



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVII, No. 1

January 2019



Season's Greetings!

Annual Dues are due! Group Corvair dues are \$12/year, payable in January. Please send your checks to the Treasurer (Jim Simpson, 3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035), made out to Group Corvair.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

January 2019

15 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. We're going back to the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant for the first meeting of the New Year. The address is 131 Centerway, Greenbelt, MD. We'll follow the 7 p.m. dinner by a business/planning meeting. Come to the meeting so you can help select the location of the next meeting!

February

19 – **Group Corvair Regular Meeting**, 7 p.m. Location is TBD; we'll pick a place at the January meeting.

March

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

22-23 – 49th Annual Sugarloaf Mountain Region AACA In/Outdoor collector car parts and swap meet, Carroll County Agricultural Center, Westminster, MD. \$2 admission.

April

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

26 – 28 – Virginia Vair Fair, Best Western Hotel Leesburg, 776 East Market St. If you plan to stay at the hotel, ask for the VairFair rates.

May

14 – Last Corvair rolled off the assembly line this date in 1969 at Willow Run.

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

June

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

July

23 – 27 – CORSA International Convention, Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL

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The President's Column

Bob Hall

A belated Happy New Year to everyone. After the wettest year in recorded weather history I am looking forward to a stretch of sunny weather to catch up on home and Corvair outside projects. One of those projects is to better protect the *inside of my Corvair/FC bodies* from further rust, beginning with the door mounting areas of our Fisher Bodies. In a separate article I will describe what I think can be done to buy some time for our favorite cars. What techniques have you used to combat rust?

As our newsletter is always on the lookout for member contributions please let Jim Simpson have your input. What current projects are you working on? What project would you like some help to finish? What maintenance breakthrough, new tool, product or “barn find” have you discovered that you can share with the rest of us? Let your fellow club members know.

Minutes of the December Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Just to remind everyone, we held the December meeting prior to the December newsletter being published. Rather than hold the December meeting minutes until this newsletter, they were published along with the November minutes last month.

Tech Topics

Bob Hall

Protecting Body Door Mounting Points: Many people write off Corvair bodies that have visible rust in the most rust prone areas of our Fisher Body built cars. But today's too rusty bodies might look very salvageable in 5 or 10 years. This is especially true where sheet metal has to carry a structural load as it does where the door hinges are mounted to the body. Fisher welded two stamped steel pan pieces at each door mount to reinforce the area behind painted steel that we see when we open the doors as well as to anchor the thick steel plates with tapped

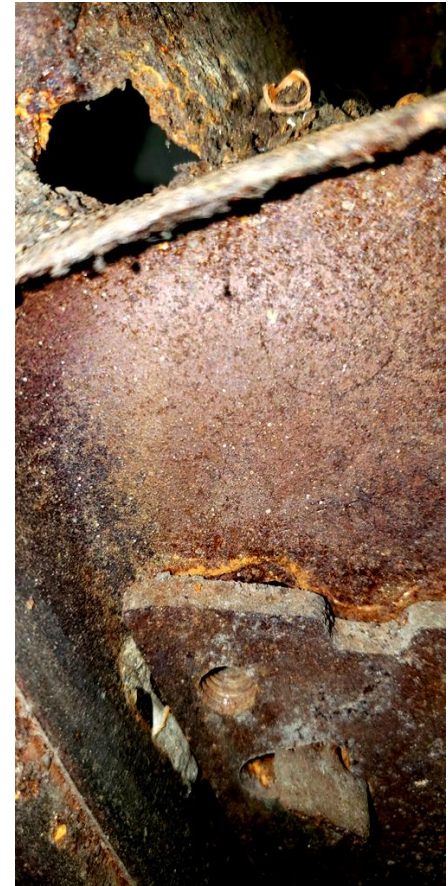


Upper Reinforcing Plate

holes that the door hinges actually bolt onto. These stamped steel reinforcing pans collect dust and hold moisture—especially the lower one—that eventually causes rust to eat its way through. Many of us have taken off the vents and other interior parts to get access to the back side of this area to vacuum and flush out the dust and dirt that collect here. Some will go further and spray old engine oil or a rust eating liquid into this area, but the “nooks and crannies” make it almost impossible to protect all areas this way.

Here are two photos of the inside of a 1966 passenger side door mounting area to show these reinforcing pans. Note how both have twisted tabs that support the thick plates with threaded holes for the hinge bolts.

