



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVI, No. 6

June 2018



## CAT South, Best of Show

Jerry Yates's Yenko Stinger Clone at the Center of Applied Technologies South show

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

### June

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. This month we are meeting at **Mama Lucia's** restaurant in Dunkirk, MD. The address is: 10136 Southern Maryland Blvd, Dunkirk, MD 20754. This is on MD Rt-4, south of Upper Marlboro. From the Beltway, take the MD Rt-4 exit south. It's about 18 miles from the Beltway, on the right as you head south. We're going to try a new place somewhat south of the area we normally meet. This will give our southern members a chance to attend without a long drive.

### 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](http://www.CORSA.org) for

more information.

## August

We normally don't hold a regular meeting in August although we might consider some kind of club outing.

11 – 2018 All-GM Show, Montgomery College, 51 Mannakee St., Rockville, MD. Contact Corry Correl, 240-686-0229 or Franklin Gage 703-869-8434 for more information.

11 – First State Annual Corvair Show. 9 am – 3 pm, Limestone Presbyterian Church, 3201 Limestone Rd., Wilmington, DE. Trophies, door prizes, dash plaques, 50/50 drawing, lunch for registered Corvairs. Please bring canned goods for the church food closet.

## September

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

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## Minutes of the May Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

There were 10 Group Corvair members present at the May 15 Group Corvair meeting at the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant. We met at 7:00 for dinner; we ordered several dishes and shared them family style. Bob Hall called the meeting to order at 8:10.

The minutes from the April meeting were approved as they appeared in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report: no income and no expenses since the last meeting.

Bob gave a brief report on the club spring outing to Erwin and Sylvia Mack's home in Silver Spring to see his Model T collection and tour his two-story garage.

Jim S. reported that he had received an email from a prospective new member (Jim Bowersox) who lives in Annapolis. He was just taking possession of a '65 Monza convertible, 140, 4-speed and was interested in joining. Both Jim S and Bob Hall have been in contact and offered the club's help in getting his car into tip-top condition.

There was a short discussion on the CAT (Center for Applied Technology) North car show that was held on May 5. The CAT South car show will be on June 2 in Edgewater.

The Bowie Memorial Day parade will be on Saturday, May 26. The club will have three cars in the parade: Jerry Yates, Rob Neighbour, and Jim S. We will meet at the McDonalds on Rt 193 in Bowie and then caravan to the staging area at the Bowie High School Annex. Barbara and Gus Torbert loaned us their Group Corvair logo magnet so we will have a logo magnet on each car.

Bob Hall suggested that club members could meet at the Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy facility near Dulles airport after the Sully car show on June 17 for an IMAX movie followed by dinner. After some discussion it was decided that another date might work better. We will keep this club activity in mind for another time.



Jim S. had a “final” mockup of the club feather flag. Jerry brought a thumb drive with a digital version of the Group Corvair and CORSA logos that will be used on the flag.

There was a discussion of break lines with stories of brake failures.

Jim S. offered to check with Phil Richardson to see if he is planning to be at the next meeting and if he has any ideas on a restaurant closer to him where we could have the May meeting. [Note: the May meeting will be at Mama Lucia’s restaurant in Dunkirk.]

There was some discussion about the Not-Quite-Fourth-of-July picnic. The proposed location is Andrew Don’s home. More details will be discussed at the June meeting.

Bob is planning to go to the Virginia Vair Fair in Winchester on Friday, May 18.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

## Group Corvair Goes on Parade

Jim Simpson

Group Corvair made its annual appearance in the Bowie Memorial Day parade. Jerry Yates (who lives in Bowie) had his white Yenko Stinger clone, Rob Neighbor (Laurel, MD) drove his turquoise convertible and Marolyn and I (who used to live in Bowie) had our Marina Blue Corsa. We all rendezvoused at the Bowie McDonald’s restaurant so that we could get a quick bite of breakfast. From there we proceeded to the parade staging point at the Bowie High School Annex. My turbocharged Corsa was a bit hard starting and stalled momentarily as we pulled away from McDonald’s but we just ascribed that to the turbo engine’s notoriously hard starting while hot. Unfortunately that seemed to be a portent of things to come.



