

THE RUNNING BOARD

OCTOBER 2026



THE RUNNING BOARD

Established 1970

July 2026

Orange County Chapter
Buick Club of America

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Turn the page. The journey continues.

The Running Board is the volunteer-created, official monthly newsletter of the Orange County Chapter, Buick Club of America, and is not produced for commercial sale.

A Note from the Editor

Sometime in the middle of the night the voice whispered to me...

Write a story for October.

Not just any story.

Something ... *different*.

At first I felt a bit overwhelmed.

My plate was already full assisting to get the October 10, All Buick Car Show at the Fullerton Airport ready to knock everyone's socks off.

Then I was compelled to indulge my creative writing skills in a whole new manner.

The excitement and unknown - all wrapped up together into one uncertain bundle.

Can I do it?

Will they like it?

What if they don't?

The voice was louder this time:

Write the story.

Then it came to me. I KNEW the story.

All the thoughts and emotions became lost in the background as I typed the words on the electronic pages.

One page. Two pages. Three pages. More followed.

The words kept flowing. Then they stopped.

A couple spell checks, several re-reads for grammar and punctuation and then passed by the discerning eyes and mind of Dino. Thumbs up.

This has been one of the most extensive pieces I have written, including outside the Club, and it was definitely a personal stretch.

I hope you enjoy.

And if you don't, well, perhaps there IS a reason people are afraid of the dark.

Muahahahahahahaha.....

Jessica Chandler
Editor,
The Running Board
Buick Club of America
Orange County Chapter



The Driver's Seat

Greetings, Buick Enthusiasts!

October is finally here, and our All Buick Western Regional Show is right around the corner! We have over 50 cars registered at this point, and I am certain that number will continue to grow right up to—and including—the day of the show on October 10th.

The Board has worked hard to make this a wonderful experience for everyone in attendance, and as an “insider,” I will say the array of cars entered is incredible. If you have not signed up yet, please do! If your Buick isn’t able to make the show but you are, come as a spectator and enjoy the camaraderie. **Better yet, volunteer! We’ll need all hands on deck to make this show a success. No experience necessary—we’re perfectly capable of putting you to work.**

September was a busy month for the Club. Thanks to Rory for hosting members at the September 12th South OC Cars & Coffee event in San Clemente. Those who attended had a great time, and there were a handful of Buicks showcased besides our own—not to mention an entire section dedicated to classic American cars. We also had our annual picnic on September 26th. As always, it was great to see everyone—and their Buicks—at Irvine Regional Park. Thanks to all who came and contributed to the potluck. It is so refreshing to spend time together in a relaxed environment, sharing stories about our cars and life in general.

The highlight for me was hearing about the work Marty did on Sonny's '63 Riviera over 20 years ago—and the test drive afterward to prove the job was done right! Marty, can I enlist you to help me with my car? I definitely want to replicate the burnouts and donuts.

Looking beyond our show at Fullerton Airport, we'll be back at Marie Callender's on October 17th for our regular monthly meeting. It will be a great opportunity for a post-show recap and to share ideas for improving the Club experience as we head into 2027.

As always, thank you for being the best part of the OCC BCA.

See you in Fullerton!

Jeff Shugarman

Director

Buick Club of America

Orange County Chapter



A vintage Buick Wildcat is shown from a rear three-quarter view, driving on a winding coastal road. The car is dark-colored with chrome accents and a California license plate that reads "ROAD STORY". The background features a dramatic sunset over the ocean, with the sun low on the horizon and its light reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds. In the upper left corner, there is a graphic of a large American flag with stars and stripes. The entire image is framed by a decorative gold border with ornate corner pieces and a central star motif.

IT'S NEVER JUST ABOUT
THE DESTINATION...

IT'S ABOUT THE **PEOPLE**,
THE **STORIES**, AND THE
MEMORIES WE MAKE
ALONG THE **WAY.**

EVENTS ATTENDED

MILES & MEMORIES



CARS & COFFEE

SEPTEMBER 12, 2026





OC Buick Command Central.







ANNUAL PICNIC

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026









THE RUNNING BOARD

ON THE HORIZON



THE RUNNING BOARD

ON THE HORIZON

OCCBCA EVENTS

Oct 10

Western Regional All Buick Car Show
Fullerton, 9:00 am

Oct 17

OCCBCA Club Meeting
Marie Callender's, Anaheim

Nov 21

OCCBCA Club Meeting
Marie Callender's, Anaheim

Dec 19

OCCBCA Club Meeting
Marie Callender's, Anaheim

Jan 2

OCCBCA Holiday Party
Newport Beach

BRAGGING RIGHTS

**CRAIG
HUGHES**

**BEST GM
DANA POINT
CAR SHOW**

**SEPTEMBER
2026**



===== MORE THAN METAL =====

THE BLACK BUICK



SOME CARS ARE REMEMBERED. SOME YOU WISH YOU COULD FORGET.

