



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVI, No. 7

July 2018



Sully Plantation Father's Day Car Show

First Place, 1959 – 1969 Chevrolet.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

July

No Group Corvair meeting this month. (No one volunteered to host the “Not Quite Fourth of July” picnic.)

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

29 – Reisterstown 15th annual all-vehicle show. Reisterstown regional park, 401 Mitchell Dr., Reisterstown, MD.
10 – 3, hosted by Free State Region, Vintage Chevrolet Club of America & Buick Owners of MD. Contact Bill Scott, 410-527-0953 or email grand1917@comcast.net for info. Web site: www.freestaterregionvcca.org.

August

No Group Corvair meeting this month. 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.

18 – Francis Scott Key Antique Car Club/Sugarloaf Mountain AACA 33rd Annual benefit car show. Rose Hill Manor Children’s Museum & Historic Park, 1611 N. Market St., Frederick, MD. Registration 8 – 1, awards 2:30. Check their Facebook site for more information.

September

15 – 43rd Annual Edgar Rohr Memorial Antique Car Meet, Manassas Museum, 9101 Prince William St., Manassas, VA. Sponsored by the Bull Run Region, AACA. Contact Bill Sessler, 703-368-2367, www.bullrunaaca.org.

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

22 – Central PA Corvair Day at the AACA Museum, Hershey, PA. Details to be announced.

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Minutes of the June Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

To give our southern Maryland members a chance to attend the June 19 meeting without the long drive, we met at the Mamma Lucia restaurant in Dunkirk. Even though it was a longer drive for others, eight members were present for dinner at 7:00. After enjoying an Italian meal Bob Hall called the meeting to order at 8:10.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer’s report: The club has had no income, no expenses since the last meeting.

There was one correction to the minutes from the May meeting that appeared in the June newsletter. The members participating in the Bowie Memorial Day parade met for breakfast at the McDonalds on Rt. 197 (not Rt. 193) in Bowie.

Group Corvair has a prospective new member, James Bowersox, from Annapolis. He has a 1965 140 Monza convertible--red with white top. Both Jim S. and Bob have been in contact with him. [Note: He has since joined the club. We hope to meet him at a future meeting.]

The Rockville show planning meeting was held on June 7. Pre-registration forms were handed out. Bob said he would send out the forms.

Bob wants to have a special event each month. He would also like to have more tech sessions. If anyone would like to schedule a tech session, contact Bob (301-493-8405; HallGreenn@aol.com).

There was a general discussion about dual shift cars. (These are cars such as the 1979 – 1984 Dodge Colt which had a two-speed transfer case with its own gear shift plus a regular 4-speed transmission that gave the car 8 forward and 2 reverse gears by shifting using two (dual) gear shifts. They gave you a choice of “power” or “economy”.)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Sully Plantation Father's Day Car Show

Jim Simpson

Marolyn and I have been attending the Sully Plantation car show just about every year since we restored our Corsa back in 1997. This show, sponsored by the George Washington chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America, goes on every Father's Day. It's one of the two largest antique and classic car shows in the Washington area and turns out nearly 400 cars. It's normally a fun event with lots of visitors – sons and daughters taking their dads out on his special day.

There have been a couple of drawbacks to the show. The first is the weather. For some reason, it always seems to be one of the hottest days of the year. And given the weather leading up to the event with the string of hot and humid days we'd been having, it seemed like it might be another "killer" day. The other drawback is that since it is sponsored by the Model A Ford club, the emphasis is on Fords. All nationalities, makes and models are welcome, but in past years many of the non-Fords were lumped into rather large and unwieldy groups. This year, however, they seem to have taken a hard look at past registration data and done a much more rational breakout of cars into classes. Our Corvair was in "Chevrolets from 1959 to 1969".

Marolyn and I watched the weather reports with some trepidation but finally decided we'd go. We packed our small cooler with as many cold drinks as we could get in there, slathered ourselves with sun screen, and headed out. As it turned out, the weather was not as bad as we'd feared. Most of the day, we had a decent breeze and enough of a cloud cover to keep the worst of the sun at bay.

Judging took place not long after we had settled into place. Ours was the only Corvair in the class! (In fact, this year there were only two Corvairs on the field; ours and Rick Sanford's red '65 Corsa. I have no idea where the Northern Virginia Corvair Club cars were. Rick's Corsa was not judged; you have to preregister as well as select to be judged.) I didn't do a count of cars in our class, but there were some very well prepared Chevrolets there. But we must have done something right, or perhaps the judges just liked Marina Blue; in any case, we took first in class!



Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

It must have been the heat, but there was no July 1978 issue of *Group Corvair Comments!*

Making up for the lack of a Group Corvair newsletter, CORSA issued what was to be the last of the *CORSA Quarterly* magazines. It had articles about the San Diego CORSA convention and Corvairs in the "Land of Fire and Ice" (Iceland). Driving in Iceland is a pretty rugged experience with many gravel (volcanic rock) country roads. The author's opinion was that the Corvair excelled on those roads. But probably the most interesting article for readers in the Washington DC area was a reprint of Don Yenko's article "12 hours of intrigue at Marlboro" from the original GM published *Corvair Communiqués*. In case you didn't know, Marlboro Motor Raceway hosted some high-profile national and international races back in the 1950s and early 1960s including the 12 Hours of Marlboro sedan races from 1961 to 1966. (It closed after the 1969 racing season although you can still see the track from US Rt-301.) In

