



# VAIRifiable News

## The Grounded Circus



The Central Virginia Corvaair Club joined forces with the Beech Aero Club for a joint venture to The Flying Circus in Bealeton, VA. The Flying Circus is a barnstormer-like airshow that is performed every Sunday throughout the summer by antique airplanes. It features aerobatics, wing walkers and comedy...every Sunday...unless it rains. Yep, it rained. Due to the poor weather, only 2 planes and 3 Corvairs made the trip although others showed up with their water pumpers. The idea was that the BAC planes would fly in to the nearby airport and the CVCC drivers would supply the ride over

to the Flying Circus and back. Once we all arrived back at the airport after the show, the BAC pilots would give the Corvaair folks a ride in the plane. The CVCC did its part as it's cars hauled everyone to The Flying Circus' airfield. We got to know one another and then BAC sprang for lunch. There was a very nice picnic pavillion and we all enjoyed lunch together.

Soon, it was time for the show to start. Two airplanes took off with skydivers but before they could start the show, the rains came down...HARD! We all hoped it would pass quickly but the radar

### Calendar

**Sep 11:** Monthly CVCC Meeting, 7pm, River City Diner, Richmond.

**Sep 18:** Valley Vairs event. Dinner at Sonic Drive-In, Waynesboro, VA 7pm

**Sep 20-23:** Sportscar Vintage Racing Assoc, VIR, Alton, VA Featuring Corvaair. (More in Newsletter)



## THE GROUNDED CIRCUS (CONT)



**Above:** CVCC and BAC members claim a spot to watch the airshow.

showed a different story. After a while, the Circus announced that there would be no show for the day. The Corvairst drivers took the pilots back to the airport but the weather was too bad to fly anyone. Driving Corvairst to the event were Frank DuVal, John and Andrea Persinger and Rex Buel. Member Alan White flew in rather than drive. John Persinger too is a member of BAC as well as CVCC. Also attending from CVCC were Chris and Julie Carter and Rucker Posey who brought along Nancy Smith, and Jim and Kristen Wieme.



**Above:** The planes were lined up and ready to get the show on the road, er, in the air!

## WORSE THAN A HARD LUCK AWARD

JOHN LOTH



*Before*

My buddy Ernie Whitley and I have attended several international conventions together because both of our wives had seen enough Corvairst after their first convention. After the Springfield, Illinois convention we started planning for Pittsburgh because Kansas City was a little too far to drive. This would be the best yet because we would drive my 1966 Corsa convertible.



*After*

Since we have moved to Mathews, Va, on the water, I haven't taken any long trips and I wanted the car to be in great shape before beginning a 750 mile round trip. I started going over the car to assess what needed to be done before our grand adventure. I found the usual for a car which had not had a thorough check-up for years.

I started by rebuilding all four carburetors, removed the engine shroud and cleaned, detailed and painted all of the shrouding and engine compartment. I removed all four wheels, checked brakes, replaced one brake line, rebuilt the master cylinder. Then I replaced the left front tie rod end. While under the car I found a universal joint had a bolt missing and replaced that and then proceeded to check every single bolt throughout the under carriage and found several that needed to be tightened. Earlier I had also added a cruise control unit.

Satisfied that mechanically it was sound, I started detailing the outside with cleaning, polishing and doing touch up paint on the outside. Then I did a thorough cleaning of the interior with a protectant. Now she was shining--not a swirl in the paint.

With two weeks left to go before the convention I figured it was time for a road test so I went out on a sunny dry day to put her through her paces. She passed with flying colors and everything was going well until I turned out around to head back home. I was sitting in the median of a four lane highway. As I pulled out in the inside lane, a pick-up truck decided to change lanes at the same time. Neither of us saw the other and he clipped my right front fender destroying the corner, the bumper and head light surround. Fortunately no one was hurt and no citation was written. I was able to drive it home but it was a real downer driving it home with the front bumper looking like a pretzel and the fender torn up and knowing that my trip to the convention would be in an Impala.

## LATE MODEL RADIO BLANK PLATE

WADE LANNING



Chevrolet made a plate to cover the dashboard radio hole when no radio came with late model Corvairs. Those plates can be hard to find and, in my opinion, they are not very attractive. If you have a need to cover the radio hole, you can make one using the regular radio faceplate. I've made a couple using the following approach:

Cut a piece of sheet metal that fits in the recessed area of the standard Corvair chrome radio faceplate that leaves the chrome bead around the outside exposed. I used 22 gauge metal and to get straight, smooth edges, I had a metal shop cut the metal on a metal shear instead of using hand tin snips. The new metal plate can be painted to match the dash or use wrinkle paint like the instrument panel and glove box surround.