Nobody remembers exactly when people started seeing the Buick.

That is when the story starts.

Ask three people and you'll get three different decades. One will tell you his father saw it sometime in the 1960s. Another remembers hearing about it as a teenager in the '70s. Someone else will insist the story is much older than either of them.

They disagree about the road. They disagree about the year. They even disagree about the model. But they all describe the same car.

Black.

Low.

An enormous chrome grille.

And one headlight with a strange yellow glow.

It only appears in October.

One of the earliest accounts came from a man named Sheridan "Sonny" Bishop, who was driving home late one night on a two-lane Southern California road.

There wasn't much traffic in those days, particularly after midnight. Sonny had been alone for several miles when two headlights appeared in his rear view mirror.

They seemed somewhat far behind him at first. Then they weren't. Whatever was back there was moving fast.

Incredibly fast.

Sonny watched the headlights rapidly grow larger until he could finally make out the shape surrounding them. An old Buick. At least he thought it was.

The car moved into the opposing lane and began to pass. Sonny looked over.

Black paint. Chrome. A hood that seemed impossibly long.

And that grille.

He would remember the grille for the rest of his life.

The Buick pulled alongside him. And stayed there. It didn't pass. It didn't fall back. It simply kept pace.

Sonny tried to see the driver.

There appeared to be someone behind the wheel, but the interior was too dark to make out a face. It was the hands he noticed.

Pale hands. Strangely pale. They rested high on the steering wheel, long, gray fingers curled around the rim. In the intermittent wash of passing moonlight, Sonny thought they looked almost... skeletal.

He immediately looked back at the road. His foot pressed harder against the accelerator. The Buick stayed beside him.

He eased off. So did the Buick. For the next several seconds the two cars traveled together down the empty highway.

Sonny intensely stared straight ahead.

That was when he knew something was wrong. Not suspected.

Knew.

The sensation began somewhere between his shoulder blades. An uncontrollable shiver moved through his body despite the warm night air.

Something was looking at him.

Not someone.

Some Thing.

He kept his eyes on the road as never before.

Then, from the corner of his vision, he saw one of those pale hands release the steering wheel. Sonny reflexively looked.

He never told anyone what he saw. Not then. Not ever.

The Buick accelerated, almost casually. That bothered him too. He had expected it to roar away, tires screaming, engine howling—something dramatic enough to break whatever spell had settled over the road. Instead, it simply moved ahead.

One car length.

Two.

Three.

Then its tiny red taillights were gone.

Sonny drove home without stopping. He never saw the Buick again.

At least that's how the story was originally told.

Years later, someone asked him what had been driving it. Sonny couldn't answer.

More likely, he wouldn't.

There are also two versions of that story. In one, he simply walked away. In the other, he stared for a very long time at the person who had asked the question and finally said: "You don't want to know."

What we do know is he has spent the rest of his life trying to forget that October night.

It didn't work.

The question that eventually became a surprisingly contentious part of the legend was not what had been driving the Buick, rather what Buick it actually was.

Many Buick people wanted to identify the car.

Larry Minery swore it was a late-'40s Roadmaster.
Les Iden said impossible.
Tom Schay insisted the grille put it in the early '50s.

Then Alan Clark produced a drawing made from one witness's description. That only made things worse. The grille was wrong. So was the roofline. The rear quarters looked familiar, but they didn't belong with the front end. The trim suggested one year while the body suggested another. Someone recognized what looked like Roadmaster sheet metal. Somebody else pointed out that the windshield couldn't belong to the same car.

Every individual piece looked like something Buick might have built. Together, they made no sense.

As more people saw the car, the stories accumulated over the years.

Ruthie and Doug Truhn, returning home late one October night, reported a black Buick following them for nearly ten miles. They never saw it approach.

Doug happened to glance in the rear view mirror. It was already there.

He sped up. It stayed with them. He slowed down. It stayed with them.

Ruthie finally told him to pull over and let the lunatic pass. Doug started to, then, for reasons he could never explain, he changed his mind.

Years later, when somebody told them about the rules, Ruthie reportedly went silent.

A tow-truck driver, Doug Cook, saw a black Buick sitting on the shoulder shortly after two in the morning.

He slowed. There was nobody standing beside it. He passed, checked his mirror, and decided to back up to see whether the driver needed help.

