



# *The Spyder's Breath Gazette*

The Newsletter of the Tidewater Corvair Club

June 2012



## TCC line up for 2012 Strawberry Parade

*In this issue:*

- Press On Regardless** by *Smitty Smith* ~ **Paint Removal** by *Ed Hlusko*  
**Milestone Reached** by *Pete Jacobson* ~ **Garage Mishap** by *Bill Hubbell*  
**Starting Mystery** by *Bill Hubbell* ~ **Show Your Corvair** by *Smitty Smith*  
**The Flailex** by *Smitty Smith* ~ **Davy Crockett Drives a Corvair**  
by *Hank Horton*



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**Activities Schedule**

**June 26th - Club Social – 7:00PM** at  
Frankie's Place For Ribs  
5200 Fairfield Shopping Ctr., Virginia  
Beach, VA (757) 495-7427

**July 10th - TCC Business Meeting –**  
**7:00PM** at Colonial Chevrolet on Virginia  
Beach Boulevard in Norfolk. -  
**Refreshments - Steve Dunn**

**July 14th - Pot Luck Planning Session -**  
John & Barbara Gilliland's house, 12 noon

We want to recognize everyone's birthday!  
Please e-mail us and let us know your day of  
celebration.

**Wall of Shame**

**At this time - No One**

**Publication Notice:**

To be a full member of The Tidewater Corvair Club (TCC), you must be a member in good standing of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA). Annual dues are \$12.00 for TCC and \$38.00 for CORSA. Due to insurance requirements, only paid member may participate in Club Events. The Spyder's Breath Gazette is a monthly publication, published and distributed by TCC, Inc. This publication is available for a donation of \$10.00 annually.

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2901 Cardo Place  
Virginia Beach, VA 23453



**Corvair Society of America**  
P.O. Box 607  
Lemont, IL 60439-0607

### **Press On Regardless - by Smitty Smith**

Had a great weekend at the Vair Fair. I wondered what the heck was wrong with those sickos in Central VA moving all the way out to Lexington for a show. When we got there we found out. The location and view from the hotel was great, with small mountains and other pastoral scenery. The hotel was fine too. Nice rooms and very accommodating. All the activities were well planned and executed. Made me think we should look into going out toward Franklin for our next one where the hotels don't have all the face cards.

The "press on" part of this comes from my Spyder deciding it needed a new fan bearing about half way there. At first just a gentle whirring sound. But that soon graduated to an engine vibrating roar. With a Spyder you are talking about easily twice the work to change a fan bearing compared to a standard engine. And there are so many things that can go wrong without proper gaskets to replace super heated crumbly ones. I was considering these things as I continued to the Fair. I decided the best course of action would be to find a bearing greaser and lube the one on the engine. Normally I don't believe in bearing greasers because nobody greases one that is silent. Then when it makes its first noise it is too late. The bearing is ruined and no amount of grease will fix it. But this was a bit of an emergency. Dave Clemmons lives close by and he was going home for the evening and said he'd bring a greaser in the morning. So the next day I spent about 30 minutes moving turbo equipment out of the way so I could get to the bearing. I pumped a few pretty good shots of grease into it, and put things back together. The bearing was still

howling but I thought I might have bought a few miles to get closer to home. By then I had a backup plan.

Sunday afternoon after the awards ceremony we took off with me flying wing on Bill Hubbell's Alice. No quarter was offered or taken as we cranked up into the 70s all the way home. We'd pull into a rest stop or for gas and it would be screaming away. I raised the lid one time and it was smoking up a storm. I didn't want to see that, so I closed the lid and didn't look anymore. We made it all the way to the house, drawing curious looks from the occasional passerby.

I spent the next two days changing the bearing. Now I figure we are good for the next 20 years.

### **Paint Removal- Ed Hlusko**

Most Corvair parts have layer, upon layer of paint on them. The problem is always having to remove the paint so you can repaint the parts. Valve cover can be found in the color of the last person who thought the color was nice. Gloss, semi-gloss Black, Orange, Pink and whatever. Now comes the chore of removing that color so You can repaint it to your choice. Choices of removal are wide open.