Attach the stock chrome faceplate to the dash. I used two short threaded lamp nipples through the radio shaft holes. The faceplate I used was one that someone had enlarged the holes for an aftermarket radio, but the chrome was good and the enlarged holes aren't visible when finished.

To hold the sheet metal cover to the faceplate, I used a new Corvair engine lid crossed flags emblem for '62-'64 and made a retainer for behind the dash from another piece of sheet metal. Holes were drilled through the front sheet metal and retainer to match the pin spacing on the emblem. Pal nuts were used on the emblem pins to hold the front plate to the retainer.

Other Corvair emblems could be used instead of the crossed flags, such as late model 110 or 140 engine lid emblems or a Corsa script fender emblem.

- From Top:** 1) Stock Radio Faceplate  
 2) Faceplate Cover with holes for emblem pins. This was painted flat black to match the dash  
 3) Crossed Flags Emblem  
 4) Behind the dash Retainer

**Right:** Completed Installation



## HEACOCK CLASSIC GOLD CUP

On Sept 20-23, there is going to be a Corvair racing event like none we've ever seen. The Heacock Classic Gold Cup will be held at Virginia International Raceway in Alton, VA (near Danville). This race features all types of classic cars racing on the 4 mile circuit. The difference between this and any other classic car race is that this year, the feature car will be the Corvair. As a result, I am told there there very well may be more Corvair's racing at this one event than at anytime in history. This historic event is happening in CVCC territory and we need to be there in force to support and celebrate the racing history of the Corvair!

Of course, not everyone can attend for the entire 4 days so CVCC is going to have its main showing on Saturday, Sept 22. We will set up a tent or two and a grill and we will be cooking burgers and dogs with all the fixin's. There may even be a cold one waiting there for you!

There will be Corvair racers, family and support personnel from all across the country and we need to show them a little central Virginia hospitality!

If you are going to be able to attend, please RSVP to Alan White [centralvacorvairclub@gmail.com](mailto:centralvacorvairclub@gmail.com) and let him know so he can plan appropriately for food and beverages! Make sure you bring a chair.



## SVRA CARSHOW



### Saturday, September 22, 2018

The SVRA Car Show at VIR is open to all Classic, Vintage, Exotic, Collectible Cars of interest and Motorcycles. Each \$50.00 Car Show registration includes:

- 2 Weekend Passes to the Vintage Races
- Touring laps on the Virginia International Raceway in your show car
- VIP Parking
- Full access to the race car paddock

For more info, go to:

<https://svra.com/events/2018-heacock-classic-gold-cup/>

## VENDORS WANTED



Do you sell Corvair parts? CORSA publishes a list of Corvair vendors in good standing in the Communique magazine and on the CORSA website. The cost for this is only \$50/year. Ken Hand is the keeper of the list for CORSA and you can reach him by email at [vairmech@aol.com](mailto:vairmech@aol.com)



# Ice Cream Social



For ice cream and car lovers, the Ice Cream Social hosted by Reggie and Cindy Nash on Sunday, August 5, was a crème de la crème event, pun intended! The Nash's are members of the Richmond Chapter of the AACA and, for the second year, invited CVCC members to attend their annual Ice Cream Social at their house on the James River in western Richmond. CVCC members that attended were David Robertson, Mike DeJong and Sue Adams, Rucker Posey & Nancy Smith, Marty and Jean Berens, John, Freddie & Bob Porterfield and Wade Lanning. David drove his top-down red '64 Monza convertible, Mike drove his black & red Rampside, Rucker drove his blue '61 Monza coupe and Wade brought his maroon '66 Monza coupe.

When arrived at the 2:00 pm start time, many antique cars were in the Nash's spacious back yard that borders the James River and more continued to roll in. Two long tables were set up, one with ice cream and the other with cakes, pies, cobblers, cookies and beverages. The ice cream served up included both homemade and store bought with every flavor you could imagine, along with a wide selection of toppings. After a few words by Reggie and the blessing, folks lined for ice cream and the other sweet tooth delights, throwing their diets and dental care out the window.

People drove their collectible cars consisting of numerous makes and models, representing a period of about 100 years of automotive history, probably at least 50 - 60 cars in total if not more. A lot of folks were checking out our Corvairs. Reggie was giving rides in his brass-era Model T Ford and he let folks drive it too, with his supervision of course. Some photographs are included with this article, but many more can be seen at the following website.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rr-aaca/albums/72157672315981418>

A big "Thank You" is extended to Reggie and Cindy for hosting the social and inviting us again.



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## FIELD DAY OF THE PAST

In case you do not plan to attend the event at the Virginia International Raceway, on Saturday, September 22, CVCC will make our annual pilgrimage to the Field Days of the Past. We generally have a good club turn out for this event. There is a car show and anyone driving an antique car for the show get in for free! We will meet at 8:30 AM at the Park & Ride on the north side of I-64, exit 173. By going in as a group, we can all park together. NOTE: It is required that each car have a fire extinguisher, so be sure to bring one.

