



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVI, No. 11

November 2018



**Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show 2018**  
(We should have parked in Red-White-Blue order!)

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

### November

20 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. This month we'll meet at the Bowie Old Towne Grill, 8604 Chestnut Ave, Bowie, MD. As usual, we'll have dinner and then hold a meeting afterward.

### December

9 – **Group Corvair Holiday Meeting**, We're having a holiday meeting on Sunday at 3 p.m. at Hemmingway's Restaurant in Stevensville, MD. This is just across the Bay Bridge; take the very first exit on your right as you come off the bridge then another right and follow the road around to the point of land nearest the Bay Bridge. Hemmingway's has an excellent view across the bay with the Bay Bridge to the right and Annapolis to the left.

## January 2019

15 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. We've tentatively picked the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant for the first meeting of the New Year; we'll confirm the location at the next meeting.

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## Minutes of the October Meeting Marolyn Simpson

Fratelli's Restaurant in Hyattsville was the setting for the October 16 Group Corvair monthly meeting. Eleven members met at 7:00 for dinner. After everyone had finished eating, Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order at 8:16. The minutes of the September meeting were approved as they appeared in the last newsletter.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. The expense for the last month was payment of the Corsa chapter dues; there was no income. It was agreed that we need more signatories for the club bank account. At the present time Jim is the only one who has access to the account.

There was a discussion about the club outing on September 22 to the Stanley Steamer restoration shop in Wellsville, PA. There were several favorable comments. Everyone had a good time participating in the tour and the lunch afterwards.

The Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show will be on October 20. The entry fee at the gate is \$20. This year the show will go on rain or shine--no rain date. Bob is planning to go but will take his Comet instead of a Corvair. Jim and Jerry Yates are planning to show their Corvairs. The Northern Virginia club may also bring some cars.

There was a short discussion about the 1965 Monza coupe body that was pictured in the last newsletter. The body is in good condition and the price is quite reasonable; the current owner wants to get rid of it.

The November 20 meeting will be at the Old Bowie Town Grill, 8604 Chestnut Ave, Bowie.

Rob Neighbour suggested going to Hemingway's Restaurant in Stevensville for our Christmas dinner and December meeting. The restaurant is located just across the bay bridge on the eastern shore. [Note: Rob made reservations for Sunday, December 9 at 3:00]

Several options for future club events were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

## Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show 2018 Marolyn Simpson

It was the bane of all cars shows – rain the night before. But after many years of having a rain date, the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show committee had decided that it would go on rain or shine. (In past years, when it shifted to the rain date, the turnout was abysmal.) So while it had rained the night before and in the early morning of



Saturday, October 20 and the roads were wet and the sky was overcast we persevered and the Rockville show went on as scheduled. Jim and I met Jerry Yates at McDonalds in Bowie and then continued on to the show. Fortunately the drive was uneventful this year.

Four Corvairs had pre-registered for the show. When we arrived Rick Sanford from the Mid-Maryland club was already there with his red '65 turbo coupe. With the addition of Jim's and Jerry's cars we had a nice red, white, and blue display. Unfortunately no other Corvairs showed up. Bob Hall had pre-registered his van, but some last minute glitches prevented him from bringing it. He did come, however, to help out.

As soon as we arrived Jim went to help with the registration and I cleaned up our Corvair and got it set up for the show. And even though he didn't have a car on display, Bob Hall helped with parking cars on the field. (Thanks Bob!)

Although the early morning had looked a bit less than promising, it turned out to be a nice day – it didn't rain, it wasn't windy, it was neither too hot nor too cold, and no one got sunburned. And in spite of the earlier rain, the ground, while damp, was not muddy and held up to all the foot and car traffic.

