



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVI, No. 5

May 2018



Group Corvair Visits the Other Side

Erwin & Sylvia Mack's collection of Model T's

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

May

15 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. We're going back to the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant (131 Centerway, Greenbelt, MD). As usual, we'll have dinner and then conduct a meeting.

18-20 – Virginia Vair Fair, Winchester, VA. There is a group rate at the host hotel (Hampton Inn) but you had to reserve your room before April 20. For more information call Jeff Roadcap, 540-908-0010 or go to their web site at www.sites.google.com/site/centralvirginiacorvairclub/home.

18-20 – Corvair Museum Grand Opening, Chevrolet Hall of Fame, Decatur, IL. Host hotel: Hampton Inn, 4855 E. Evergreen Ct., Mt. Zion, IL 62521. Phone: 217-864-3297. Room rates are \$129/night using reservation code COR. There should be a welcoming party Friday night, car display on Saturday. The museum ribbon cutting is expected about noon on Saturday with possibly a banquet Saturday night.

20 – **Corvair Ranch Open House**, 1079 Bon-Ox Rd, Gettysburg, PA. Car show, lunch, door prizes, tech demos and more! Should we plan a caravan up there?

26 – Bowie Memorial Day Parade. GC participants will gather at Jerry Yates's home (13461 Overbrook Lane, Bowie, MD) at about 9:00 a.m. and then proceed to the parade staging area at about 10:00 am.

June

2 – Orphan Car Tour through Harford and Baltimore counties in Maryland. Starts in Jarrettsville and ends at Friendly Farms Restaurant in Upperco with stops at points of interest along the way. See www.orphancartour.org for info.

2 – CAT South 6th Annual Car Show & Street Market. 211 Central Ave. East, Edgewater, MD. See www.skillsusacats.org/car-show for registration information. Here's a chance to introduce automobile technology students to something old/new – the Corvair!

17 – Sully Father's Day Car Show, Sully Historic Site, Chantilly, VA. (This is just off VA Rt-28, opposite Dulles Airport.) Registration 8 – 11 after which the field closes to all vehicle traffic. The show is actually 10-3:30. This is one of the larger shows for classic and antique cars in the Washington area.

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

July

TBD – Group Corvair “Almost Fourth of July” meeting/picnic. Date, time and location are all TBD.

23-28 – CORSA International Convention, Pittsburgh, PA. See the *CORSA Communiqué* or www.CORSA.org for more information.

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Minutes of the April Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Twelve Group Corvair members met at 7:00 for the April 17 meeting at Fratelli's Restaurant in Hyattsville. The restaurant was busier than usual and was short of staff so the service was slow. The good news was that it gave us time to chat and catch up on what everyone had been doing. At 7:40 we decided to go ahead with the meeting before we ate, so Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order.

The minutes were approved as they appeared in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. There were no expenses or income during the last month.

Bob Hall discussed a spring activity for the club. He had arranged for the club members to visit Erwin Mack's Model-T collection at his two-story garage in Silver Spring. The plan was to meet at Erwin and Sylvia Mack's home at 12:00 noon on Saturday, April 21. [Note: The date was later changed to Sunday, April 22.]

Several other possible activities were suggested such as a trip on the Choptank River or a trip to Pennsylvania to visit a restorer of Stanley Steamers.

The Bowie Memorial Day Parade will be on Saturday, May 26. It looks like we will have three cars in the parade this year. Those participating will be Jerry Yates, Rob Neighbour, and Jim Simpson.

The CAT (Center for Applied Technology) North car show will be on Saturday, May 5. This is a first time show for this vocational technical high school that specializes in auto related courses. It might be a good place to introduce the younger generation to the Corvair. There is limited space so anyone interested needs to register.

There was a discussion about the various areas of expertise among the club members. Bob suggested that those needing technical assistance should let him know and he would try to set up a tech session. Bob also suggested that we could make a list of Corvairs that might be available for movie shoots. It would be fun to see our cars on the screen.

The Corvair Ranch open house will be on May 20. Several club members indicated that they were planning to go: Jerry, Rob, and Jim S. We may want to caravan up there; something to discuss at the next meeting.

At this point in the meeting the restaurant servers brought out our plates, so we took a break to enjoy a great Italian dinner.

There was a suggestion that club members could go to the IMAX movie theater at the Udvar-Hazy facility (Smithsonian Air and Space Museum out by Dulles Airport) on a Sunday, arriving about 4:00 – when parking is free. After the movie we could enjoy a late dinner.

We decided that the May 15 meeting will be at the Beijing of Greenbelt again. You can order an individual dinner or we can order several dishes and share them family style.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.

Group Corvair Checks out Fords!