The 1965 Corsa coupe I sold to new member Mike Coale has rusty door hinge mounting areas in the body. He has a very good welder who is experienced in restoration work and they are discussing how best to repair these areas. I've suggested cutting out a section of fender forward of the hinges to fully expose the hinge area in



Lower Reinforcing Plate

order to treat the rust and prevent future rust. If successful I plan to have the same work done to my cars before body work and repainting. We'll keep you informed on any future progress.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

Forty years ago, the January 1979 issue of the *Group Corvair Comments* was marked as Volume VIII, Number 1; we're now up to Vol. XLVII. That's XXXIX annual volumes ago (39 for those of you who don't remember your Roman numerals). But if I count correctly, we should be XL volumes down the pike this year, so somewhere in the last 40 years we lost count. Oh well. The actual newsletter was only three pages; a page of calendar, a final announcement of the upcoming banquet and the new officers for 1979. The Vair Vendor had two “want” ads for a

change along with four cars for sale. And John Moody was offering to rent a custom made Corvair towing bar for \$15/day. (If I'm not mistaken, I have that bar now; it's available for free provided it's returned intact.)

By way of contrast, the *CORSA Communiqué* for January 1979 was still part of Volume 1 (Number 5 to be specific), but you have to remember that CORSA had only recently changed the *Communiqué* to a monthly magazine. There was an interesting article discussing the planning for the Detroit CORSA Convention. There had been a lot of discussion with General Motors about tours of the Willow Run assembly plant and the GM Tech Center. (Marolyn and I attended that convention and can attest that the tours were great!) Room rates at the convention hotel (Michigan Inn) were set at \$36 for a double(!). CORSA noted that the membership had gone up to over 6,000 with 6127 issues of the December *Communiqué* being mailed. In an article on "Senior Division" cars, they had a complete list of all the Corvairs that had achieved that level to date, 35 in all, including two local cars – a '64 Monza coupe belonging to Waldo Davis in Columbia and Mike Harrison's '66 Corsa coupe Crown V-8 conversion. Under the Tech Topics there were a couple of articles conveying the angst caused by the newly introduced no-lead gasoline (and the disappearance of leaded gasoline). (Corvairs are basically immune to the loss of lead in gasoline as long as the octane requirements are met.) There were a couple of pages of ads in the CORSA Classified, but other than a '65 Monza with less than 5,000 miles on it, there wasn't anything really special.

Ten years later, we had successfully added an "X" to the January 1989 *Group Corvair Comments* volume count and it was now XVIII, No. 1. Now as far as content was concerned, it was not a lot different than the previous decades – we were getting ready for our annual banquet, we had a new set of officers, but only one car for sale. There were three tech tips that are still valid. The first was to pay attention to problems, specifically in this case, a failing alternator regulator. The author was driving and the headlights started cycling between extra bright & dim with extra bright cycle getting longer and longer indicating that the regulator was going bad. After ignoring it for a while, he heard a loud "bang" and pulled over. Noticing "water" dripping from the left rear side of the car, he opened the engine lid and saw that the top half of the battery had blown off due to the overcharging! The second tech tip concerned wheel nuts and studs. While driving, the owner heard a scrapping noise from one of the front wheels. A bad wheel bearing? A dragging brake shoe? While trying to loosen the wheel nuts to check what's going on, he could barely move two of them even with an extra long cheater bar while the other two were fine. After getting the nuts loose, he decided to snug them all down with a torque wrench to their correct torque. The noise was gone – the over-tightened lug nuts had distorted the brake drum to the point it was rubbing on the backing plate. Finally if you have to do any work involving the oil pressure switch, make sure you get the correct, special, socket wrench – commonly available for only a couple dollars. The oil pressure switch shell is thin metal and can be distorted very easily. When it fails – and it likely will – oil goes everywhere and if you don't catch it soon enough, the engine will be destroyed!

The January 1989 *CORSA Communiqué* was Vol. 11, No. 1. None of those fancy Roman numerals for CORSA and somewhere over the previous 10 years they adjusted the issue number so the volumes started with the January issue. This issue was pretty much devoted to Corvair prototype "XP709", more commonly known as "Pinky". This was the first Corvair convertible built under the personal direction of Harley Earl, not only as a prototype but also as his wife's personal car. Painted pink as the name implies, it had a number of unique features including a "rainomatic" top that sensed rain and automatically raised the top and a three-speed automatic transmission. Unfortunately the last owner in about 1972 decided it was too rusty and after stripping a few things such as the wire wheels, sent it off to the crusher. The CORSA Classifieds were down to just over a page of cars for sale with a selection of both Lakewoods and Greenbriers for sales.

