



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVI, No. 1

January 2018



Group Corvair Holiday Dinner Participants
(Minus Barbara and Gus Torbert)

It's the New Year and DUES are due! \$12/year, make out your check to Group Corvair and send it to Jim Simpson (Group Corvair Treasurer), 3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035. If you are uncertain if you have pre-paid, call or drop me (Jim Simpson) an e-mail and I'll check.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

January 2018

16 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. Yet another new location! This month, we're going to try Sardi's Pollo A La Brasa in the Bowie Town Center. The address is 4001 Town Center Blvd, Bowie, MD. This is just off Rt-197 in Bowie; they've taken over the old Pizza Uno restaurant at the entrance to the Bowie Town Center shopping center. Lots of parking.

February

20 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. Location will be decided at the January meeting, so if you don't attend the January meeting, don't complain that we didn't pick your favorite watering hole for this meeting!

March

10 – Chesapeake Region AACA Parts Swap Meet, Howard County Fairgrounds, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m.

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

23-24 – Sugarloaf Mountain Region AACA Swap Meet, Carroll County Agricultural Center, Westminster, MD.

Since we didn't hold any elections, at least for now our officers and points of contact remain the same:

GROUP CORVAIR 2018 OFFICERS and Points of Contact

President: Jim Govoni

12713 Keswick Ave, Bowie, MD 20715

301-262-7017 JKFG717@gmail.com

Vice President: Barbara Torbert

5317 Crittenden Street Hyattsville, MD 20781

301- 927-6029 barbara.torbert@hotmail.com

Secretary: Marolyn Simpson

3845 Wayson Road Davidsonville, MD 21035

301- 262-0978 or 240-232-2820

m.simpson7@verizon.net

Treasurer: Jim Simpson

3845 Wayson Road Davidsonville, MD 21035

301-262-0978 or 240-232-2820 simpsonj@verizon.net

Newsletter Editor: Jim Simpson

3845 Wayson Road Davidsonville, MD 21035

301 262-0978 or 240-232-2820 simpsonj@verizon.net

Merchandise: Gus Torbert

5317 Crittenden Street Hyattsville, MD 20781

301-927-6029 barbara.torbert@hotmail.com

Minutes of the December Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

The December Group Corvair business meeting was short and sweet. It was held after the club's Christmas dinner on Sunday, December 17, with 10 members present. The main topic was deciding on the location of the January meeting. Rob Neighbour suggested one of the Sardi's Polo A La Brasa restaurants for our next culinary adventure. They seem to have a varied menu with lots of choices including Peruvian specialties. Of the varied locations, we picked their Bowie Town Center restaurant; this location is easily accessible and has plenty of parking. The address is:

Sardi's Polo A La Brasa, 4001 Town Center Blvd (Bowie Town Center, just off Rt. 197), Bowie, MD 20716

There was also some further discussion of the designs Jerry Yates has been working on for the Group Corvair feather flag, but no final decision was made. This topic will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Group Corvair's Holiday Dinner

Marolyn Simpson

The Group Corvair holiday dinner was at the Simpson's home in the suburbs of Davidsonville on Sunday, December 17. Because the dinner was on a Sunday, we were able to start the festivities earlier in the day which had the additional advantage that people were able to search for the house in the daylight. (Things get pretty dark around here after sunset!)

Guests starting arriving at 4:00 and soon after the kitchen was a hub of activity as final preparations for the meal got underway. Since the dinner was coordinated pot luck we had a well balanced meal with no duplications in the menu.

The dinner began at about 6:00 and was served buffet style. The table was decorated with poinsettias and tea candles. We had been a bit worried because our regular dining room table seats 10 and the number of guests kept fluctuating. We did have a contingency plan to seat more, but as it turned out, the final total was 10 so we could accommodate everyone at a single table. Those participating in the dinner were Gus and Barbara Torbert, Jerry and Diana Yates, Bob and Carol Hall, Rob Neighbour, Andrew Don, and hosts Jim and Marolyn Simpson.

At the end of the meal there was a short business meeting with the main topic being deciding where the next meeting would be.

Barbara and Gus had already left when we realized we hadn't taken any pictures yet. So Jim got out his camera and took several pictures – some in front of the Christmas tree and some by the fireplace.



Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

I think the biggest revelation from the January 1978 *Group Corvair Comments* was that the upcoming banquet would celebrate Group Corvair's 10th anniversary. If I am counting the right number of fingers and toes, that means that Group Corvair will be celebrating its Golden Anniversary this year! (That would mean this newsletter should be volume "L" if the club started numbering the newsletters from the start. But since this one is volume XLVI, apparently we didn't. And if you are a collector of back issues, you'll find that volume XXXI covered two years, 2002 and 2003. So really this newsletter should be the first one of volume XLVII; there were no volume numbers for the first three years.) In other news, Pete Frailey continued his fulminations over changes in the auto industry. His current target was the introduction of air bags. After watching one of the movies of early air bag testing, he concluded that they were more dangerous to the occupants than the actual accident that would trigger them. (Statistics have proven him wrong...) In the Vair Vendor, there were two cars being offered, a '64 and a '65 Monza, both 4-doors, both under \$1,000.

The New Year's issue of the *CORSA Communiqués* for 1978 included a study of Corvair price trends as reflected in *Hemmings Motor News* from late 1975 to the end of 1977. Not surprisingly, prices were tending higher, at about a rate that matched inflation. (If you recall, the period 1972 to about 1984 was a period of high inflation and interest rates with a peak in 1980 of about 14%.) One take away from the study was that there were a relatively large number of Corvairs available for \$500 or less even in a national publication like *Hemmings*. Glancing over the Corvair Classified in the *Communiqués*, it was pretty obvious that these were the "golden years" for anyone who wanted to get into Corvairs. There were well over a hundred cars for sale, just about every year and version, with just about any set of accessories that you might want. How about a '69 convertible, \$750, or a '64 Spyder convertible with Hands aluminum wheels for \$1,500 or a '62 Monza wagon with 26k miles for \$1,700. Those were the days!

Jumping ahead a decade to the January 1988 issue of *Group Corvair Comments*, the newsletter reported that the club was preparing to submit its bid to host the 1991 Corsa International Convention. This was going to be an "all hands" event and involve just about everyone in the club. We published some notes from the North Texas Corvair Association *Transaxle Telegraph*; Did you know that in Pearsall, TX you will be made to wear a pair of horse blinders in public for 24 hours if you "ogle a woman in that way"?, or that in Guthrie, TX, it is illegal to hold hands with a girl while driving down the street, but only if she is riding in another car? And of particular note for Corvair owners, in Yoakum, TX, you can be fined \$1 for every drop of oil found on the pavement under your car! There was also a good selection of tech topics. I'll try to republish a few in upcoming newsletters. There were seven cars for sale; none were in great shape; prices ranged from \$100 to \$800.

The January 1988 *CORSA Communiqué* introduced the new CORSA management team, Harry Jensen and Mike McGowan. Coincidentally, the current *CORSA Communiqué* has their farewells as they retire and turn over the reins to a new team. Thanks Harry and Mike for the great job you did over the last 30 years! Most of the rest of the issue was devoted to owner's stories. Some people have put a LOT of miles, accompanied by a lot of smiles, in their Corvairs over the years! The number of cars in the CORSA Classified has been going down; this month, there was only one full page of car ads (no '67s or '69s were listed) plus another page of parts and wanted items.

A mere 20 years ago, the January 1998 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* was published. Our annual banquet was coming up at the end of the month; we thought we'd give the American Legion hall in Greenbelt a try. One "highlight" of that was getting John Moody home again. I'm sure that anyone who remembers John also remembers how bad a navigator he was. Good driver, lousy navigator. As he left, we gave him instructions on how to get on the Beltway. We told him to "get on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. Stay, repeat **STAY**, in the right lane and it will take you directly onto the Beltway toward home." It wasn't more than 100 yards with big signs pointing to the Beltway. It couldn't have been easier. John's first move upon getting onto the B-W Parkway was to move to the far left lane and drive on into D.C. He did eventually find his way home... I wrote up some of the things we attended to over the holidays to finish and correct items on our Corsas, things like fixing the odometer, changing steering arms (NOS factory quick steering arms), rechroming bumpers and more. John Moody had a long tech article on why automobiles are wired the way they are and not at all like houses. (Short answer is cost and lower voltages.) The Vair Vendor had a pair of Rampsides and a '65 4-door for sale.

The January 1998 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* was split between a relatively large selection of tech tips and reporting on various local chapter fall events. For you Ultravan (whale) fans, there was a short report on the restoration of serial 101, the prototype, Ultravan. There were about as many ads in the Vair Vendor as there were ten years earlier but now the '67 - '69 cars were becoming available. Fred Bybee had Yenko Stinger YS-150 up for sale; \$10,000 ready to race, \$12,000 with spares.