**Waiting for the Start of the Parade**

Group Corvair was assigned to be the 50<sup>th</sup> “unit” in the parade which put us at about the 2/3rds point. (There were originally 88 units in the parade but a few dropped out at the last minute.) 50<sup>th</sup> was a pretty good position; it was far enough away from some of the dance units and the Bowie Fire Trucks – those groups have LOUD music and sirens and spending an hour with them right in front or behind would be a bit much to bear.

The weather was about as good as it gets and the crowd was as enthusiastic as ever. The parade is only about a mile long, but takes roughly 45 minutes to cover the

entire route. You go as slow as the slowest unit. Some of the units, particularly the dance groups, stop and perform in front of the judge’s stand so cars do a lot of idling.

Everything was going great until our Corsa started acting up. First it started to blow some oil smoke. This has been a long developing problem. I’m pretty sure that it is the turbocharger oil seal. Without going into details, it’s still the original one (52 years/120k miles old). I have a replacement – Clarks sells an updated design – but just haven’t taken the time to build a new turbo. Usually revving the engine a bit will burn off the oil and get the seal to seat a bit better. It took a while, but eventually that trick seemed to work. Then at about the ¾ mile point, the car stalled. It just died. Cranking didn’t do much good; it seemed to catch once or twice, but then nothing more. The only thing to do was to pull the car over and let the parade go by.

Friendly spectators gave us a hand and we pulled the car over to the curb. Other car units offered help, but we had our tool box and once Jerry and Rob finished the parade route they came back to lend a hand. Corvairs are simple. Unless there is something major broken inside the engine, the usual problems are fuel due to a bad fuel pump or

ignition, frequently due an overheating spark coil. So we started with the fuel pump. Loosening the outlet line on the fuel pump showed plenty of fuel there and since there were no signs of the fuel pump leaking, we guessed that it was ok. So how about the spark? Sure enough, there wasn't any!

This is where yours truly didn't properly follow the logic tree and jumped to the conclusion it "must be the coil". My excuse is that bad coils have been showing up in the Virtual Vairs discussion rather frequently. So I asked Jerry and Rob to see if they could get a new coil at the local auto parts store. Sure enough, they managed to find one that should fit.

Of course the engine was still pretty hot and it was well after lunch time. We decided that we'd let the engine cool and go to lunch. Jerry had to drop out at this point, but Jim Govoni and Andrew were able to join Rob, Marolyn and I at the Old Bowie Town Grille for a really delicious meal. It gave me some time to cool down and think through the problem a bit more.

There is something thing you need to understand about the engine in Marolyn and my Corsa. We have a Pertronix ignition system that substitutes for the points along with a Safeguard knock sensor. The Safeguard gets its signals from the Pertronix and drives the ignition coil. When I installed the Safeguard, I'd set it up so that it could be bypassed with a simple plug-in jumper and the Pertronix would take over the entire ignition load.

When we got back to the car, we played around with the new coil a bit and discovered that there still was no spark. So we finally tried the quickest and simplest approach and bypassed the Safeguard unit. The car fired immediately and ran like a top! If I'd just plugged in the by-pass jumper at the first sign of a problem we could have gotten right back in the parade with maybe a minute or so of delay. Lesson learned – try the simplest things first! (We finished just in time – thunderstorms were closing in and the rains were starting.)

Thanks Jerry, Rob and Jim for standing by while I was troubleshooting. Rob in particular – he got to drive home in his open convertible in the rain! Guess he didn't need a shower that night.

## CAT South Car Show

Jerry Yates/Jim Simpson

Last month we reported on the Center for Applied Technology (CAT) North car show. This month it was CAT South's turn. Marolyn and I had planned to go but family issues prevented us from making it. But Jerry Yates was there to dazzle the spectators with his Corvair, a brilliant white Yenke clone! Here is his report:

I (Jerry) attended the CAT South 6<sup>th</sup> annual car show on Saturday (June 9) in Edgewater. The turnout was lower than expected, I think because of the threat of rain. As a matter of fact, it did rain within minutes of my arrival! However, it only rained for about 20 minutes. I came prepared; I brought my chamois and the car was dry again minutes after it stopped.

There were some very nice people running the show and a number of very nice cars. I was parked next to a Dodge "Yellow Jacket", a Dodge Challenger SRT8 special edition. The color is "Stinger Yellow" which I thought was interesting. Besides the brilliant yellow paint, the car had black stripes which sported a bee as a design feature.