The shoulder was empty. No Buick. No headlights. No dust.

Nothing.

Neil Matranga, a mechanic, encountered it at a traffic light.

He had spent most of his life around old cars and knew Buicks particularly well. At first, he admired it. Then he started looking closely. The longer he looked, the less sense the car made.

The roof was too low. The windshield was too small. The hood was too long for the wheelbase. The proportions were wrong. And the grille seemed enormous. The car was idling. He could hear the engine—a deep, uneven burble that should have been familiar. It wasn't.

There appeared to be no one inside. Then he noticed the hands.
Pale.
Motionless.
Waiting on the steering wheel.

Every hair on his body stood up.

The traffic signal remained red. The mechanic looked forward. He told himself not to look again.

The light was taking way too long. He could hear the Buick beside him. That engine. That slow, uneven idle.

He could feel a gaze upon him.

He looked....

As the light turned green, the Buick moved away—at first with that same casual acceleration and then, somewhere farther down the road, it seemed to simply...
disappear.

Neil never again drove that road at night in October.

Years later, people would ask what he had seen behind the wheel. He never told them. Once, somebody asked whether it had been a dead man. The mechanic said no. Nothing more. It was his frightened eyes that would always give him away.

By then, the story had reached local car clubs. Photographs were requested. None appeared.

Every few years someone claimed to have one. However, nobody ever seemed able to produce it.

Adding to it all, the sightings gradually became stranger. The Buick seemed to be changing.

Older witnesses remembered a fairly conventional automobile. Later witnesses described something lower.

Longer.

Darker.

The windows became smaller. The hood grew longer. And the grille—the grille seemed to be growing.

Someone eventually compared several witness drawings. None depicted quite the same automobile. Worse, none depicted an automobile Buick had ever built. Until one witness finally said what everyone else had apparently been thinking:

“I know it's a grille, but *I swear the thing was leering at me.*”

Then somebody finally photographed it. The picture wasn't particularly good. It had been taken at night from inside another car. The Buick was several lengths ahead, illuminated mostly by headlights. But there it was.

A low black body. The small rear window. Those tiny red taillights.

The photograph circulated among several old-car enthusiasts, sparking memories some of them would have preferred to leave alone.

Someone finally digitally enhanced and enlarged the photograph. That's when they noticed the license plate.

California.

Vanity plate.

Seven characters.

PRETTY1

Nobody knew what it meant.

Someone tried to locate the car. They couldn't. There were no records of the plate. No registration stickers could be seen in the photograph.

Then an older club member, Fred Rawlins, saw the picture. He didn't care about the plate. He wanted to know where the photograph had been taken. They told him.

His face changed. For several seconds he said nothing.

Then he asked exactly where. They told him.

Fred sat down.

He had seen the Buick. Forty-three years earlier on the same road. He remembered the headlights: One white, one yellow. He remembered the grille.

He remembered the hands.

And he, too, had tried to see the driver.

It was a choice he has regretted for the rest of his life.

People asked him what he'd seen. Fred wouldn't say.

That seems to be another thing the witnesses agree upon. The ones who don't look can describe the car forever. The ones who look at the driver stop talking about it.

There is one final part of the story. It concerns what you're supposed to do if you encounter the Buick. Apparently, there are rules. Nobody knows where the rules came from. Nobody remembers who first told them. There is no written original anyone has ever found. Yet people who know the story tend to repeat them exactly the same way.

If you see the Buick approaching from the opposite direction, you're fine.

If it passes you, you're fine.

If you see its taillights disappearing ahead of you, you're fine.

But if the Buick appears in your rearview mirror...

and doesn't pass...

Don't stop.

Don't pull over.

Don't try to get a better look.

And whatever you do—don't let it disappear from your mirror. Nobody knows what happens if it does.

There are stories, of course. There are always stories. But nobody who claims to know can ever tell you where they heard them.

According to the oldest version of the legend, there is one thing nobody has ever reported seeing: the Buick arriving. It is simply...

there.

Which means that if you happen to be driving alone on an October night and glance into your rearview mirror—and a pair of headlights is suddenly behind you...

you may find yourself wondering how long they've been there.

Look carefully.

One will be white. The other may have a faint yellow glow.

Don't waste time trying to figure out specifics about the car. People have been trying to for decades.

Don't slow down.

Don't pull over.

Just keep driving.

And if the Buick moves into the other lane and pulls alongside you, keep your eyes on the road.

You may see the grille.

You may hear the engine.

You may even see those pale hands wrapped around the steering wheel.

That's all right. Keep looking straight ahead.

Because sooner or later, you *will* feel it.