Bob Hall

On Sunday, April 22nd, Erwin Mack and his wife Sylvia hosted Group Corvair at their home in Silver Spring. Carol and I brought drinks, chips and wraps to share and Erwin took us on a tour of his two story garage where he maintains and rebuilds his seven car Model T collection. (It should be noted that the Macks are also fans of the Corvair having owned and loved a Greenbrier they had for years when their children were younger). In addition to heating, air conditioning and a private bathroom Erwin and Sylvia's garage has a woodworking shop on the upper floor where he makes car body parts, wood toys and home accessories. He showed us his fully, and beautifully, restored 1909 Model T (brass era) and his two (1920 and 1924) Model T Huckster (pickup) trucks. He keeps the rest of his collection at one of his sons' homes.

After a tour of his garage, its equipment and the 1909 Model T, Erwin took us upstairs to see the well-equipped woodworking area. Unlike our Corvairs, Model T bodies were built with a lot of wood so their owners can justify having even more tools than we can.

While having lunch we discussed automobile clubs and the problem of attracting new and younger members. We agreed that getting people involved with the vehicles; driving them, maintaining them and making personal memories with them was the best way to support our hobby.

After lunch we discussed the merits of Model Ts, Henry Ford, mechanical brakes, three pedal foot controls, two post vs. four post lifts and keeping neighbors happy. We agreed that our Corvairs all had major advantages with our electric starters, distributors with mechanical and vacuum advance and hydraulic four wheel brakes. Then Erwin started the 1924 Huckster and let it run for our benefit—94 years young and still going strong. My grandfather knew how to drive one and I suspect yours did too.



CAT North Car Show

Marolyn Simpson

Several weeks ago Ron Fedorcak called us and told us about a car show that would be held in northern Anne Arundel County. CAT (Center for Applied Technology) North is a vocational technical high school that teaches automotive repair skills including body work, painting, and repairs. They were planning their first car show. The forecast for Saturday, May 5, was for rain much of the day so we didn't want to take our Corvair out, but we thought we could still go to the show and possibly give some of the students a little moral support.

We had just arrived and were looking at the first car when we looked up and saw Ron and Eileen. That first car proved to be one of the more interesting ones in the show. It was a 1974 red Chevy Nova. It did not look like a concours show car so we asked about the car's story. It had about 67,000 miles on it and had been parked for many years. The man showing it had just recently acquired it and cleaned it up, but it was totally original. He said he planned to keep it original with just normal maintenance--not restoration. Specifically, it had a leak around the taillights that allowed water to run into the trunk that he wanted to get fixed.

Other cars in the show were everything from classic 1950 cars to a 2017 Corvette to hot rods. Quite a mix. We also looked over a black Camaro that looked pretty rough. Again we asked about the car's story. The owner said this style Camaro had always been his dream car. He found one for sale and bought it about two weeks ago. His plan was to restore it – mostly a “resto-mod” – and have students at the CAT North school do much of the work.

On our way out we were handed a flyer for the CAT South car show on June 2. It will be just down the street from us at 211 Central Avenue East in Edgewater MD. The hours are 8:00 to 1:00. More information about the show is at www.skillsusacats.org.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

In May 1978, Group Corvair was active. As reported in the May *Group Corvair Comments* calendar, we had three meetings scheduled in both May and June – a business meeting and two tech sessions in both months. Bob Lewis reported on how the Maryland MVA was moving to approve the Corvair for Historic tag status. In the Vair Vendor, there was a '68 500 coupe for sale. While the condition wasn't listed, even as a parts car, it sounded interesting – 140hp/4-speed, factory heavy duty suspension and quick steering, Corsa gauges plus a spare 95 hp engine, front and rear suspension, interior parts and more for \$600. (Of course a dollar was worth a bit more back then.)

The May 1978 *CORSA Communiqués* noted Bob Coffin's and Warren LeVeque's successes on the race track. Bob took second in D/Production at the SCCA regional race in Lime Rock while Warren won D/Production at Mid-America Raceway. The Tech Topics noted that Clark's Corvair Parts had reproduced the bushings and bolt kits for the '64 rear suspension leaf springs. They had (and still have) a nasty habit of breaking and dropping the ends of the leaf spring onto the road. This was followed by a full two pages of comments on the Corvair turbo engine. There seemed to be a consensus that the Carter YH carburetor was not the best choice that Chevrolet could have made for the turbo engines. If you were in the market for a Corvair, there were six full columns of cars for sale in the Corvair Classified. With the exception of a '66 Corsa/Kelmark mid-engine V8 conversion, I didn't spot anything exotic. But you pretty much had your choice of all the years and models of Corvair that Chevrolet ever made.

Ten years on, by 1988 Group Corvair had pretty much ended the regular tech sessions. The May *Group Corvair Comments* had regularly scheduled business meetings and our very popular Fall Flea Fair listed in the calendar but the tech sessions and autocrosses that marked the early days of the club were about extinct. Replacing them were car shows as the Corvair became more and more of a “classic car”. In the Vair Vendor section, we had four cars for sale including a '65 convertible that had been updated with all the appropriate Corsa instruments and badges.