First option is sanding and grinding the paint off. I'll just say this does not remove all the paint. Another problem, some get carried away and grind off the metal. No, not good.

Another option is to purchase a very promising, and expensive PR-15 product. It is said to be FAST ACTING and NON TOXIC. I've used it and it is fast. I won't say NON TOXIC as it ate my latex gloves. Oh, that's right, latex is also used in paint. Go figure.

I heard and saw the guy on one Saturday morning “Car Mechanic” show talk about a product that was “Guaranteed” to remove ALL paint on about any surface. I was skeptical of this. So he takes a plastic grill from a car and dips it into this stuff. Well, it wasn’t real quick to work. The Host kept coming back to the tank to “Check on the Progress”. TV car mechanics build an engine in a half hour show so this took some time. But, eventually, the grill came out about paint free. Magical product was Break Fluid. As the Mechanic said, “Never get brake fluid on a paint job. Repainting will be required.”

Skeptical of this, I took the top off of an air cleaner I had and applied brake fluid to it. I’m cheap so I only used enough to cover the metal. I put a paper towel over the fluid and saturated the towel. No, the paint didn’t just bubble up and wipe off. However, the next day I scrubbed the top with that paper towel and about everywhere the towel held the fluid the paint did wipe off. I have no patience so I took a wire brush on a drill and helped remove more of the old paint.

I reapplied brake fluid to the leftover paint and again covered with a saturated paper towel. Next day I could remove about 90 percent of the old, layered paint. On the third day the entire top was back to bare metal. Funny thing is brake fluid does not take care of any rust beneath the paint. Oh well, there is always POR-15 for that.

Paint thinner removed all the residue brake fluid. Now I had a new surface to paint to my own color and then give it my own obligatory runs and streaks. Be a penny pincher and next time you bleed your breaks, save the old fluid.

### Milestone Reached - by Pete Jacobsen

As you can see in the below picture, my odometer just turned 85,000 miles.



I still have the original receipt for the car. My mother-in-law sold us the car in April of 1995 for just one dollar. After 40,000 miles and 17 years it passed inspection for another year on Virginia’s roads. Also this month our 65 convertible was in the parade. Unfortunately, we couldn’t come to the picnic because we had visitors from out of town.



These two ladies from New Jersey were close friends of my late mother-in-law, Susan. Betty and Ruth, 83 and 85 years old respectively, drove themselves to Tidewater to spend a few days with us. I took them on a tour of the navy base and then downtown Norfolk in the Corvair with the top down. They really got a big kick from riding in the car which they had not been in for over 20 years when Sue and the girls use to drive to Cape Cod together.

### **Garage Mishap - by Bill Hubbell**

While backing Alice, my '64 sedan, into the garage this afternoon, my foot slipped off the brake and hit the accelerator. The car instantly went full-throttle, slamming backwards into the rear of the garage. There was a lot of stuff back there, which was fortunate in a way, as it absorbed most of the impact and kept the car from actually striking the wall or the overhanging stairway.

The only damage to the rear of the car was a ding in the bumper. Unfortunately, the right side of the car also hit the engine stored on the side wall, so the passenger doors are both deeply scratched, the front door dented, and the rocker trim ripped and dented beyond repair.

Additional damage: broken chain sprocket on the wife's bike, busted leaf blower, bent stepladder, dented (but not broken!) water heater, and a LOT of crushed aluminum cans (in two bags, waiting to be recycled). Also, a bruise on my forehead where it hit the doorframe.

The good news? My wife had a breast biopsy for abnormal mammogram. We got

the results this week - no cancer. It's important to keep things in perspective.



## **Starting Mystery - by Bill Hubbell**

For several years I have been experiencing intermittent starting problems with my 1964 sedan, "Alice.". Most of the time the car would start right up with no problems, but every now and then I would turn the key and nothing would happen - no click, nothing. Well, sometimes the engine's lights would dim when I turned the key, but other times they would stay bright. Whenever this problem occurred, I could always start the car by directly jumping the positive terminal of the battery directly to the starter solenoid (junction 9). The frequency of failures has gradually increased over time, and tended to be more prevalent in hot weather or after the engine was warmed up.

