



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLV, No. 6

June 2017



Waiting for the Start of the Bowie Memorial Day Parade

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

*(There are **many** local events over the year, too many to list here; search Google for "Maryland, DC or Virginia Car Shows" to find more.)*

June

18 – Sully Plantation/George Washington Chapter Model A Club sponsored annual Father's Day show.

20 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7 p.m. Bob & Carol Hall have reserved the group room at the China Gourmet restaurant at 3739 University Blvd W Kensington, MD 20895. Parking is available both in front and in back of the restaurant. We'll have a round table that can seat anywhere from 12 to 20, so come on out!

23-25 – Carlisle Chevrolet Nationals (This replaces the old GM Nationals, but all GM brands are welcome.)

27 – July 1 – CORSA International Convention, Independence, MO.

July

1 – Capital Driving Club autocross, Regency Furniture Stadium, Waldorf, MD. For details and the future schedule see: <http://www.capitaldrivingclub.com/aboutCDC.html> (They run about every 2 weeks from March through November shifting between three venues – Waldorf, MD; Frederick, MD; and Winchester, VA.)

2 – **Group Corvair “Not Quite Fourth of July” picnic**, 3 – 7 p.m., Jerry & Diana Yates’ home, 13461 Overbrook Lane, Bowie, MD. For details, see below.

14 – 8th Annual Collector Car Appreciation Day. For info and local events:

http://www.semasan.com/page.asp?content=celebrate_collectorcar_day&g=SEMAGA

30 – Asphalt Angels “Summer Sizzler” car show, Chili’s & On the Border Restaurant parking lot, Bowie, MD.

August

No Group Corvair meeting this month!

12 – All-GM Show, 9- 3, Montgomery College, 51 Mannakee St., Rockville, MD. Contact Cory (240-686-0229) or Franklin (703-869-8434) for information.

September

3 – Heart of Maryland Classic Chevy Club cruise-in, 10-2, Silver Diner, 5120 Buckeystown Pike, Frederick, MD.

16 – 42nd Annual Edgar Rohr Memorial Antique Car Show, Manassas Museum, 9101 Prince William St., Manassas, VA. Sponsored by the Bull Run Region, AACA. Contact Darryll Baker, 571-294-7853 (darryllbaker@aol.com) or the flyer on the website: www.bullrunaaca.org

17 – Heart of Maryland Classic Chevy Club 25th Annual Car & Truck show, MVA, Frederick, MD (1601 Bowman’s Farm Road, exit 56 from I-70 in Frederick.) For information contact Ed Zimmerman (301-514-2207) or Butch Riley (301-514-8267). Dash plaques to the first 350 to register. Benefits the Alzheimer’s Association.

19 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7 p.m. Location is TBD.

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Minutes of the May Business Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

On May 16, 10 Group Corvair members met at 7:00 for dinner at Fratelli’s Restaurant in Hyattsville. We also had two surprise guests – Bryan and Elle Blackwell who are members of the Northern Virginia Corvair Club. Bryan is also the CORSA secretary and one of the Eastern Division Directors. When possible he likes to attend meetings and other

functions of various clubs in the area. We enjoyed having Bryan and Elle at our meeting and discussing some of the on-going issues with CORSA and the Corvair world.

Jim Govoni called the meeting to order at 8:15. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report; there was neither income nor any expenses during the last month.

The first order of business concerned the Bowie Memorial Day Parade on Saturday, May 27. Jim G. invited parade participants to gather at his house at 9:00 and then caravan to the parade staging area at about 9:45. It was noted that all drivers in the parade would be veterans!



We briefly discussed the Not-Quite-Fourth-of-July picnic. Jerry and Diana Yates have volunteered to host this at their home in Bowie (13461 Overbrook Lane; phone: 301-262-8428).

Bob and Carol Hall volunteered to research a place for the June meeting.

The 2017 CORSA International Convention will be held in Independence, MO, June 27 to July 1. Those at the meeting who are planning to attend were Bryan and Elle Blackwell and Jim and Marolyn Simpson. Ron Fedorcak, who was not at the May meeting, is also planning to attend.