The May 1988 *CORSA Communiqués* focused on the new CORSA Concours Judging Rules (Rev 5), a very timely subject given the upcoming Asheville, NC, CORSA national convention. It is interesting to note that CORSA allows current production tires – including metric radials – as acceptable replacements in the Factory Stock class. Compare that with AACA rules that require original type bias ply tires. The other major topic was the election of the CORSA Board of Directors. Group Corvair's own Ward Bourgoingien was running for one of the two Eastern Division positions. Still plenty of cars for sale but prices were creeping up and the selection seemed a bit thinner than before.

Perhaps things accelerated later in the year, but the May 1998 *Group Corvair Comments* was pretty thin. Marolyn and I had just attended the Virginia Vair Fair in Manassas (it rained all the way there and back, but stayed dry during the show!). There was a brief article about Rose Martin, a true Corvair lover, being buried with her coffin in her beloved '62 sedan. And we had eight cars for sale in the Vair Vendor. I told you it was a thin issue.

Finally the *CORSA Communiqué* for May 1998 had a great "letter to the editor" from Jim Burkhard on the "Calvair" that had been featured the month before. Jim had significant experience in Stirling engines, the power plant in the "Calvair" and corrected a number of technical errors and oversights in the article. Remember when the Corvair Museum was in Richmond? Ray Mitchell reported on the major "spring cleaning" effort which included running the showroom Corvairs and returning them to concours condition, and a top-to-bottom cleaning of the facility. There were also a couple articles of note: Terry Stafford provided his thoughts on preparing your car for high-speed track time. The other was by Bob Helt of his conversation with Bob Benzinger who was the Design Engineer in charge of the Corvair engine from 1957 through 1964. Among other topics, Mr. Benzinger confirmed that there wasn't enough cooling designed into the Corvair engine to handle the full power of the turbocharged engines; the designers just assumed the driver would either run out of road or run out of guts before he overheated and ruined the engine.

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Welding in new floor pans: If you are welding in new floor pans and want to do it right, the joints should be "butt welds". That is, the edges of the old and new metal should "butt" up against each other (with a very small gap that will be filled by weld material) instead of overlapping. But holding the two pieces in even alignment can be hard. There are a number of clamps made for the purpose and they aren't very expensive individually. And if you were a professional welder, they would be an investment that would pay for themselves fairly quickly. But for an amateur who is going to do one set of floor pans, then buying 30 or 40 of them starts to add up.

Smitty Smith offered an alternative in the Virtual Vairs. Buy a box of 100 #4 steel screws, a box of nuts to fit and 200 flat washers. Drill 1/8" holes through the gap between the panels you plan to weld at roughly 4" intervals and using a washer on each side, clamp the metal edges in place. Once you have tack welded between the screws, remove them. (You might find that the metal has expanded and the screw doesn't want to move. In that case, just grind off the head and punch them out. They are cheap and expendable.)

Another suggestion from the Virtual Vairs is to use self-tapping sheet metal screws in the gaps. If all goes well, the screw will bite into both pieces of metal and hold them in alignment.

I haven't tried either method and suspect that a combination of the two might work best, that is, use screws with washers as clamps to get the major parts in basic alignment and then self-tapping screws to fill in.

And if you are a master welder, working with a gas torch, then there was a third method suggested. Heat the area around the point where you are welding until the sheet metal expands until it touches. Then make a tack weld in the center of the heated area. Move down a ways and do it again. You still might need a few clamps to hold large areas in alignment, but you should end up with a very tight seam.

High-Stall Torque Converter Installation: If you are blessed with a 140 hp engine and powerglide (PG) transmission this is something you might want to consider. The 140 hp engine is really designed for higher RPM operations; it is not known for its low-RPM "lugging" capability. While GM did use a different governor on the transmission and retarded the cam on the 140 PG engine to try to compensate, apparently the real "solution" is to change the torque converter to one that has a higher stall.

What is a higher stall torque converter you might ask? While there are a number of whys of defining "stall" in a torque converter, Clark's Corvair Parts puts it this way: "...most of us probably think of it as the RPM that the engine must reach for the car to start moving." They list the benefits as "No stalling or engine speed drops at stop lights", "no creeping", "less apt to ping as the engine revs up a little before there is a load on the engine whether starting or accelerating."