Over the past several years I have examined and repaired or replaced all the various aspects of the starter circuit. As you can see in the attached diagram, this is a very long circuit, as are most of the engine compartment circuits, but this particular circuit requires a fairly high amount of current, so the wires involved are of a large gauge. There are also a large number of connections - 10 of them on the positive side of the circuit - so there are lots of places to check when looking for a problem. The long run and multiple connections cause a drop in the voltage over the run, so the fact that the car would start by applying a jumper directly from the battery to the starter suggested that the problem was somewhere in the wiring or switches.

However, over time, by carefully applying jumpers to various points of the circuit, I determined that the problem did Not lie in either the wiring harness or the switches. Therefore, I replaced the starter

solenoid, and so far that seems to have solved the problem. However, the solenoid I removed seems to be in perfect working order. Therefore, the mystery remains unsolved and I cannot be certain that the problem will not return.

## **Show Your Corvair - by Smitty Smith**

I don't know of anybody that owns a collector car (or a hundred) that doesn't like to show it to others. I have known some that kept something like an unrestored T Bone in their garage all covered up with cast off blankets that would uncover it and roll it out into the sunlight when the opportunity arose to show it off. Others have absolutely pristine Resto Rods or restored to original that will do the same thing. I went to the Gillmore museum in Michigan. The owner gave the tour. You could tell he was thrilled to have people see his millions of dollars worth of cars. Of course the ultimate opportunity is to show your car off to crowds of people in shows. You can get all kinds of attention there. I used to be thrilled to do just that.

There is another side to this activity and I call it, "if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen". I didn't make that phrase up, by the way (smile). I showed my first awkward attempts of restoration at every opportunity. If I recognized that they didn't "measure up" I felt no shame because it was the best I could do at the time. Over the years I got better and was really proud to compete with the big money cars of others. Then one day I realized there was something wrong with the picture. I would spend thousands of hours and thousands of dollars on a car and then "PAY" somebody to let people look at it. Well, that was the name of the game so I

continued to show. Then I had another awakening. There were more and more shows available as years went by. They all wanted money to look at my cars. I had to start picking and choosing what shows to attend because there would be a half dozen in a month. Every one cost me money. I don't care if they were charities to prevent hangnails on high school girls. The bottom line was the same for me. So one time I went to four shows in two months at \$20 a pop and what did I get for my efforts? A couple of trophies. I should have been happy but the world had changed again. No longer were just the top two or three cars awarded at the Vair Fair but 90 % of the cars there got trophies. That's about like getting first place in a class that only has one car in it.

Please forgive me if I don't jump up and say "send me in coach" every time I find out about a show. I took the Spyder to "Jenros Cruise In" last week. I was only there for a couple of hours but I spent one and a half of those hours talking Corvair to people.

### **The Flailex - by *Smitty Smith***

Flailex is a military term where everybody has lost control but nevertheless everyone flails around trying to accomplish something. (Flailex; An exercise in Flailing around).

I had a personal flailex this morning. It was truly noteworthy. Last Christmas I played sleigh for Santa by using the Spyder to transport him to a grade school gathering. Naturally it was quite brisk out and I had to have the top down, but that didn't concern me as my Corvairs have always been able to provide a wealth of hot air.

So we picked up Santa and headed over to the school. I flipped on the heater switch

but got no forced air. I figured it was probably a fuse but there was no time to be troubleshooting. I would have checked the fuse but no tools and no flashlight and cold fingers put that idea to rest. I drove home with the top down and put the car away. As we headed into the mountains for the Vair Fair I thought of the heater again. At road speeds you never need a fan for heat but IF I got into some mountain fog I might wish I had it. A quick check showed the fuse was good but I was more concerned about my failed engine fan bearing.

Back home again for a few weeks and I was busying around the house fixing things that had fallen by the wayside. I remembered the heater fan.