1964, Don Yenke decided to run a Corvair team (including a Monza Spyder) against some of the world's best including Colin Chapman's Lotus Cortina team with Jackie Stewart driving. One problem though – FIA rules stated that he had to have a three car team and one of the originally planned participants dropped out at the last moment without any notice. Where to get the necessary third car? Well they happened to notice an innocent little Monza sitting in the parking lot. Yes, it had a powerglide transmission, but hey, it was a Corvair! And as it turned out, it was owned by one of the pit crew. After some quickie safety preparation the car was ready. And after much coaxing, Donna Mae Mims was recruited to drive it. So they now had a full team. The Monza Spyder qualified fourth, right behind the three factory Lotus Cortinas. Once racing started, the owner of the powerglide Monza was seen mumbling to himself something about “Please come in, Please come in!” And sure enough, as if she could read his mind, Donna Mae pitted on lap two. Her problem? Driver fatigue. While everyone else watched the race, deft hands quickly replace license plates, hub caps and upholstery then removed numbers, masking tape and the roll bar. Fifteen minutes later, reporters came by asking what had happened to the third Corvair. No one seemed to know... The rest of the race was exciting with both mechanical and weather problems. But even with its problems (the transmission was stuck in first gear at the end of the race), the Monza Spyder won its class and took 7th overall.

The July 1978 *CORSA Communiqués* reported on racing, in particular, the results of Sears Point and Laguna Seca. Corvair drivers did well with a podium finish at Sears Point. There was a large Tech Topic article about tuning the Carter YH carburetor used on the turbocharged Corvair. In the seven pages of ads, just about everything Corvair was available. For example, Art Herschberger's personal '65 Solar Cavalier Corsa was for sale -- \$6,000.

We did have a July 1988 issue of *Group Corvair Comments*. There wasn't a lot of news; after all, we were getting into the summer doldrums. But we did have some tech topics including one I'd never heard of before. One member discovered that the bottom of the battery box on his Rampside had failed and the battery had tilted over to one side, away from the engine. It had tilted so far that the positive terminal was resting against the body and was busily burning a hole through the fender! There were only two cars for sale this month; a '62 Monza and a '63 700. Both were cheap.

The July '88 *CORSA Communiqués* focused on last minute news and updates about the upcoming Asheville, NC, CORSA National Convention. Most of the other articles were by long-term owners of Corvairs and their tales of love/hate relationships with their cars. (Mostly love, but there were some occasional “issues” they'd had to overcome.) The CORSA Classifieds were down to essentially two pages; still a reasonable selection, but few special or rare cars.

In keeping with the summer doldrums theme, the July 1998 *Group Corvair Comments* was pretty light on news. The big event was to be the “Not Quite Fourth of July” picnic in Greenbelt Park. Six cars were being offered for sale along with some interesting parts including a complete air conditioning system for an early model.

“*Stupid is as Stupid does*” was the standout article in the July '98 *CORSA Communiqué*. The author will remain nameless, but he recounted a series of what he described as stupid actions on his part. They start with a failure to do the “hard, harder” test on his brakes prior to an 800 mile road trip. Sure enough, his brakes failed due to a rusted out line, luckily just a mile before getting back home. Once home he jacked the car up using the factory scissors jack on a gravel surface, removed a rear wheel and did not use a jack stand. He had problems removing the brake line (it had rusted) so he took a break and decided to work inside the car and swap the non-functional radio for a radio delete plate. He did not disconnect the battery before pulling the radio. The radio managed to swing around and hit the power lead to the cigarette lighter (not fused!). The car's interior immediately filled with acrid smoke from burning insulation. Jumping from the car to get to the battery to disconnect it was enough to topple the already shaky scissors jack (on gravel remember) and the car dropped. Cushioning the fall very slightly was a can of WD-40 right under the brake drum – the can exploded spraying its contents in a 20' circle. And to cap it all off, his can of beer which he had put on top of the car fell over and rolled down the back window sending cascades of foamy beer everywhere. Lots of lessons here, including not to leave an open can of beer on top of your car! Two ads caught my eye in the CORSA Classifieds: First an all original, unrestored, rust free '63 Greenbrier with 15k miles on the odometer. The second was Fred Bybee's ready to race stage IV Yenke Stinger (YS-150).

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Head Deflashing: Everyone knows that the Corvair engine is air cooled. The cylinder heads, cast out of aluminum, have around 15 fins to transfer the combustion chamber heat to the air. The engine design is for air from the fan to be forced down through those fins to carry the heat away. Unfortunately the casting process was a bit sloppy and sometimes the top and bottom halves of the moulds didn't quite line up properly. When that happened, the bases of the fins didn't line up and compromised the air flow. And compounding the problem, frequently there was "flashing" left as well. Flashing is a thin layer of aluminum that squeezes into any gap between the two halves of the moulds and can completely block air flow.

The foundry should have rejected any heads where the moulds were badly misaligned as well as punch out any flashing left at the mould part lines. Well, that didn't always happen. Here's a photo of a cylinder head that has been cut apart. Note the misaligned fins and the remaining flashing.

Heads like this one can be salvaged. You need a thin hole saw or a long 1/8" drill bit to get down to the mould parting line and open things up. Getting all the flashing out and fins "aligned" takes time and effort, but the results are a much cooler running engine!

(Photo borrowed from the *Leaky Seel*, the Corvair Minnesota Newsletter, July 2108.)

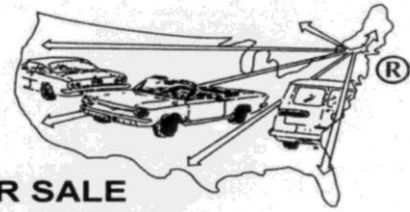


Vair Vendor

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 for more information.



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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.