



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLV, No. 9

October 2017



We Had A Guest!

Billy Cannon (right) from the Birmingham Vulcan Corvair Enthusiasts joined our meeting.

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.)*

October

14 – **Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show**, Rockville Civic Center, 603 Edmonston Drive. Registration opens at 8 a.m. and closes at 11 a.m. with no more cars admitted. Group Corvair is a sponsoring club and has a great area for showing our cars. This is the big finale to the car show season. Huge turnout of cars (538 last year), great venue, free admission to spectators. I can't encourage you too much to come and show your classic car. Come early – the lines can be long at registration.

17 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7 p.m., at the **Killarney House** in Davidsonville. This is at 584 West Central Ave., Davidsonville, MD. From the crossroads of Central Ave (Rt 214) and Davidsonville Road (Rt 424), go east on Central Ave about 1 mile and it will be on the left.

21 – Asphalt Angles Fall Car Show, Chili's & On The Border restaurants parking lot, 16401 Heritage Blvd., Bowie,

MD. \$20 registration, show runs 9 – 3.

21 – Potomac Day Classic Car Show. 10220 River Road, Potomac, MD. 9:00 – 3:00, awards at 2:45. Roads close at 10:00 so be there no later than 9:30! \$20 registration fee. Contact Jennifer@polomacpizza.com or 301-299-2170 for information or to register.

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Minutes of the September Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

On September 19 eight Group Corvair members and one guest met at Fratelli's Restaurant in Hyattsville at 7:00 for dinner. Billy Cannon from the Vulcan Corvair Enthusiasts in Birmingham, AL, was in Silver Spring for business. He had seen our newsletter with the information about our meeting and decided to join us for dinner. It was great to have him as a guest. As you can see in the cover picture, he presented the club with a plaque with the hand-burned Vulcan Corvair Enthusiasts logo! The club thanked him very much.

Minutes from the last meeting were approved and seconded by Rob Neighbour. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report; there was neither new income nor expenses during the last month.

There was a short recap on the club outing to the trolley museum in August. Everyone who had been there enjoyed the experience.

Phil Richardson has been working on his car and has requested a tech session to help with the installation of the drive train but the car is not quite ready yet. Phil will let us know when he has reached that point in the restoration.

The Rockville car show is coming up on Saturday, October 14 and Group Corvair is a sponsoring club with our own reserved area. This year, the show within the show will be a custom car collection.

Corvair Day, sponsored by the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club, is scheduled for September 23 at the AACA Museum in Hershey.

Lee Cramp had attended the DMV show in Frederick. He said it was a good show.



Group Corvair is still considering buying one of the feather flags. It has several types of bases such as a pole that goes into the ground and a flat base that will stand on pavement. In light of his creativity in creating the famous Group Corvair logo, there was a motion to asking Jerry Yates to design what will go on the flag. Jim Simpson will bring it up with Jerry.

Along with presenting the club with a wood burn plaque that one of his club members (David Hausenfleck) had made, Billy Cannon described a number of events the Vulcan club is involved in. Billy gave us a brief history of the Vulcan club. One interesting comment was that the Vulcan club has met on the third Friday of the month for its entire history. That resulted in short discussion of the history of Group Corvair and several of the other clubs in the area.

The October meeting will be at Killarney House in Davidsonville. Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant was suggested for the November meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Corvair Day, Hershey, PA

Marolyn Simpson

On Saturday, September 23, the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club hosted Corvair Day at the Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) Museum in Hershey, PA. Jim and I cleaned up the Corvair and packed as much as we could the night before. Since the festivities started at 9:00 a.m. we got up early, ate breakfast, finished packing up the car, and were on the road about 6:30. Since we're retired we're not used to being on the road that early anymore and were surprised at the amount of traffic that early in the morning.

(We used to be on the road to work at 6:30 a.m. ourselves so it really shouldn't have been that much of a shock...)