That shiver running down your spine.

All the hairs on your body standing on end.

The unmistakable sensation that **something** in the other car has turned its head...

and is looking at you.

But whatever you do...

Don't look at the driver.

AWAKENING
THE
TITAN
PART 8.2
USE IT OR LOSE IT
PART DEUX



COOLING THE TITAN: THE INSTALL

The re-installation of the resurrected radiator was a piece of cake on the Roadmaster.

To paint or not to paint, that is the question.

We decided not to paint the core of the radiator. Nothing to block the functionality of the cooling system. Brand-new core, brand-new bolts, brand-new lock washers, brand-new hoses and clamps—it all made for a seamless installation. With the hood removed for easy access, the whole thing was quick and painless.

All except for one tricky part: installing the new radiator filter with the peep-glass window.

I had heard about this trick from the spiritual leader of our club. At breakfast one morning, amongst the cacophony of club-member voices, I mentioned what I was doing with the Buick radiator. He looked at me and said:

“Make sure you put a filter on there.”

Pearls of wisdom, to be sure!!!

I had never heard of a radiator filter, so this was a novelty. After breakfast, I looked it up and, lo and behold, this animal does exist!

I searched high and low, read reviews on about four different devices, and finally found one I liked from JEGS.

Once the radiator was installed and the hoses were hooked up, I pulled up the installation instructions for that particular unit. Cutting a perfectly good radiator hose to install it was a bit concerning, but as the saying goes, you have to crack some eggs to make an omelette.

Fortunately, it was no problem. The filter fit perfectly, and I cinched it down with stainless-steel clamps I got at my local Santa Ana NAPA. The ones that came in the kit were Chinese garbage.

This was an easy upgrade—simple and straightforward enough.

Or so I thought.



JEGS Radiator Filter

The one thing that didn't work out so great was the seal around the glass peep hole. They don't mention that you need to put down some sealant to make sure it doesn't leak.

After losing about a quart of coolant, I pulled the unit back off, sealed it with gasket adhesive, reinstalled it, and we were off to the races.

One of the great things about the '48 Buick Roadmaster is that the hood is relatively easy to take completely off. The radiator installation definitely benefited from having it out of the way. Everything was easier to reach, and I wasn't fighting the hood and shaving my knuckles throughout the entire process.

The other cool thing is that, when you're finished, you can drive the car around without the hood for testing purposes.

Testing purposes, of course.

I had to make sure everything was functioning correctly, so I took the Buick out for a hot lap.

And by hot, I mean it was 103 degrees!!!

That's when the radiator filter really became entertaining.

As the engine warms to operating temperature and the thermostat opens, suddenly you get a show: a torrent of green coolant flowing through the peep window and back into the top of the radiator.

No more guessing whether the water pump is working!

After an extended drive, I could watch the coolant moving through the system, watch the heat indicator stay low, and actually feel the difference in the engine bay now that the radiator wasn't plugged up and was doing what a radiator is supposed to do.

It was actually working.

I brought the Buick back to the shop for a final inspection and watched the radiator filter doing its job. It was already catching the little floaty bits still circulating in the block—the very same debris that, without the filter, would have gone straight into the radiator we had just spent a ton of money to get recored!!!

And then came the club picnic.



In-Line Radiator Filter

The vehicles were beautiful, the food was great, and the conversation and stories were wonderful.

There was only one snafu.

One of our club members—who shall remain nameless—brought his beautiful automobile, which promptly threw up a chowder of brown soup from its radiator.

Maybe a bad hose. Maybe a loose clamp.

If only he had read last month's installment of Re-Awakening the Titan about FLUSHING THE RADIATOR in the summer, perhaps this unfortunate event could have been avoided.

Hopefully, more club members will flush their radiators at Gary's Radiator Shop—say hello to Pops for me—and consider installing a radiator filter with a peep window. Being able to actually watch the coolant circulating and see the system doing its job is pretty damn satisfying.

And perhaps, someday, brown radiator chowder in our club members' automobiles will become a distant memory.

