



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVII, No. 10

October 2019



First Meeting of the Fall; Beijing of Greenbelt

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

October

2 – 6 – Fall Carlisle, Carlisle Fair Grounds, Carlisle, PA.

9 – 12 – Eastern Division AACA National Fall Meet, Hershey, PA.

13 – **NOTE THE CHANGE:** **Group Corvair Business Meeting**, 11:00 a.m., at the Fisherman's Inn, 3116 Main St., Grasonville, MD. (That is just after the Kent Narrows bridge as you head east on US Rt. 50. Take the exit on the right onto Kent Narrows Rd. South and then right again onto Main Street.)

19 – **Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show**, Rockville Civic Center, 603 Edmonston Dr., Rockville, MD; 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cars have to be on the field not later than 11 a.m. and it is wise to get there as soon after registration opens (8:30 a.m.) as possible – we expect in excess of 500 cars! **Group Corvair is a sponsoring club and Corvairs have a dedicated section.** Registration at: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Antique-Classic-Car-Show>

19 – Asphalt Angels Fall Car, Truck & Bike show, 9 - 3; Chili's parking lot, 16401 Heritage Blvd, Bowie, MD.

November

19 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., location TBD

December

17 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., location TBD. Note: the regular meeting may be preempted by a Christmas Celebration!

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

October is here and our monthly club meeting will take place **Sunday October 13th at 11:00 am** (instead of our usual Tuesday date) at the **Fisherman's Inn** at the Kent Narrows at the first exit just across the Kent Narrows Bridge. Tell them you are with Group Corvair when you arrive to get to our table. The other October event is the annual Rockville Antique & Classic Car show, Saturday, October 19th at the Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville MD. At last count two Turbo Corsas, a Yenko, a Fitch Sprint and two Greenbriers are registered with (we hope) other Corvairs to attend. For those with registered cars plan to get there no later than 10:30 as there is usually a line to get in and the field will have to close to show cars at 11:00 am when the public is allowed in. We are still hoping a clean 1969 Corvair will register as the show organizers have designated our car to represent the year 1969 in their celebration of automobiles of the "9s".

I hope everyone's projects are going well and that our Indian summer weather holds as long as possible for all of our "shade tree mechanics." Let the club know if you need any help with anything Corvair.

Minutes of the September Meeting

By Marolyn Simpson

For the September 17 meeting 12 Group Corvair members met at the Beijing of Greenbelt Restaurant at 7:00 for dinner.

Bob Hall called the meeting to order at 8:00. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. During the last month he had paid the Corsa chapter filing fee; there was no income to report.

Everyone was reminded of the Rockville car show that will be held on Saturday, October 19 at the Rockville Civic Center Park. Group Corvair is one of the sponsoring clubs and we will need to have several people there to work on the field and at registration.

Pete Frailey, a former Group Corvair member, died on July 1 and his memorial service will be on September 21. Members reminisced about Pete and his hobbies. Jerry Yates related stories about Pete's model building skills.

There was a brief discussion about the possibilities of getting new members in the club.

Gus Torbert informed the members about an air show at the Easton airport that would be held on September 21. The opening ceremony was set for 10:00 am. Gus brought several Corvair parts and accessories to the meeting. One

item was an original, though used, AC white oil filter. Gus gave several items to club members for a donation to the club.

Marolyn gave an update on Judy Motley. She was having her house appraised, but had not decided yet if she will sell the house, or if she does, where she would relocate.

Jim Govoni has sold his green 1960 Corvair; we believe it went to a buyer in Canada.

Ron Fedorczak passed out a handout on the American Museum of Tort Law in Winsted, Connecticut, Ralph Nader's hometown. In this flyer it calls for all Corvairs to join the invasion at the museum on July 20, 2020. For more information go to www.frankwinchell.com.

The last important topic for discussion was the location of next month's meeting. After several possibilities were discussed it was decided to meet on Sunday, October 13 (instead of our usual third Tuesday of the month), at the Fisherman's Inn restaurant on Main Street, Grasonville, MD. That is just across the Kent Narrows Bridge off Rt-50 as you go to the Eastern Shore. It will be a lunch meeting starting at 11:00 am.