Will the Corvair Kill You?

That's the title of an article in the November 2017 Hagerty Insurance magazine. Larry Webster, the author of the article, got together with Peter Koehler, a former GM engineer who's owned "dozens" of Corvairs, and put a 1960 Corvair to the test. His verdict? He's shopping for one.

The article is too long to reprint here, but you can go on-line and see it. Thanks to Bob Winokur, here's a link: <https://www.hagerty.com/articles-videos/articles/2017/11/15/will-the-corvair-kill-you?>

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Lubricating Control Cables: There are a number of jacketed control cables in a Corvair, especially those controlling the heater. If you want to lubricate them while still in the car, try this: Get a used valve stem and a length of clear tubing that will fit over the end of the cable you want to lubricate. Clamp the valve stem in one end of the tubing (you might have to shave the base of the valve stem to fit). Fill the tubing with your favorite lubricant – preferably something fairly heavy weight like gear oil. Clamp the other end of the tubing over the jacket of the cable to be lubricated. **PUT ON SAFETY GOOGLES.** Use a bicycle air pump to pressurize the tubing and pump the lubricant into the cable. (Careful, this could get messy!) (Mike Shank, Jan 1998 *Communiqué*.)

Rusty Fan Belt Pulleys? This may be particularly pertinent to Corvairs that aren't being driven on a regular basis. The insides of pulleys are normally bright, shiny steel, but if they sit for a long time, they get rusty. A rusty surface is a rough surface and will rapidly wear out a fan belt. So you might want to take a look and if the surfaces are rusting, consider polishing them up. You can do it with the engine running – perhaps by putting some medium grit sandpaper in a slot in the end of a dowel, but that can be dangerous if the paper or dowel gets trapped by the spinning pulley. A better way would be to remove the fan belt and polish the pulleys by hand. (Based upon a tip from Tony Underwood, Jan 1998 *Corsa Communiqué*.)

A Frequently Overlooked Powerglide Leak: Powerglide leaks are hard to find. After you've checked the common sources – pan gasket, shift lever cable and shift lever O-ring – there's one more item to check. That is the O-ring on the throttle shaft lever. Clarks sells replacements; item #29 in the Powerglide section. Note that this is near the bottom of the transmission and it will drain fluid when you remove the throttle shaft to change the O-ring.

Adjusting Brakes with New Linings: Here are some tips for when you put new brakes on your Corvair. First, you can't properly adjust the rear brakes until you have backed off the parking brake until the cable is slack. This ensures that both shoes are resting against the anchor bolt. Second, while the manual suggests that the auto-adjusters (on 1963 and later Corvairs) are adequate to adjust the new brakes, that's not really true. A better approach is to manually run the adjusters out until the shoes are tight against the brake drum. Then take a rubber hammer or a length of 2x4 and beat the brake drums to shake things into position. (Don't use a hammer – the drums are brittle.) Keep adjusting and beating until you can't get things any tighter. This centers the brakes. Then back off the adjusters 12 clicks on front and 16 on rear on '60-'62 brakes (with manual adjusters) or 16 and 20 respectively on '63 – '69 brakes (with automatic adjusters). (The automatic adjusters have finer teeth than the manual adjusters.) Finally adjust the parking brake according to the shop manual. (Based upon a tip from Smitty Smith in the Tidewater Corvair Club *Spyder's Breathe Gazette*.)

Vair Vendor

For Sale: 1965 Corvair Corsa Coupe, 140 hp, 4-speed. Yellow with black interior. This car belonged to a former Group Corvair member and has been parked in a dry garage for about the last 27 years. It was running when parked; the odometer indicates 63,779 miles on the car. There is paperwork that indicates that the engine was replaced at one time; the block is a "RM" code (Monza/500 140 hp manual transmission) vs. the "RB" Corsa 140 hp manual transmission engine. The engine can be turned by hand. The interior is in generally decent condition although the side of the driver's seat has been patched with tape. The body has some rust in the usual places but it is not excessive; the floors and trunk seem to be in good condition. There has been some sheet metal damage that appears to be relatively easy to straighten out. The car will need a brake overhaul, tires and a cleaning of the fuel system in order to make it run. Overall this Corsa appears to be a sound basis for a restoration. Asking \$2,250. Please contact the owner at ldgray1@yahoo.com for more information.



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.