Bryan told the group that all the past Communiqués and other CORSA periodicals are now on line at the CORSA web site.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Bowie Memorial Day Parade

Marolyn Simpson

The Bowie Memorial Day Parade was held on Saturday, May 27. We originally had four Corvairs registered to participate but by parade day we were down to two. When Jim and I arrived at Jim G.'s house about 9:00 Gus and Barbara Torbert were already there. We all enjoyed a light breakfast out on the sun porch before heading out for the staging area shortly before 10:00. Gus and Barbara came along to ride with Jim G in his "Caveman Corvair", a 1960 four-door sedan.

When we arrived at the staging area we discovered that our reserved parking spots were in the shade, which was welcome news. The first order of business was to "dress" the cars for the event. We attached the Group Corvair magnets to the cars and slipped an American flag over each antenna.

This year there were not as many units in the parade as there have been in the past. There have been about 100, but this year there were just over 80. Group Corvair was number 77. I guess they decided to save the best for the last.

While we were waiting in the staging area many of the other parade participants came over to check out the Corvairs. There were many new faces but also several folks we had talked to at previous parades. During the parade there were a lot of comments and questions from the spectators such as "What year is it?" "Nice car!" and "My dad used to have one of those."

As we approached the finish line of the parade I gave Jerry Yates a call and he and Diana met us in the Bowie Market Place parking lot. (He and Diana couldn't make the parade but were able to join us for lunch afterward.) With Jim G. in the lead we all headed out to Galesville for lunch at the Pirate's Cove Restaurant.

Group Corvair's Annual "Not Quite Fourth of July" Cookout

Hosted by Diana and Jerry Yates

Date: Sunday, July 2, 2017

Time: 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. (or whenever...)

Address: The Yates residence at 13461 Overbrook Lane, Bowie, MD 20715

Phone: 301-262-8428 Email: dlyates1@verizon.net or yatesj@verizon.net

Things to bring:

Folding lawn chair

One shareable dish

Beverage(s) of your choice

Anything you would like to cook on our gas grill

We will provide plates, napkins, eating utensils, cups, a cooler full of ice plus iced tea (unsweetened) and possibly some lemonade. All the usual condiments (catsup, mustard, mayo, relish, salt, pepper, etc.) will be here. If you think of anything else we could include in the list of condiments, please let us know and we'd be happy to provide it.

PLEASE RSVP BY Wednesday, June 28.

Diana and I look forward to hosting this event. See you then!

Wings 'n Wheels

Jim Simpson

The Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association (AOPA) headquartered in Frederick, MD, sponsored its second "Wings 'n Wheels" event on Saturday, 10 June. Jerry Yates and Marolyn & I decided to give it a try. As the name and sponsor suggests, it is a combination of a fly-in for private aircraft and a car show. That made for an interesting mix! Private aircraft owners tend to be relatively well-to-do and some of the cars reflected that including a McLaren 12C. But the four Corvairs there certainly held their own with a constant stream of visitors asking good questions and making nice comments about the cars. We may try this event again next year.



Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

The June 1977 *Group Corvair Comments* was pretty short, I assume due to everyone recovering from the Freestate Corvair Affair miniconvention in Columbia, MD. Unfortunately no statistics were reported so I can't tell you how many people, cars or vendors showed up. But the short report says it was a great success. There must have been a good trade in Corvairs as well at the event – the newsletter had only three cars for sale, one of which was a “cherry, rust-free, 4-speed gold 1966 Monza with ‘tired engine’” for \$250! Sounds like a bargain even back then.

The *CORSA Quarterly* for the summer of 1977 continued with the reporting on the life and death of Ed Cole. Half of the issue was devoted to him and his influence on the design and development of the Corvair. There was a six page article about Dick Griffin, a prominent car “tuner” who worked extensively with the Corvair to bring out its best engine performance. It focused on the things he did to the engines that progressively turned his car (a '61 coupe) into the quickest Corvair in the country. He was able to pull an “honest” 245 hp at 7,000 rpm out of that 145 cu in engine. And finally for the van enthusiasts, there was a reprint of a road test of the Corvair Greenbrier. There was no source given for the reprint but based upon the format, I suspect it came from an early '60 issue of Road & Track magazine.