I received two awards; one for being among the "Top 30" and the second, Best in Show. That trophy consisted of various engine parts and weighed close to 50 lbs! Overall it was a good day and if things go right I plan to attend again next year.





# Virginia Vair Fair

Rick Sanford

The 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Vair Fair was held in Winchester, Va. this year. Jeff and Cherie Roadcap were the Chairs, with help from many others including Wade and Phyllis Lanning. It was well attended once you consider the wet weather and competing events such as the Vintage Racing at Summit Point (rained out) and the grand opening of the Corvair Museum in Decatur, Ill. We had twenty some cars and about forty plus people. It was a fun group with some folks driving a considerable distance to attend -- the Passini's from Warminster, Pa. drove their real nice 62 wagon and John Downer came in from Cambridge, Ohio. The welcome pizza party with the ever popular valve cover races was on Friday night while on Saturday we had the (wet) car show and equally wet Corvair games.



**Paul & Marlene Passini's Wagon**

## Vair Fair Awards

Corvair Games: John Porterfield

Valve Cover Races: Helen Smith

Model Car Stock: Joe Darinsig

Model Car Modified: Mike Dejong

Model Car Diorama: John & Andrea Persinger

Model Car Promotional: Wade and Phyllis Lanning

Long Distance Award: John Downer

Hard Luck Award: John Downer (His primary car had issues about an hour away from home. He called AAA, had it towed home, and got out his other Corvair, a 1960 4-door, and made the trip to the Vair Fair.)

Early Open: John Killen ??

Early Closed: Ron Tumolo --63 Monza Coupe

Late Open: Richard Runion -66 Monza Conv.

Late Closed: Rick & Brenda Sanford -65 Corsa

Forward Control: Alan White -Ramp Side

Wagon; Paul & Marlene Passini -62 Monza Wagon

Beater: Andrew Watkins- 64 Monza Cp.

Best of Show: Rick & Brenda Sanford – 65 Corsa

Mark Ellis Award for Excellence: Allen White – Red Early Monza Coupe



**Vair Fair in the Rain**

## Corvair Ranch Open House

Rick Sanford

On Sunday, following the Vair Fair, a few of us headed north to the Corvair Ranch – now in the sun with dry roads! Other Corvair enthusiasts found their way there so that over 30 cars and more than 65 people attended. Tom Rahochik, president of the Mid-Maryland Corvair Club did his best as always in heading up this yearly event. His Corvair trivia contest is the best. There was plenty of food, fun and door prizes for everyone. It was a good day to be at the Corvair Ranch. We are so lucky to have Jeff and the Ranch to support our cars.



## Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

The big event listed in the June 1978 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* was the Group Corvair “Cherish Date” autocross on June 4. This was to be held at Cameron Station in Virginia. For those of you new to the area, Cameron Station was a US Army installation, home of the Defense Logistics Agency with several high rise office towers and huge parking lots that were empty on the weekends – a great place for autocrosses. It was bounded by Van Dorn St on the west, Duke St on the north and the Beltway to the south. The base was closed as part of the military base realignment in 1988 and has been totally redeveloped into a townhouse community. In the Vair Vendor, there were a set of four Fitch Sprint Hands wheels for sale -- \$150/set. Try to even find them today!

The June 1978 *CORSA Communiqués* was about car shows and conventions. The '78 CORSA Convention was to be held in San Diego in July and they were expecting a record turn-out. For folks coming from the east, they had a warning about driving across the desert “it gets quite hot in July”, with a recommendation to plan the last day’s drive for the evening or night and to pack extra water. Group Corvair had a quarter page ad for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Freestate Corvair Affair for 9-10 September, once again in Columbia, Md. There were plenty of ads in the Corvair Classifieds, but one in particular caught my eye – ‘69 Yenko Stinger, former Goodyear test car, Stage IV engine, 2,600 miles. Last Yenko built, \$4,000.” \$4,000 was a fair amount of money in 1978, but I’m sure it would have been a very sound investment. (Marolyn and I saw the restored car at the 2004 Lexington CORSA Convention. It was immaculate.) And in one small note, there was an announcement that Bill Coyle had purchased the inventory and rights to the Solar Cavalier.