The Field Days of the Past is just as the name states. It's a throw-back to yester-year. There are historic displays, buildings and re-enactments, truck and tractor pulls, small engine displays, arts and crafts, flea market, antique and modern construction equipment, carnival rides and equestrian events. For those that like modern shopping, there are tents with apparel, cowgirl and cowboy boots, hats, tools, model toys and hunting supplies to mention a few.

Two things that deserve special mention are the food and steam engines. It's not every day that you

can come across a multitude of working steam engines. There is everything from steam engines that crush soda cans to a steam operated sawmill and everything in between. You won't go away hungry



either. Food vendors are everywhere serving not only the standard event food but also home-made ice cream and homemade soda! For more info visit their website at: <https://fielddayofthepast.net>

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## CVCC MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 14, 2018

Attendees: Steve Wright, Don Garner, Chris Carter, Wade Lanning, Mike DeJong, Marty Berens, Frank DuVal & Andrew Watkins

### Activities Review:

- Wade reported on the Ice Cream Social at the home Reggie and Cindy Nash.
- Frank reported on the Flying Circus. After eating the storms prevented having flights.

### Future Activities:

- September 11: Monthly Meeting at River City Diner.
- September 21- 23: Gold Cup Historic Races featuring

Corvairs at Virginia International Raceway.

- September 22: Field Days of the Past, Rockville, VA.
- October: Steve Wright suggested holding a meeting in the Fredericksburg area. Steve and Frank will check on restaurants to hold the meeting.

### General Corvair Discussion:

- Mike brought information about having artwork done with your Corvair.

- A discussion was held about removal and installation of harmonic balancers.



Meeting Minutes

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# CORVAIRS IN THE NEWS!

The article below and artwork to the right appeared in the Richmond Times Dispatch on 24 August 2018. It appears from the Wheelbasemedia.com website that the article was originally published by the author, Malcolm Gunn, in 2014.



**G**eneral Motors could have taken the path of least resistance and built its first small family sedan as a junior-sized version of the Chevrolet Biscayne/Bel-Air/Impala.

Instead, the company charted a more radical design course that ultimately proved fatal for the Corvair.

In the 1950s, North American cars were mostly road-hog huge and equipped with equally large petroleum-swallowing engines and acres of chrome. Gas was cheap, and the majority of drivers neither knew nor cared about such a mundane issue as fuel economy. Smog was viewed simply as a necessary, if unfortunate, evil, and vehicle emission controls had yet to be invented.

But there was concern in Detroit. Those pesky imports — with Volkswagen leading the charge — were invading North America in ever-increasing numbers. With one eye on a shrinking market share and the other eye firmly fixed on the bottom line, GM, Ford and Chrysler executives set about to develop cars intended to blunt this infestation.

By the fall of 1959, the Big Three rolled out their respective new compact offerings. The Ford Falcon and Plymouth Valiant were traditional sedans powered by comparably thrifty six-cylinder engines.

But the public stared slack-jawed at what GM had wrought. The Corvair had an 80-horsepower air cooled horizontally opposed six-cylinder aluminum engine positioned where the trunk normally would be. Clearly, this car was taking direct aim at its VW nemesis by imitating that car's layout.

By early 1960, the Ford Falcon with its skimpy fuel consumption held a commanding sales edge over the Corvair.

To counter Ford's lead, Chevrolet rushed the two-door Corvair Monza coupe into production. The Monza was equipped with bucket seats, fancy wheel covers and narrow-band whitewall tires. It also came with a four-speed manual gearbox instead of the more traditional manual used

by Ford and Chrysler. A two-speed powerglide automatic with a dash-mounted shifter was optional.

The sporty Monza was an immediate hit with buyers and quickly became the bestselling Corvair in a rapidly expanding lineup that soon included a Monza convertible, Lakewood station wagon and Greenbrier van that could be equipped for commercial or passenger use.

In 1962, an even more robust Monza Spyder was introduced. This version, considerably more expensive than plain Corvairs, featured a turbocharged engine that produced 150 horsepower.

By 1964, the Corvair seemed firmly entrenched as a popular import alternative while a new, second-generation car was already in the production pipeline.

The Corvair might be better known for its problems however. Aside from delivering poor fuel economy when stacked up against

its rivals, the engine had an annoying tendency to discard its fanbelt. The Corvair's flaw was its swing-axle rear suspension that caused the wheels to tuck inward during sharp turns, which provided some unintended thrills for its surprised pilots.