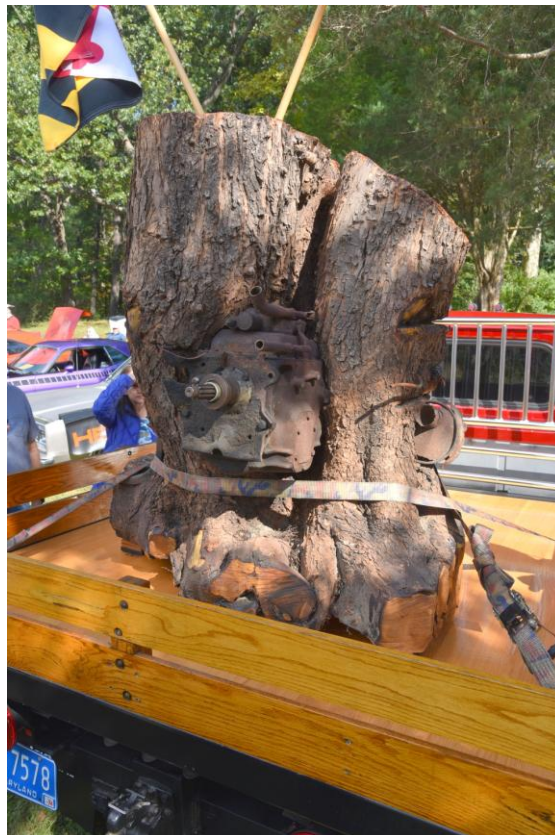
The early rains scared a number of people off so attendance was down somewhat from previous years with about 430 cars on the field compared to the mid-500's we normally see. But it didn't seem to dampen the enthusiasm of the spectators; we haven't heard an official number but with the good afternoon weather the crowd seemed to be about normal. As usual the Corvairs were parked near the food so just about everyone past by – and admired – our display as they came to eat. Among them were several "regulars" who stop by every year because they enjoy seeing the Corvairs.

We were pleased to chat with a number of current and former Group Corvair members at the show that we don't see very often. They included Randy Morris, Bob Walker, Bob Winokur, Don Hibbard, and Jack Dempsey.

Of course there were cars other than Corvairs at the show. (They have to fill the field somehow!) Among the sights was this interesting exhibit – one of those cases where "it ran when it was parked" I guess. This is the transmission from a White truck that had been parked in a field. I suspect if you count the tree rings you could get an idea of how long ago that was. I suspect it's a bit late to start a restoration.



Admiring our "auxiliary Hemi engine"; a plastic model V8



# Brake Lights? Who Needs Brake Lights?

Jerry Yates

For those of you who might not know, I've had a problem for about a week blowing fuses every time I turned on the headlights. The simple solution was "don't turn on the headlights". This however made driving at night somewhat difficult.

After taking out a small loan to invest in cases of 20-amp fuses, I decided to call for help! The first person to come to mind was someone familiar with submarines. This could be a proven asset.

Within minutes Jim Simpson and his trusty sidekick Marolyn showed up in a moving van loaded with high tech equipment. It was immediately discovered there wasn't enough room in the garage for the Corvair and the test equipment. So, everything had to be loaded back into the van except 5 ohm meters, three spools of 8 gauge electrical wire, a Geiger counter and a flux capacitor. We were ready to work! The first thing we tested was the dimmer switch. It was found to be working properly, so I went out and bought a new one just in case. After bypassing every system in the car, Jim decided it would be necessary to disassemble the entire car, starting with the dash. Jim and I quickly agreed the dash looked better when it's in the car. While it was out Jim removed the headlight switch and rewired it, switching the orange wire for the white wire and vice versa. It's obvious that GM color codes the wires to make them more eye catching.



**Jerry pulling the dash**

Jim had me replacing the taillight bulbs so many times that it wore out the housings. I had to replace the housings, the lenses and the rear bumper. None of this seemed to help!

All the while Jim and I were working it was Marolyn's job to keep Diana out of the garage.

She obviously had a honey do list for me that would have distracted me from the work at hand.

At the moment Jim noticed that the dome light was on fire, we broke for lunch. After lunch, and putting the fire out, we checked the dome light out to find it was the cause of the short. This should have been obvious by the big hole burnt in the roof of the car. After correcting the problem, everything seems to be working fine. Jim and I quickly put everything back together before anything else could go wrong.

I helped Jim along with some neighbors load his equipment back into the van. Diana baked a cake and gave it to Jim and Marolyn as a token of our appreciation. After that we tearfully waved goodbye.

I'll probably send Jim a bill for the damage to my driveway the weight of the van caused.

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By way of rebuttal – everyone knows I don't own a van. We managed to carry all the tools and spare parts in the back of my Audi station wagon. And we never did use the Geiger counter!

As it turned out the dome light was the problem; one of the lamp connectors was loose and intermittently touching the metal roof just above it. Why did that cause the brake light fuse to blow? Well in GM's infinite wisdom, the overhead dome light and the glove box light share the same circuit (and fuse) as the brake lights. Couple that with what is probably a common miss-wiring – yes the dome orange wire is supposed to connect to the body white wire and the white wire is supposed to connect to the orange wire instead of the logical orange-to-orange and white-to-white – so that whenever the loose lamp connector touched the roof, the fuse blew.