In the regular June 1977 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* the focus was now on the Twin Cities, Minnesota CORSA Convention. Remember CB radios? Yes, the convention had a “talk in” channel (3) and was coordinating with the Minnesota Highway Patrol to get people to the convention safely. There was the usual discussion of club and CORSA issues and a tech topic on the virtues of using fiberglass to repair rust holes and collision damage. (In my opinion, there wasn't enough emphasis on eliminating the rust problem before patching things.) Does anyone remember the Cheetah? It was a fiberglass body for the '65 – '69 Corvair being sold by GLASPOT in East Stroudsburg, PA. The issue closed with seven pages of cars and parts ads plus several vendor ads.

Jumping to the next decade, the June 1987 *Group Corvair Comments* was something of a potpourri of news, articles and even recipes. The club was meeting at the Navy Yard downtown and had been for the last five years. We were starting to look around for a new place. There was a note trying to reunite the owner of a classic Myers Manx dune buggy in Maryland with its owner in New York; the people involved apparently had lost addresses and phone numbers. In the 'Vair Vendor, it looked like people were trying to clear their garages with a real mix of cars, vans, rampsides and parts available.

As is usual for June, the 1987 *CORSA Communiqué* was focusing on the upcoming CORSA International Convention, this year to be in Chicago. Keeping with that theme were articles on how to autocross, participating as a concours judge and prepping cars for the show. Larry Claypool provided “10 Commandments” for engine rebuilding, all tips and recommendations for things you might overlook during an engine build. He also continued his “Stock Is...” series. The article had a photo of the '60 Monza “turbine” wheel cover, unique to that very limited late 1960 production run. I'm not sure I've ever seen one on a car. The CORSA Classified was four pages long with a reasonable selection and some relatively rare parts such as a complete AM/FM radio with multiplex unit.

Twenty years ago the June 1997 *Group Corvair Comments* was a bit abbreviated. Marolyn and I were preparing the newsletter on a Wednesday and the next Monday we were leaving for the CORSA International Convention in Lake Placid, NY. And we still had things to do to get our Corsas ready! I was fighting with the side windows, having real problems with getting them properly aligned. In case you haven't had the thrill, there are at least 10 screw adjusters on each side of the car that allow the windows to be moved in just about every direction imaginable. The problem is getting all the potential adjustments to come together in a way so that the windows align with each other, the channels they ride in and the weather stripping so you end up with a reasonably rain and wind tight fit. We had 19 cars for sale with representatives from every year except '67 and '69. Pretty good selection there!

And as you might expect, the June 1997 *CORSA Communiqué* led off with last minute articles about the Lake Placid convention; the theme was “‘Vairs in the Village”. There were five pages of Tech Topics covering everything from installing shoulder belts on an early model to a reminder to wait until the engine was cold before attempting to remove spark plugs. (They will strip the aluminum threads on the cylinder heads if you do it while the engine is hot!) The CORSA Classifieds had shrunk to just three pages with only one page being devoted to cars for sale.

For the Greenbrier Fans!

A recent link from Virtual Vairs provided an interesting insight into the design history of the Corvair Greenbrier. Lots of good pictures of the various design studies they went through to come up with the final product. While there were some interesting features in those preliminary designs, the final design really seems about right in my opinion. Take a look: <http://tylerlinner1.kinja.com/design-history-1961-65-chevrolet-corvair-greenbrier-1786876388>

Happen to have some spare Porsche drive train parts?

Rob Neighbor came across an interesting article – a four wheel drive, Porsche powered Corvair. Enjoy!
<http://hooniverse.com/2012/07/18/chevy-corvair-with-porsche-engine-and-all-wheel-drive/>

Other Newsletters

CORSA and other clubs have greatly improved the electronic distribution of club newsletters. I now receive 8 – 10 each month. While I skim them all for information that might be of interest to Group Corvair, I suspect that other's in the club might be interested in seeing them. If you are interested, just let me know (simpsonj@verizon.net) and I'll add you to the redistribution list.