We arrived at the museum shortly after 9:00. As we drove into the museum drive we thought for a moment we were there on the wrong day. The lawn in front of the museum was filled with British Triumphs. But as we drove in a bit further we saw the Corvairs.



There was a good turnout of Corvairs. The official count was 33 registered cars; there were a few additional cars for



a total of about 40. As I walked around the display lot I noted two vans, no trucks, three late 4-door coupes, and one early 4-door coupe (with a Corvair brand bike on a bike rack on the roof) as well as a good variety of 2-door early and late model coupes and convertibles. Most of the cars were from Pennsylvania, but I did note one car from Kentucky, one from North Carolina, and two from Maryland (our car and one from Bel Air).

Activities included a scavenger hunt in the museum, door prizes, and a people's choice voting with the awards given out about 2:30. (Jim and I received one of the awards.) For

lunch the organizers provided hot dogs and all the fixings.

In addition to the Corvair folks, there were a number of museum visitors who came out to see the show. As you might expect for visitors to the AACA museum, many of them seemed to be quite knowledgeable about cars in general, but also about the Corvair.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

Forty years ago, the October 1977 *Group Corvair Comments* was pretty short (three pages) and to the point. I suspect that everyone was pretty exhausted by the just completed Flea Market at Jim McKay Chevrolet. Marolyn and I attended and we can attest to the huge turnout of both people and parts. Does anyone remember “CORVEGA”? That was a small company in New Jersey that specialized in Corvair and Vega parts – they were there with a load of parts. For some reason they always made me think of the mafia... The flea market must have attracted considerable interest as well – we introduced a full dozen new members into the club right afterward. The rest of the newsletter was the Vair Vendor with 14 cars for sale plus a couple of want ads.

By contrast the October 1977 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* was quite large. October 1977 was apparently the time to buy and sell Corvairs and parts. There were seven pages devoted to ads. Name a year and model and there was one for sale. There were even a couple exotics such as an Autodynamics Deserter GS – a mid-engine fiberglass dune buggy like car – and a '63 VW Karmann Ghia/Crown Corvair conversion. I'm sure both of those cars could fly low. Finally there was a special insert with the statistics and results of the 1977 CORSA National Convention in Minneapolis. That must have been a popular event with over 1200 people there from 437 registrations. The banquet (644 people) sold out on Friday. There were 104 cars in the concours (Group Corvair's late Mike Harrison took fourth overall with his V-8 car) and 57 chose to run in the autocross.

Three decades ago, the length of the October 1987 *Group Corvair Comments* was up but the number of cars for sale was down. Believe it or not, but we had a full dozen people signed up to drive in the Greenbelt Labor Day parade! I don't know where those photos went, but I remember trotting along in front of the parade taking pictures of the Corvairs as they came along behind. The notes from the business meeting recorded that the club turned down the offer of a '65 Monza coupe that was offered as a club project car. I wonder what our response would be today? Do you remember the Group Corvair cookbook? Well the newsletter noted that we'd sold 775 out of our initial printing of 800! It must have been popular – two other clubs had taken up on the idea and were offering their own versions.

The *CORSA Communiqué* in October 1987 was devoted to homebuilt Corvairs. The modular nature of the Corvair power train along with the engine being air cooled (thus not needing a radiator) makes it a natural for use in everything from dune buggies to custom race cars. The five cars described ran the gamut of fiberglass kits to home built steel bodies to totally fabricated space-frame with aluminum body racers. There's a lot of imagination and talent out there! Larry Claypool continued his series “Stock Is...” with some updates on earlier articles and then delving into the world of rear grills. The number of cars in the CORSA Classified stayed at about one and a half pages, but a quick scan showed there was at least one example of every year and model available.