Moving up to just 20 years ago, the January 1999 edition of *Group Corvair Comments* was still in proper sequence, labeled Vol. XXIII, No. 1. Somehow I had been roped into being club president and my column discussed my inability to synchronize using proper winter tires with the weather – no, I was not driving our Corvair in the winter – but we had a set of real, honest-to-goodness winter tires for our daily driver Honda. The first two winters we used the winter tires there was zero – nada – snow! Then when I delayed putting them on, we had an ice storm! I couldn't win. The major club activity was restoring the cutaway engine display we'd acquired. (We had one of the Chevrolet Corvair cutaway operating drive trains that had been created in the early 1960s for auto shows. It was in good overall condition, but needed some TLC and a new Plexiglas cover. It was ultimately donated to the Corvair Preservation Society.) We had four cars for sale; a somewhat rusty Greenbrier and three four door Monzas ('63, '64 and '65).

Kicking off January 1999, the *CORSA Communiqué* had something of a mix of articles. Harry Jensen had a good write-up on the SCCA runoffs; Charlie Clark finished mid-pack in his Yenko Stinger, running against a pack of Mazda RX-7s and Nissan 240Zs. Unfortunately Jon Brakke was sidelined by a competitor who damaged his car's left rear quarter panel and punctured the tire. Tom Keosababian commented on his experiences running Corvairs for speed records at Bonneville and how much the engine cooling fan affected top speed. In his opinion, the major affect the fan has is on acceleration, not top speed. In his view, the horsepower requirement of the fan is over rated, even by the engineers who wrote the SAE papers on the Corvair. The CORSA Classified had shrunk to under one page of cars for sale; there was the normal selection of cars, but for some reason there were four UltraVans up for sale!

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: Price Reduction! 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 \$1,800.** Please contact the owner at ldgray1@yahoo.com for

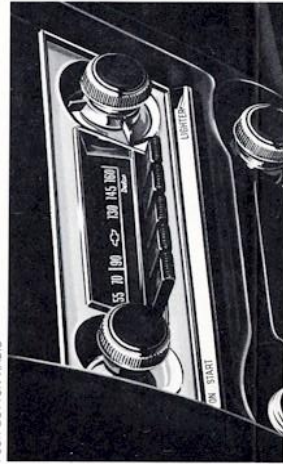


more information.

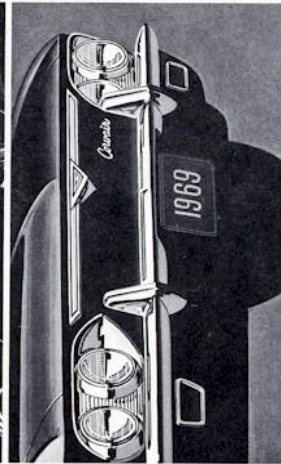
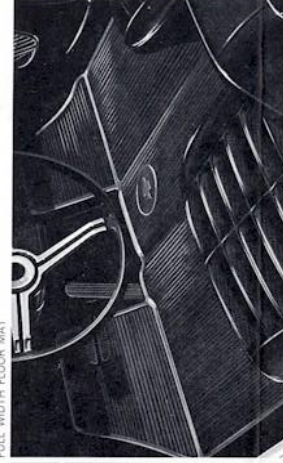


1969 CORVAIR

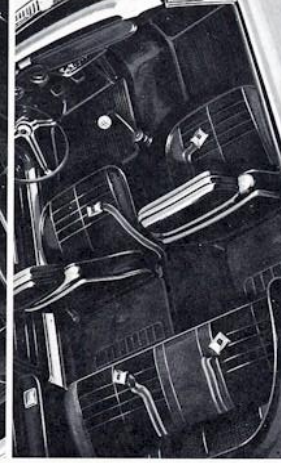
PUSH BUTTON RADIO



FULL WIDTH FLOOR MAT



FRT. & REAR BUMPER GUARDS



CONTOUR FRT. & REAR MATS

CORVAIR CUSTOM FEATURES



Putting you first, keeps us first.

Chevrolet Did Not Spend A Lot On Advertising The 1969 Corvair