nearing its point of replacement when Pontiac announced that they were reintroducing the legendary muscle car nameplate GTO for the 2004 model year. I was inspired as to what my next new car would be ... the GTO! I owned a great running front wheel drive Grand Prix sport compact for almost 10 years and so I once again returned to Behlmann Pontiac to test drive the new rear drive return of the original Muscle Car, the 2004 GTO. What a great car ... so the decision was made ... I had to have one ... The Great One that is!

While the limited production and availability of the 2004 GTO's was initially frustrating, it ended up being a blessing for me ... timing once again ... because during the interim, Pontiac announced the upcoming changes for the 2005 GTO ... i.e. the extra 50 horsepower, 50 lb-ft. torque, hood scoops and split dual exhaust tips ... "extra cool" ... so I waited for the 2005's!

During my continuing saga in my search for a 2005 GTO, I moved my efforts, negotiations, final purchase and delivery to the dealership where my Dad had worked in their Body Shop right after he got out of the Army ... and that was McMahon Pontiac. My initial concerns of a muscle car from Australia were alleviated by a couple things ...

1. Corvette LS2 motors and Tremec 6 speed transmissions, and
2. A GM Extended Warranty through June 30, 2010.

We took initial delivery on June 30, 2005 which also happens to have been ...

1. my Birthday and Wedding Anniversary in addition to
2. being right in the middle of the 2005 GTOAA National's being held in St. Louis by who else, the **Gateway GTO Association**. Ironically this happened to be the first of our two GTOAA National's that Diane and I have now attended. Shortly thereafter we joined the GTOAA.

Within a couple weeks of picking up the Goat, I had a 3M clear bra installed on it. This protected the front paint finish on the hood, complete bumper/headlight area and outside r/v mirrors from rock dings. We also got the windows tinted darker ... so ... beyond that and the installation of a K&N filter element, our GTO remains "**Stock as a Rock**". Does the radar detector count? Back to the clear bra and window tints ... in my opinion, the one is very effective at protecting the outside of the car while the other cools down and helps protect the leather surfaces of the interior of the car ... i.e. protection inside and out!

While many 2004 - '06 GTO owners have had considerable problems documented with their suspensions, we've been lucky in that regard too! While both of the right side tires had considerable inside tire wear requiring replacement at only 15,000 miles ... McMahon Pontiac's excellent Service department traced my problem to defective rear coil springs which they replaced under GM's Warranty. They also reimbursed me for two tires while also replacing the other two tires ... all traced by McMahon to this problem with the rear coil springs. Tire wear on the replacements is virtually nil after another approximate 12,000 miles of tire usage since the replacement of the rear springs with stock GM parts.

Now, back to the fun part of owning the Goat ... **DRIVING IT** ... while we've always enjoyed the intermittent cruises set up via LS2GTO.com, our level of enjoyment really improved after we joined and started participating as members of the **Gateway GTO Association**. As a matter of fact, this year alone, we've participated in the King Louie's Drive In Spring 2009 Cruise, the Taste of Cottleville and Car Show and even more recently and importantly, the GTOAA/POCI Co-vention in Dayton, Ohio where our GTO placed 2nd overall in Popular Vote for Stock 04 - 06 GTO Coupes ... what a thrill!! Even though we were unable to get to Dayton until Thursday, Diane and I had non-stop fun while at

this event! This was true, whether we were just hanging out with other “Club” members or while touring the almost 1,100 POCI and GTOAA members’ Show Cars at the Nutter Center, or having Dinner Under the Wings, or enjoying the rock music of the Scotty Bratcher Band under another star lit night! But wait a minute ... did I forget to mention the fun in the sun we had on the bright, sunny afternoon out at the Drag Strip watching the related drag racing competition?? The only thing that would’ve made the Show any better is if I’d taken my car cover ... oh well ... that won’t be necessary at next year’s GTOAA Nationals in Wichita, KS!

HAPPINESS is ... owning and driving a GTO Muscle Car while you still can ...!