In his 1965 book, "Unsafe at Any Speed," Ralph Nader, a young Washington, D.C., lawyer and consumer advocate at the time, provided a damning indictment of the automobile industry in general and the Corvair in particular. Nader's view was that the car's original rear suspension was downright lethal.

At first, GM tried to fight back. The 1965 Corvair, with its gorgeous Bill Mitchell-designed sheetmetal, had an all-new independent rear suspension that was far superior to that of most other cars on the road.

But, with the negative fallout from Nader's book, the damage had been done. The Corvair gradually disappeared and received very little in the way of corporate advertising or marketing support. Predictably, Corvair sales went into freefall, and, in May 1969, after a total production run of a healthy 1.7 million vehicles, General Motors announced the end of production for its rear-engined Corvair.

By the end of its brief, troubled existence, the Corvair had actually matured into an attractive, decent-handling and performance-oriented alternative to those mainstream compacts of the day. Most fervent loyalists of this marque still believe that the Corvair could have evolved into a truly great car had GM stuck it out and promoted the car on its numerous virtues.

The Corvair, a swim-against-the-current car if ever there was one, likely deserved a better fate. ●

BY MALCOLM GUNN  
WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

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## FINE LINES



The Corvair was an odd duck in Chevrolet showrooms.



**2018 OFFICERS**



**President**  
**Mike DeJong**  
804-262-4321

[mustardman\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:mustardman_98@yahoo.com)



[www.facebook.com/CentralVAVairs](http://www.facebook.com/CentralVAVairs)



**Vice-President**  
**Wade Lanning**  
804-861-5748

[wblanning@comcast.net](mailto:wblanning@comcast.net)



**Sec/Treasurer**  
**Chris Carter**  
540-295-5197

[rexcarter@comcast.net](mailto:rexcarter@comcast.net)

<https://sites.google.com/site/centralvirginiacorvairclub/>



**Newsletter Editor**  
**Alan White**  
540-294-2374

[centralvacorvairclub@gmail.com](mailto:centralvacorvairclub@gmail.com)



**Webmaster**  
**Cherie Roadcap**  
540-896-1164

[cherieast80@gmail.com](mailto:cherieast80@gmail.com)

**September Birthdays**

- 1- Bill Eldred
- 25- Phyllis Lanning
- 25-David Clemens
- 29- Bill Clemens



**CENTRAL VIRGINIA CORVAIR CLUB**

Formed in 1979

**Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month/day: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Birthdays for the month are noted in our newsletter for that month.*

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work or cell (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Profession: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month/day: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month/day: \_\_\_\_\_  
(living @ home)

\_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month/day: \_\_\_\_\_

Corvair(s) you own: \_\_\_\_\_

Corvair skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Other hobbies: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues enclosed: **Central Virginia Corvair Club... (\$12/year if you receive newsletter via email, \$17/year if you receive newsletter via mail, add \$3 if you are not a CORSA member)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Corvair Society of America (CORSA) (\$45/yr\*\*)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*Recommended. Do not pro-rate. Not applicable if CORSA member already)

**Total enclosed.....**\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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CVCC annual dues expire each July 1. Dues are pro-rated at \$1.00 per **full month** you belong until the next July. For example, if you join in October, your dues are \$9.00. If you join in February, your dues are \$5.00. **Please make checks payable to Central Virginia Corvair Club**

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Mail to: **Central Virginia Corvair Club**  
**110 Woodland Rd**  
**Stafford, VA 22556**



- Rechromed EM rear bumper (except wagon). Very good condition.  
- Rechromed LM front bumper. Straight but starting to rust.  
- Two totes of miscellaneous parts including two EM instrument clusters, windshield washer bottle, mirrors and other small used parts.  
- EM coupe clear rear window (back light).  
- Tote of miscellaneous literature including two '61 Service Manuals, two '62-'63 Service Manuals, Volume 1 & 2 of the "Compleat History of Corvaire for the Compleat Corvaire Nut" by John Wipff, '63 & '65 convertible top operation manual, '63 Owners Manual, '63 Accessories booklet, Greenbrier custom features booklet.  
Contact Amos Richardson, 804/481-1157 or email [fetchinwater@gmail.com](mailto:fetchinwater@gmail.com). Located on West Washington St near the Petersburg Library. Pictures attached.  
I think he wants to sell everything as one lot, however if you want something specific and you arrange to buy it, I'll pick it up for you. --Wade Lanning--



For Sale: 1960 Corvaire, blue and white with gray interior, rebuilt carbs, good tires, new battery & starter. Fuel line to the gas heater disconnected, but the heater was working when it was disconnected, but could use a new nozzle. Comes with seal kit for the engine that has not been done yet. Looking for \$3900 or best. Contact David Mack at (804)334-2148 or [DM3326@gmail.com](mailto:DM3326@gmail.com). (Located in Powhatan County)