First I jacked up the car and pulled the connector off the motor. Hooked up a non fused 12 volts to the motor. It definitely was a little slow getting underweight as it probably hadn't turned in 15 or 20 years. It came up to speed nicely though, so I knew it was good. I flipped the switch on high and checked for power at the motor wire. No good there. I broke out the manual to see where that wire got its power from. Checked there and no power. Then I remembered the key has to be on for the heater to run. Jacked the car up again and checked for power with the key on. No power. Back under the dash again. Dropped the heater control unit and pulled the plug off to check for incoming power. Then I remembered the key again. Turned key on and had power. Now we are getting someplace. Got my meter and checked for continuity at the various pins on the switch. No good. I know that these old switches get corrosion films on their contacts when they aren't used, but I had flipped that switch a couple of dozen times while trying to get the

heater to work. By then it was a case of, either pull the switch or fix it in place. I grabbed it and started flipping it back and forth like I was trying to wear it out. Checked it for continuity and it was OK. Plugged it in and the motor ran. See what I mean, FLAILEX. I spent 2 ½ hours crawling under the car and dash. Putting my antique body through contortions that would strain a 20 year old. Flailing around trying to prove out connections. And all I had to do was flip the switch a few more times. But as proven by the military many times. If you flail around hard enough and long enough, you can fix things sometimes even if they aren't broke.

### **Davy Crockett Drives a Corvair -** *by Hank Horton*

I don't know if you know this or not, but rumor has it that Davy Crockett has been seen driving a Early Generation Corvair Coupe. I will tell you my story and you can make up your own mind.

Last Saturday I was in the backyard trying to get it cleaned from the Goose Residue and trying to fill up the Muskrat holes. There were at least fifteen large lawn areas where the Muskrats have been wrecking havoc and digging holes in the yard next to the Creek. Large sections of the lawn have sunk into the Creek and it is very dangerous to walk in the yard near the back of the Creek and impossible to run the riding mower over the yard.

I had acquired a Sears BB rifle to try to scare away the Muskrats, but to no avail, they don't even run a away anymore they just go underwater and that is the last you see them for a while. I was trying to fill up as many holes as possible when I heard the

distinctive noise of a Corvair Engine parking in my drive way and I went to the front yard to greet the visitor. It was a large curly haired gentleman carrying a pellet rifle. He stated that he heard I was having problems with Muskrats and he had a pellet rifle that would take care of the problem. We prepared the rifle and started to remove the Muskrat population. There was one small problem the rifle would not fire, it seems that it had been sitting in a closet for over ten years and just didn't have any power left. The Gentleman said that he felt bad that the rifle was not able to fire and, got in his Corvair and departed from the area.

I continued to try to fill the Muskrat holes to at least keep up with the rodent population but the next day the rodents had again shown their skill and determination to set up a colony in my back yard and had almost doubled the number of holes in the back yard. The next Saturday, I again heard the familiar and distinctive sound of a Corvair power plant. The same tall Gentleman was driving, he came around to the back yard this time and he was carrying a pellet rifle much newer and equipped with a scope. He indicated that we should try to see if we could remove the pests from the yard. He placed the rifle to his shoulder and I heard the familiar sound of the pellet rifle and immediately one of the Muskrats jumped into the Creek. A very large snapping turtle grabbed the Muskrat and went to the bottom of the creek not to be seen again. There was a resounding cheer from the group that were repairing the turf and holes in the back yard. The Tall Stranger again loaded the rifle, shot from the shoulder and another Muskrat departed from the scene to join the snapping turtle feeding frenzy.

To date we have encouraged at least five or six Muskrats to depart from the backyard area one way or the other. The Tall Stranger has departed to perhaps Tennessee or other western areas to rid the populace of varmints.

*Happy Birthday To:*

*Terry Grandstaff - 6/1, George Jones - 6/1,  
Helen Smith - 6/2    Bev Weber - 6/30*



Want ads will be published free for members of the Tidewater Corvair Club. Publishing deadline is the Saturday after the monthly business meeting. Ads notification is provided (early removal or extension) to the newsletter editor (jwg1701@cox.net)

I have two carburetors with tags and clips that say they were manufactured in 1960 for a PG Corvair engine. I'll barter, sell, trade, or whatever for late model PG ones. I hear 1965 carburetors are the best. I cleaned them up a bit but they are as I got them. Contact Ed Hlusko

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