Twenty years ago the October 1997 *Group Corvair Comments* reported on another successful Fall Flea Fair. Besides the 20 cars in the show, we held a parts auction, ran a tech session, had a fabulous food booth plus a 50/50 drawing. (For the second year in a row, a salesman from Roger's Chevrolet won. I sometimes wonder if we somehow arranged that in order to keep the dealership inviting us to come again...) The Rockville Antique and Classic Car show was coming up in a few weeks as was the beginning of the fall automobile rally season. Marolyn and I used to participate, but the local rallies seem to have largely faded into history. The number of cars for sale seems to have stabilized at about eight. Ward Bourgondien had a pair of Lakewoods for sale at \$600 for the pair.

Even though the CORSA convention had been covered in the September issue, there was a great article in the October issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* by Bill Hubbell on his adventures driving a rather faded '64 sedan to the Lake Placid convention. The car made it there and back, but without the benefit of a reverse gear and some other minor maladies. The '97 Lime Rock meet results were in. According to the article, Corvairs seem to be getting faster and faster. Under tech topics there were three articles on valve cover leaks. All three recommended using the long spring bars that Chevrolet introduced in 1964 (and told dealers to retrofit on any earlier Corvair with a valve cover leak). These springs spread pressure along the entire valve cover gasket. Two of the articles recommending replacing the standard valve cover bolts with permanently installed studs and nuts. The advantages include that the

studs will hold the valve cover gasket in place while installing the valve cover plus much less chance of stripping the bolt threads in the cylinder head. Simple and cheap fixes! In the CORSA Classified, you can see the steady shift toward the higher end models as the “lesser” base models disappear. I assume the base models were the daily drivers and as they wore or rusted out, were scrapped whereas the higher end models were retained and restored.

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Rebuilding Brake Cylinders. This is from a note in the 1987 newsletter. According to a “reliable authority”, the bores on new brake cylinders are finished by “ball burnishing”. That’s a process in which a highly polished, lubricated, carbide ball is pressed through the slightly undersized hole in a new cylinder. This leaves a highly polished and hardened finish on the inside of the cylinder.

Not too many home garages (or machine shops for that matter) have the tools to create that kind of finish when rebuilding a brake cylinder. So short of buying new every time, what to do? The suggestion is that after honing the cylinder bore, use successively finer grades of oil-lubricated “wet-or-dry” sandpaper. Check a good auto body paint store for a supply of fine grits. Start with 600 grit and work your way to the finest grit you can find. (Amazon lists a 3000 grit 3M wet-or-dry paper.) Always polish the bore in rotation, not “in and out” to prevent fine scratches – and potential leaks -- along the length of the bore.

When finished, clean the brake cylinder thoroughly to remove all traces of grit and oil before assembling. I’d suggest using soap and water to get the bulk of the dirt and oil off, then either denatured alcohol or acetone for a couple of rinses, and then final cleaning with spray brake cleaner.

Vair Vendor

For Sale: 1963 Monza Coupe. Low mileage – 40,555 miles at the moment. White with blue interior. Asking \$6,500, will consider most things as part of a trade.



Kenneth Stone, 301-370-5824, Dayton, MD.

For Sale: 1964 Spyder Convertible parts car. Potentially restorable, but I don’t have the time. I would prefer to sell the whole car with complete running gear for the right price but am willing to talk about selling individual parts. It has a nice trunk lid, doors, engine lid, dash (odometer shows 28,000 miles), glove box door, radio with face plate, good glass, nice top frame, very nice SS boot trim. 4-speed w/3.55 positrac differential. Also have a pair of extra turbo heads and many other miscellaneous parts. What do you need? Call Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278 or e-mail rtl1936@gmail.com for info.



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 or e-mail rtl1936@gmail.com for info.

For Sale: Clark's Corvair Parts replacement late model convertible top rear window – black with zipper. I'm not sure just how old this one is, but it seems to be in excellent condition with the window very pliable. Clark's currently wants \$127.85 for theirs. Make an offer! Jim Simpson, simpsonj@verizon.net, 240-232-2820

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.