If you take a look at the dome light, the lamp looks like a large fuse. It clips in place to connectors that look just like standard fuse connectors. One of them was loose in the housing – it’s held in place by small prongs that flair out to the sides. If you push a bit too hard on one of these connectors, it can pop loose and go up just enough to touch the roof thus shorting it to the body ground. We fixed the problem by popping the connector back in place and bending the prongs out to hold it tightly. We backed up the fix with some electrical tape on top of the dome light so if the connector ever does come loose again, there’s a layer of electrical insulation to keep it from shorting.

And regarding the orange-to-white and white-to-orange wiring connections? These are the wires that come down from the dome light to connect to body wiring just behind the left side of the dash; one is orange and the other white. The shop manual shows them as “orange dome connecting to a white body wire” and “white dome connecting to an orange body wire”. Sometime in the past, they’d been swapped. If they’d been hooked up according to the schematic, all that would have happened was that the dome light would have come on whenever the short occurred. But having the connections swapped really doesn’t matter – if the other dome light lamp connector had been loose instead, then the fuse would have blown anyway. It was just a matter of luck.

Finally, there really wasn’t any connection between having the headlights on and blowing the brake light fuse! That was just a red herring. The headlights and the brake lights don’t share the same circuit! Once power gets from the engine compartment via the famous #10 red wire to under the dash, it is split to all the various circuits. That’s the last time the headlights and brake lights share a common connection. A bad high/low dimmer switch will normally just keep the headlights from working – they’ll be dim or not on at all. In the rare case of it somehow shorting to ground, the wiring under the dash would melt since there is no fuse in the circuit. But it has nothing to do with the brake light fuse.

-- Jim Simpson



**Jim performing his yoga exercises**

## Tech Topics

**Improving Visibility Through Worn Windshields.** Bob Hall writes: Old windshields may be period correct with the correct manufacturer’s logo in the corner, but decades of abrasion by wiper blades and grit can make them near opaque when driving in rain – especially into the sun. I have been using *RainX* to treat my windshields (Corvairs and current cars) for years with good result. If you take the time to thoroughly wash and rinse your windshield before applying *RainX* and take the time to rub it in thoroughly with a soft cloth (microfiber cloths work well) you will find that the water beads well in the worn areas and the wiper blades simply bat the beads away. It isn’t as good as a new windshield, but you won’t be driving blind in a sudden downpour.

**Slow Windshield Wipers?** If your Corvair’s windshield wipers seem a bit sluggish, one possibility is the lubrication (or lack thereof) in the wiper motor and linkage. The September 2018 issue of the *Mid Continent Corvair Association Newsletter* has a nice article on how to clean and lubricate the system but it’s too long to insert here. Just drop me ([simpsonj@verizon.net](mailto:simpsonj@verizon.net)) a note and I’ll forward it to you.

**Squeaks and Rattles?** Jon Whitely in *The Denvair News* recommends using a “mechanics stethoscope” to hunt down odd squeaks and rattles. He gave the example of an annoying squeak he had in his Corvair’s front suspension. He was absolutely sure that it was due to rubbing coil spring but when he used his mechanic’s stethoscope he found that it was actually one of the lower A-arm rubber bushings. You can find them at Harbor Freight and most auto parts stores for \$10 - \$15.

# Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

The *Group Corvair Comments* back in 1978 were shrinking! The November issue had just two and a half pages, one of which was the calendar and a second page of ads. None of the ads were particularly interesting either. Kind of a slow period I guess.

While our newsletter was struggling, the *CORSA Communiqué* was finding its feet. The November 1978 issue focused mostly on Corvairs in competition and included a complete (up to that time) compilation of Stinger racing history. This was supplemented with a good set of tech topics on quick steering, head temperature monitoring and retrofitting harmonic balancers on earlier engines. As I noted last month, there was a good selection of cars for sale, but were a bit hard to find since they were sorted by state so you really had to read them all to find the hidden gems.