Tech Topics

'61-'65 4-Speed Transmission Tips

By Mike Dawson, From the Heart of America Corvair Owners Association *VairCor*, June 2017

Errors in the Books: The better guide to service these transmissions is the 4-inch by 8-inch booklet by GM, *Overhauling the 1961 4-Speed Transmission* (available from CCP). It has lots of pictures; however page 3 shows an unnecessary puller, page 4 does not warn you about holding slight pressure against the counter shaft as it emerges, and page 14 shows using stub shafts on both sides of the counter gear during installation (only the left side is used). Although the '64 and '65 units had many changes from '63, which you need to be aware of, this booklet is a good guide to the general layout and process.

The shop manuals also show the unnecessary puller, tell you that you can remove the 3-4 shifter fork in the wrong order, show the incorrect diameter of the dummy shaft, are poor help on installing the counter gear, and contain confusing directions for installing the shifter shafts.

Driving Out Pins From Shift Forks: Do the removal in the correct order of disassembly or you could lock up the fork with the pin pushed halfway out and no access to it. You must have the shifter forks **fully** engaged in the gears as specified in the books. If you do not, the pins will not clear as you drive them out.

Check Spur Gear Teeth: The four forward gears each have spur gear teeth that interact with the synchronizer hubs. Check them for major chips or flattened edges. If these are really bad they could cause shifting problems even with good blocker rings. Over the years I have had good luck with putting points back on flattened teeth with a very thin cut-off wheel. Practice on a junk gear and with patience and a steady hand you should be able to make the gears serviceable. Also check the corresponding teeth on the synchronizer clutch sleeves; these are usually good but can also be dressed up if necessary. The two sets of teeth for reverse are usually damaged but unless large pieces are missing (causing clicking in reverse) they do not need dressing up.

Checking blocker ring-to-cone clearance: The tapered area of the brass ring can wear causing it to ride too close to the spur gear. They also lose their ability to engage the cone firmly due to partial loss of the internal splines. You can check by inserting a feeler gauge between the ring and the spur gear ledge while pushing the ring tight against the cone. Clearance should be a minimum of 0.030; new blocker rings from Clarks measured 0.050 on gears I recently checked.

Counter Gear Shaft and Bearings: This is the most common wear problem on the '61 –'65 transmissions. If you are driving a vehicle with a bad shaft, you will hear whining in first gear that gets less noisy in second, again less

noisy in third and finally quiet in fourth. There are four sets of needle bearings surrounding the shaft and with the loading greatest in first gear the first set of bearings and the corresponding area on the shaft wear out. Continuing to drive the vehicle will increase the wear along the shaft with increasing noise in each gear except fourth, which does not load the counter gear as there is no reduction; fourth gear is 1:1. The shafts wear badly but I have never seen the bearing surface of the counter gear worn. The replacement shaft and its bearings are available from CCP.

Changing this shaft and the necessary bearings can be the hardest part of the transmission maintenance so I will share some things that help me out. You can remove the shaft for inspection and leave all 92 bearings in place by use of a dummy shaft as described in the shop manual. I used a junk clutch shaft from a '64-'65 4-speed which is the correct diameter (or visit Metal By The Foot for an 11/16-inch dowel) and cut one piece exactly 7 inches and a second piece about 2 inches, keeping perfectly square cuts. Chamfer the ends of the dummy shaft slightly but leave the ends of the 2-inch piece sharp; it is the re-installation helper. The counter gear shaft is a press fit at the clutch gear end of the case. Start the shaft carefully with a punch and heavy hammer (or shop press) until you feel it give up the press fit, then use the dummy shaft to push the counter shaft out while using your other hand to keep pressure on the shaft as it emerges. This keeps the bearings in place. Since the first gear end where wear occurs comes out first you could inspect it for wear and if perfect (not likely), simply push it back in.