Jumping ahead ten years to the June 1988 *Group Corvair Comments* and we were still talking about car shows. The Virginia Vair Fair and Mid-Maryland meets had just finished – the reports were that both were great events -- and the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Antique Chevrolet show at Sport Chevrolet was scheduled for the next weekend. Group Corvair had made a scenic tour of some of downtown Washington to include the Iwo Jima memorial and Haines Point to see “The Awakening” sculpture. (The Awakening depicted a giant that appeared to be struggling to emerge from the earth. It was originally installed at Haines Point in 1980 and was later sold and moved to National Harbor in 2008. It’s worth seeing.) And in something of a coincidence, the Vair Vendor had a ‘66 Fitch Sprint being sold that had a set of the rare Fitch Sprint Hands wheels on it.

The May ‘88 *CORSA Communiqués* had an interesting article about a truly mysterious early convertible. If this had been the April issue, you might have thought this was an April fool’s joke, but the car apparently started life as a 1960



coupe. Over several years, it appears that GM used it to test a number of experimental features including power bucket seats, a three-speed automatic (with a “park” position) coupled to a turbocharged engine, a power top (yes, they cut the top off) with a rain sensor to automatically raise the top, possibly air conditioning and a variety of body/cosmetic modifications. Unfortunately, the car disappeared (most likely scrapped) and all that remained were photos and previous owner’s recollections. The Tech Topics had three articles all focused on engine cooling. The bottom line of all three was to make sure all the casting flashing in the cylinder heads was removed. In the two pages of cars for sale, there was a ’66 Yenko that had been converted to a mid-engine V8.

Moving forward another decade to the June 1998 *Group Corvair Comments* and just like ten years earlier, the focus was on car shows. Marolyn and I had just attended the Mid-Maryland show and the VCCA sponsored show at Sport Chevrolet. Our newly restored Corsa did well in both events. Ward Bourgoingien reported Master Power Brakes were advertising power brakes for ’62 – ’69 Corvairs. (I checked, Master Power Brakes is still in business but don’t list anything specifically for Corvairs. But they have a wide range of “universal” parts that likely include something that would fit.) The Vair Vendor had a pretty good selection including a Rampside for sale.

Staying with the car show theme, the June ’98 *CORSA Communiqué* had articles on the upcoming St. Louis CORSA Convention. This was followed by a couple of nice articles on Corvairs, their owners and their adventures together. Capping the issue were a variety of Tech Topic articles covering topics such as modern tires, electric fuel pumps, adding sound deadening to early models, powerglide transmissions, paint and last, but not least, modern motor oils. And closing out the issue, there was a good selection of cars available in the CORSA Classifieds including Yenko Stinger YS-054 and a ’68 mid-engine V-8 that seemed well sorted. (The owner had put 77k miles on it!)

## Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

**Windshield Wipers:** This is from the June 1988 Group Corvair newsletter. Everyone knows that the wiper blade is critical to getting a clean window in the rain. But how many of you know that the wiper arm is equally important? Yes, obviously the arm holds the blade and swings it back and forth, but there’s also a spring built into the arm that presses the wiper blade down. And there’s actually a specification for just how much it should press down – at least one ounce for each inch of blade length!

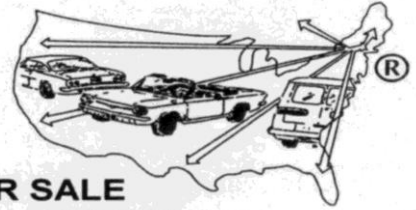
Corvairs use 15” blades so the specification is at least 15 ounces of down force. Get an old fashioned spring scale, the kind that fishermen use to weigh fish. Hook it at the point where the blade attaches to the arm and see how much force it takes to just lift the blade. If it’s not high enough, quit blaming the wiper blade for streaks and get a new arm!

## Vair Vendor

**For Sale: 1965 Corvair Corsa Coupe**, 140 hp, 4-speed. Yellow with black interior. This car has been parked in a dry garage for about the last 27 years. Running when parked, 63,779 miles on the car. 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 at least 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](mailto:ldgray1@yahoo.com) for more information.



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**This sale goes from January 20 - December 31, 2018.**

Sale prices for all items are on the internet order site.  
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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](http://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.*