If any of these benefits have caught your attention, or even if you need to change the torque converter for some other reason, then check out the April/May 2018 edition of *The Drip Line*, the newsletter of the Pikes Peak Corvair Club. You can find it on their web site: <http://www.corvair.org/chapters/chapter809>

Changing Jets in your Corvair's Carburetors? Then here's a tool you need to make. If you've ever worked on a Corvair Rochester H or HV carburetor, you'll know that the jet is installed right by the sidewall of the bowl. A regular screw driver won't fit in that spot – if it's big enough to properly engage the slots on the jet, then it's too big to fit in there straight. And if it's small enough to go in straight, then it is too small to properly engage the jet. (A lot of people have found out the hard way that the soft brass of the jet will round out if the screw driver is not just the right size and engaged straight on!)

Fran Schmit, in the Corvair Minnesota *Leaky Seel*, describes making a tool that does the job perfectly. It really consists of two parts. First is a hand impact driver. This is kind of a hammer driven screw driver. You put the screw driver blade (or a small socket) on the offending screw and rap the other end with a hammer. That simultaneously puts more pressure on the screw driver blade to keep it in place while an internal thread in the impact driver translates the hammer force into torque on the screw. They work quit well in loosening frozen screws.

The second part is an adapter to fit the jet screw slots. The impact driver Mr. Schmit is using has a 5/16" drive so he took a 4" long piece of 5/16" hex steel stock and ground/filed most of the length so it would fit down along the carburetor wall and align squarely with the jet. He then used a Dremel tool to cut/grind the end of the tool into a blade that "exactly" fits the slot on a jet. (It helps to have a spare jet in hand to check the fit.) You really want as tight a fit as possible to ensure the soft brass jet isn't damaged.

In use, the vertical impact helps break the thread bond (corrosion) while the high torque of the impact driver gets the jet turning. If you want to see his illustrations, check, out this site:

<http://www.vv.corvair.org/pipermail/chapters/attachments/20180506/7aed4a3d/attachment.pdf>

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 shows 63,779 miles on the car. There is paperwork that indicates that the engine was replaced at one time with a "RM" code (Monza/500) 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 \$2,000. Please contact the owner at ldgray1@yahoo.com for more information.





Monza interior. ▲

▼ Monza Sport Coupe.



Locking up-front trunk.

Fold-down rear seat in Monza Sport Coupe.



Not only does Monza put the car before the horses, it gives you sporty buckets and styling flair in hardtop and convertible models.

If you're a true car enthusiast, then you probably know all about Corvair already. If not, you can't help but notice those sleek rear-engine fun cars darting about. For 1968, both enthusiasts and lovers of fun cars will find lots to like in the Monza Sport Coupe or Convertible. Outside, it has that aerodynamic styling with new side marker lights front and rear.

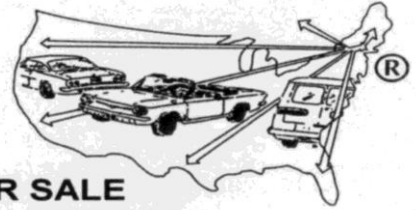
Inside, those great bucket seats have new finer grain vinyl with extra-soft expanded vinyl on cushion centers and back rests. New finer grain vinyl is used on sidewalls, too. Also new: added instrument panel padding, padded windshield pillars and energy-absorbing front seat backs, and new safety armrests that shield door handles. Bright accents highlight seat backs and sidewalls, while deep-twist nylon carpet luxuriates underfoot. On the instrument panel, the black-textured trim panel adds a tasteful touch. Black, gold or blue interiors are keyed to Magic-Mirror exterior color. Fold-down rear seat is standard in the Monza Sport Coupe; handy locking front trunk on all Corvairs. Monza Convertible top choices: white, black or blue with any body color.

Just for sport, try ordering a Monza model equipped with either the 110-hp or 140-hp Turbo-Air engine, 4-Speed fully synchronized gearbox, Positraction, sport-styled steering wheel (looks like real walnut), AM-FM radio (even FM stereo or tape stereo if you like — or both for ultimate listening!) and those dashing wire wheel covers to set off whitewall or black 7.00 x 13 tires. That's what a real enthusiast would specify, and the entire package won't cost you a bundle.

So much for the cart. As for horses, 95 are standard. 110 or 140 are available. Transmissions: 3-Speed fully synchronized standard; you may also order 4-Speed or Powerglide automatic with any engine.

Personalize your Monza with extra-cost Options and Custom Features listed on the inside page. Some are described and illustrated above.

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CLARK'S 45th ANNIVERSARY SUPER SALE
This sale goes from January 20 - December 31, 2018.

Sale prices for all items are on the internet order site.
Page numbers refer to the 2013-18 catalog unless otherwise noted.

The 2018 Supplement is on our website. For those who would like a printed version,
you can request one with your parts order.

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 86, Maple Plain, MN 55359, phone 630-403-5010, website: www.corvair.org CORSA memberships are available at various levels with corresponding dues. As a member, you will receive the CORSA Communiqué and be eligible to attend all CORSA national events, including the annual convention.