The November 1988 *Group Corvair Comments* reminded me that the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show used to have automobile games, specifically a “run around your car, jump in, start it, and move 50 feet” event. Corvairs did great – they have great traction on slick grassy surfaces and while there might be higher powered cars there, superior traction ruled the day. In what amounted to be an “op-ed” piece, Herb Karner of Green County Corvair Group claimed that the 95 series are NOT Corvairs! He described how different the Greenbriers, Rampsides, etc., differed from the Corvairs we know and love. Everything from sheet metal gauges to where they were built is different. There was also an important tech note – do **not** use copper pipe or tubing on an automobile. Copper work hardens from vibration and flexing and will break! If you use a copper line for fuel or oil, you’ll end up with a fire or lose all the lubrication! Among the ‘vairs for sale was a ’69 500 3-spd, #4803, that the owner claimed was the “last one sold in the US” based upon the fact that the Chevrolet zone locator said that all others had been sold. He was asking \$1000.

Late 1988 must have had something in the air regarding Yenko Stingers. Following on to the October issue, the November *CORSA Communiqué* had three articles on Yenko Stingers, a red, a white and a blue one. In the Tech Topics, Larry Claypool’s “Stock Is” series covered mufflers and the associated heat shields. The *CORSA Classifieds* were down to just a page and a half of cars, but still a great selection at what would be fantastic prices today.

I guess I shouldn’t complain about having only three Corvairs at the Rockville show this year. Twenty years ago, the November 1998 edition of *Group Corvair Comments* reported that there were only two in the show that year! G.C. had a “Halloween Theme” pot luck dinner at the meeting; it was judged a success. We had five cars listed for sale one of which was a ’63 van with 37,000 miles on it. Some rust, but the price was right -- \$1,000.

The October 1998 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* main story was about the two Corvairs that had been restyled by the Italian design house Pininfarina. The first one was a very mild rework of the 1960 model; the most obvious change was the addition of a sun roof but there were a number of other interior and exterior trim changes including reshaping the rear window line. The second car, also based on a ’60 model was much more dramatic. They shortened the wheelbase and then over the course of the years reworked the body three times. The front end of the first iteration looked like a Porsche 911; the rear was unique. The body on the second version had some lines that reappeared in Chevrolet’s ’65 restyling, particularly the belt-line crease and the rear roof/window contours. The third and final version looks to me something like a cross between a VW Karman Ghia and a mid-70s BMW 6-series. Apparently both of these cars are in private collections. There was just one page of cars for sale; the only thing that caught my eye were two Ultravans.

## Vair Vendor

**For Sale: ’64 Corvair Dune Buggy.** New lower price. It has a Maryland title and “Street Rod” tags as a ’64 Corvair. Asking \$3,900 or an offer I can live with?? Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278, Nanjemoy, MD. For Sale Dune



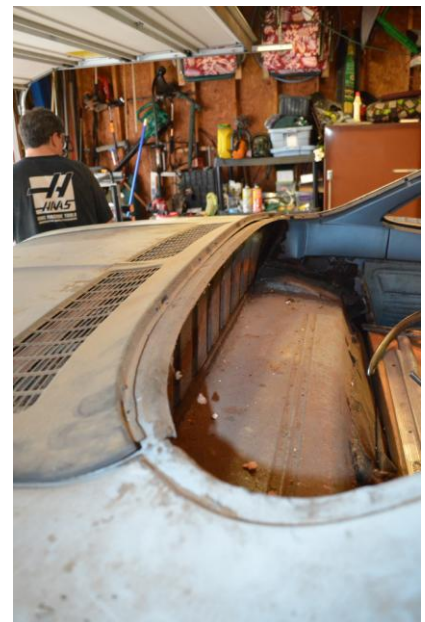


Buggy Built in 2009, Street Legal tagged as a 1964 Corvair has Street Rod tags. Never been off road, street driven only. Specs: 1964 Corvair 110 HP Engine, Automatic transmission. Front and Rear Suspension are 1964 Corvair. The frame is square steel tubing factory built for complete running gear from a Corvair and was probably built in the early 60's by Devin of El Monte Calif. Tires are 13" on front and 14" on rear with only have 600 miles on them. Fiberglass body was new old-stock, a Berry Mini "T" 2 built in California by Berry in late 1960 / 70's. I have only driven it about 600 miles, it's fun to drive.

**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.



**For Sale: 1965 Monza Coupe Body.** Totally dissembled -- no engine, no suspension, no drive train and in pieces, BUT an almost rust free body in primer with a clean title—see photos. Originally an air conditioned, automatic car; ac is still installed. No signs of front or rear collision damage. Includes rear floor, front windshield and lower door patch panels, Softseal weather strip kit for doors. Two doors are included—one original '65 one '67-69. Car is sitting on a Chevy S10 frame. Contact Bill at 410-370 3539.





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**CLARK'S 45<sup>th</sup> 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](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.*