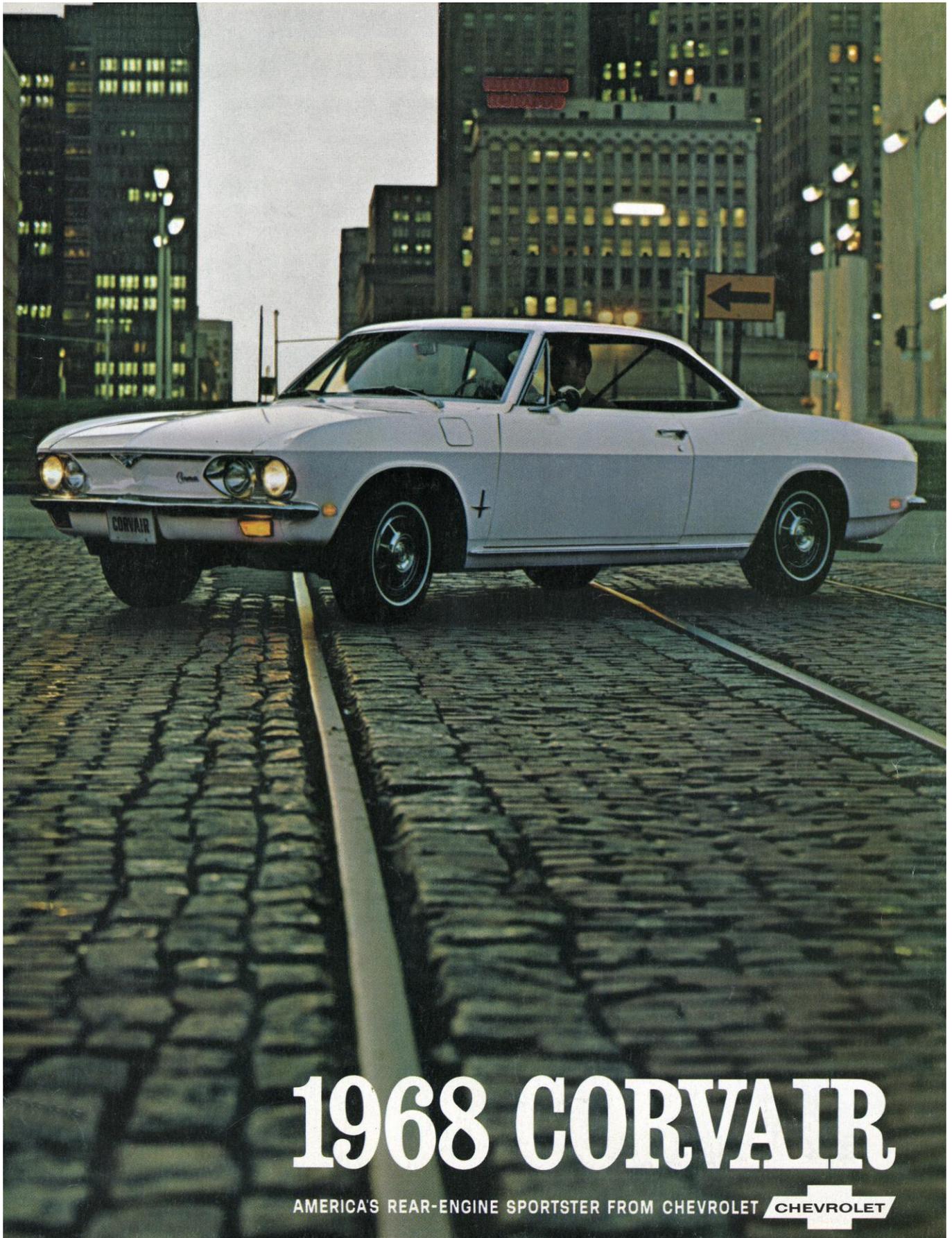


For Sale: Convertible Rear Window replacement. This is the Clark's Corvair Parts replacement late model convertible top rear window – black with zipper. I'm not sure just how old this one is, but it seems to be in excellent condition with the window very pliable. Clark's currently wants \$127.85 for theirs. Please make me 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.

These are "QRC" links to the CORSA web site. Clip them out and post them where people with smart phones can image them and connect to CORSA.





1968 CORVAIR

AMERICA'S REAR-ENGINE SPORTSTER FROM CHEVROLET 

Cover of the 1968 Chevrolet Corvair Brochure



A+ for Ambition!

Corvair at the Autocross, 2017 CORSA International Convention in Independence, MO.