If you install a new shaft and bearings, use lots of Vaseline when placing dummy shaft, bearings and spacers into the counter gear. When you are ready to install the counter gear in the case, the book is of little help, so the following is what I use. With the case opening facing you, first, check the inside area on the case where the thrust washer fits on the right side. Half of the cases have residual casting that rubs against the small raised tab on the washer so do a check by sliding the washer into position and note if the tab hangs up. Remove any of the casting that is necessary to be able to slide the washer into place smoothly when the counter gear is in place. Next, use Vaseline to place the thrust washer in place on the left side and use the 2-inch dowel mentioned above inserted through the washer from the outside. Lower the counter gear into place without disturbing the left thrust washer. Keeping the counter gear level, insert the right thrust washer (coated with Vaseline) into place with its tab in the slot. Look through the hole from the outside and when the washer and dummy shaft are centered, you are ready to insert the new shaft from the right side. You may have to look back and forth at the ends to make sure of the centering. As you slide the (new) shaft through, hold pressure on the emerging dummy shaft to keep the bearings in place. Remember the shaft is a press fit into the case on the clutch gear end.

Changes Over the Years: There were many changes made from '61-'65; eight different versions with many parts upgrades according to our CORSA Transmission Historians. A lot of changes were made in the middle of model years so if you are sorting through used gears that you do not know the history of, it is vital that you read up on changes and measure parts and count teeth carefully.

Craig Nicol has written a great guide to yearly upgrades and parts changes, and combined that with interesting historical information. His article can be found in the October 2004 issue of *CORSA Communiqué* or in the *CORSA Tech Guide*.

Slow Starter? Adapted from a note by Matt Nall, via the Virtual Vairs: If the starter motor seems to be "dragging" when attempting to start the engine, there's a good chance the starter motor's endplate bushing is worn on one side. That allows the armature (the part that rotates) to drag against the inside of the stator (field windings). It's a simple fix. Remove the starter motor and clamp it upright with the endplate up and the nosecone down. Remove the two 3/8" bolts on the endplate and lift the endplate off. Take a look at the bushing to confirm that it is worn only on one side; if so, just put a dab of grease on the bushing, rotate the endplate 180 degrees and reassemble. Now the armature's shaft is riding on the new part of the bushing. (If the bushing is badly worn, it is replaceable. Clarks has them in three sizes, two of them for undersized (worn) shafts.)

Rain-X: Remember Rain-X, the magic water repellent windshield treatment? The late John Moody reported on how well it worked in the June, 1977 issue of *Group Corvair Comments*. In his testing, he said that just as the advertising claimed, rain just beaded up and was easily swept from the windshield by either the wind or wipers. It also did a great job in helping keep the rear window on vans clean. Yes, it is still available in your local auto parts store or on-line from places like Amazon.

Vair Vendor

For Sale: 1961 Corvair 900 (Monza), 4-door, 21,000 original miles. Excellent condition inside and out, never any rust. Repainted a teal green (acceptable, but not a great paint job) with the original blue/green interior. Powerglide automatic, resealed engine with later model magnesium fan and alternator, fresh carburetors. Have all original books and paperwork as well as receipts for parts from Clarks Corvair Parts. Asking \$7,000. Contact John Mays, 410-221-8735 for more information.

For Sale: '61-'69 Gas Tank. Used, but cleaned and sealed by Jeff at the Corvair Ranch. Hasn't been used since, ready to go in your car. Asking \$60 or best offer. (Clark's reproductions are \$170 plus shipping!) Bob Lewis, Nanjemoy, MD. 301-246-4278, rtl1936@gmail.com

Group Corvair welcomes anyone in the Washington, DC area who has an interest in the Chevrolet Corvair. We sponsor a variety of events including shows, tech sessions, and social gatherings. Dues are \$12.00 a year, payable to Group Corvair and sent to the treasurer's address. Group Corvair is a chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), P.O. Box 607, Lemont, IL 60439-0607, website: www.corvair.org CORSA memberships are available at various levels with corresponding dues. As a member, you will receive the award-winning CORSA Communiqué and be eligible to attend all CORSA national events, including the annual convention.