Respectfully Yours,

— Dino

Public Relations

Buick Club of America - OC Chapter



GARAGE HUMOR



BIRTHDAYS

- 3 - Elvia Figueroa (Robert)
- 7 - Neil Matranga
- 8 - Dino Changanahui (Jessica)
- 10 - Stacey Jacobi (Chuck)
- 13 - Daniela Rendon (Juan)
- 24 - Kirk Wells
- 26 - Sam Mandlin
- 26 - Doug Truhn (Ruthie)

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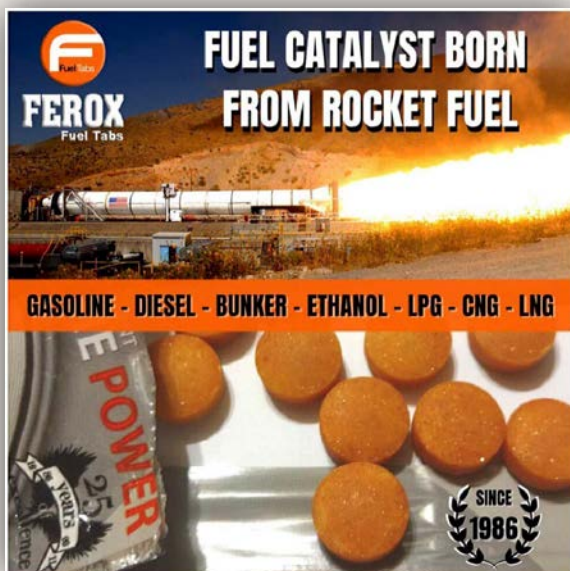
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Courtesy of Ken Mork, Lois Powers and the late Lee Wengrin.

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320 Engine Blocks: 50979357 • 68469377 • 55223287 (1949) • 54305747 • 64162284 (with cam & crankshaft) • 48674237 • 656717687 (hydraulic lifters)
Most have bearing caps.

Other Engine Parts:

10 rocker arm assemblies, believed to fit 248 & 320 engines • 320 rocker covers • 3 320 oil pans • 3 oil pumps • 3 oil filters • 8 thermostat housings • 2 torsion balancers • several timing covers • flywheel housings for 248 & 320, plus 2 bottom covers • approximately 50 pushrods in 6 different lengths—call for measurements

Pistons: 1 set of .040 pistons for a 320; fits one of the 320 blocks listed above.

Water Pumps: Casting #1336756, #1339915, #1307345

Intake Manifolds: 1937 plus 3 others, probably for 320 engines.

Exhaust Manifold Pieces: 1937 — Casting #288765, #1288764

CHASSIS & BODY PARTS

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If you know the casting numbers and corresponding years for any Straight 8 crankshafts, please send that information to Fred.

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A collection of 1962 Skylark parts is also available to Club members. Many of these parts also fit Buick Specials.

Interested or have casting-number information?

Fred Rawling
fred.rawling@live.com
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— Dino

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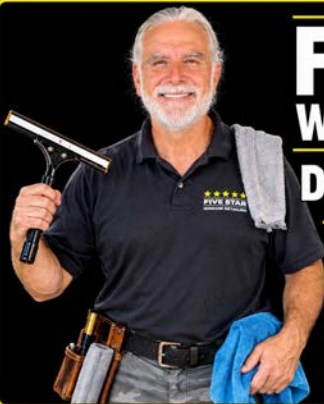
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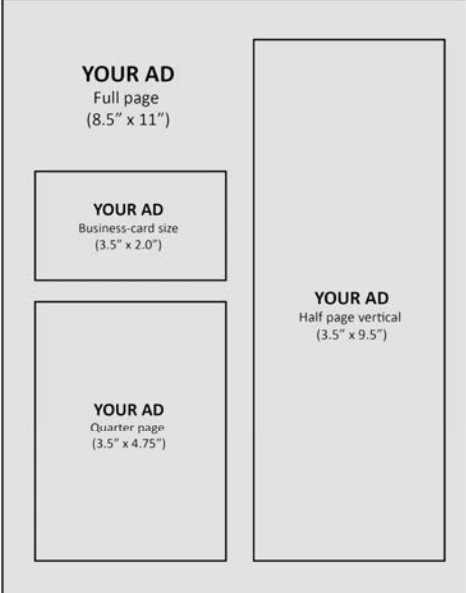
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BECOME A MEMBER

For those who know.

Membership in the Orange County Chapter of the Buick Club of America connects you with a community that values craftsmanship, history, and the stories behind every mile.

From local drives to national events, this is where Buick enthusiasts come together—not just to show their cars, but to share them.

Membership Includes:

- Monthly meetings and events
- Access to the national BCA network
- Newsletter features and member stories
- A community built on shared passion

Download your membership form: orangecounty.buickclub.org



Buick Club of America - Orange County Chapter is a chartered chapter of the Buick Club of America (BCA).

For membership in the OC Chapter, you must be a member of the Buick Club of America or have applied for membership.

For BCA Membership information visit buickclub.org

THE RUNNING BOARD

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The Running Board

The Running Board is published monthly, on the last day of the previous month.

Contributions to the newsletter are welcomed and should be received by the 15th of the month.

Submissions:

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