On the Show Trail

Report on the 2019 CORSA International Convention

Eileen Clegg

Ron Fedorczak, contributing CORSA photographer, was once again on the road to what is his 49th and counting CORSA International Convention, held this year in St Charles, Illinois. This gathering was convened for the second time at the Pheasant Run Resort. We drove to the resort, not in one of his four Corvairs, but rather in my 2010 Subaru Outback; it has A/C and a radio. Wimps! The long drive out took us by miles and acres of cornfields, as high as an elephant's eye and seen right to the horizon - stunningly beautiful.

Congratulations must be given to the organizers and host club from Chicagoland Corvair Enthusiasts for a thoughtful, highly organized convention with a stunning Program booklet. Clear signage to direct people to all their events was in plain sight.

Pheasant Run Resort was opened to the public as a destination resort in 1963. At that time the area was fairly rural surrounded by dairy farms and prairie with abundant wildlife: deer, foxes and pheasants. That is all but a faded memory now. A six lane highway, Illinois Rt 64 (Main Street east and west) runs parallel to the Resort. Hotels, car dealerships, malls, restaurants, and small businesses occupy the once pastoral area.

Pheasant Run was the ideal location for CORSA's celebration of the 50th year of the last Corvair built and of the formation of CORSA. There were more



than enough rooms to house the participants, several on site restaurants, large meeting rooms for group gatherings, tech sessions, a grand ballroom for the 400 plus banquet goers and most importantly of all a separate Mega Center for the vendors complete with several Corvairs on display, one of which was the last known Corvair off the line. Outside parking provided ample room for cars, vans and trailers. It also doubled as space for the auto cross.

St Charles itself is a charming, small, 1800's mid-west city with historic buildings of architectural interest abutting Main Street (Rt 64) and is bisected by the lazy Fox River, exceedingly scenic. The Baker Hotel, a real gem,

Spanish in style, is on the National Register of Historic Places as is the Municipal building designed by R. Harold Zook in the “Streamline Modern” style with white Georgia marble on a black granite base. When the setting sun shines on it, the building radiates a golden glow. A sight to see. A walking tour takes you to other buildings of interest. Step into the Arcada Theatre for an evening of magic during dinner in a room converted into a 1920’s, jazz-theme speakeasy. The wait staff dressed in “flapper” costumes.



While Ron covered ALL the aspects and events of the Convention

– road rally, autocross, economy run, model car concours, tech sessions, valve cover races, concours d’Elegance 24/7 – I took advantage of the sights in the area, the first of which was an exciting cruise on the Chicago River to see and learn about the spectacular architecture along its riverfront. A+ event.



Next I spent a day at the extensive gardens at the Morton Arboretum; yes, the salt mogul. Took advantage of a one hour tram tour of the gardens and then went back to explore on my own two areas of interest, the prairie and a large glacial boulder. Throughout



the gardens were larger than life trolls made of natural materials, quite charming and in other areas were insects, spiders, flowers, and gardeners constructed of Legos. A delightful day.

Another day was more educational; a day spent at Fermilab, a national laboratory, spread out over 7,000 acres. There is a variety of habitats for wildlife including a herd of bison. What a peaceful, creative space for scientists from all over the world to meet and collaborate. The physics was over my head, but the exhibits were well presented. You could see a model of the accelerator and the gift shop had an ABC’s of particle physics book for toddlers; I bought several for great nieces and my grandsons.



Lastly, a visit was paid to the local historical museum, always a good touchstone for understanding a new city. Surprisingly the museum was featuring an exhibit about the Titanic. Apparently three area families had

been directly affected by its tragic sinking. The exhibit brought me to tears.

St Charles is a small town that packs a tourist punch. A real destination if you are in the region. Excellent restaurants throughout the town.





And you're thinking by now where is Ron in all this? Happily clicking away on his shutter, saving for posterity the 2019 CORSA Convention in digital format. Some unusual sightings were a 1960's Hippie flower power Greenbrier decorated inside and out, a Corvair



vintage bicycle found at a garage sale offered in the Raffle, and lastly Ron came home as a WINNER. A winner of a crocheted afghan in



Corvair car colors inscribed with the word Corvair crocheted into it.

I will close with a sign I cornered from one of the vendors, "Others Too Weird to Index." Need I say more? Happy Trails to All.

Tech Topics

Corvair Special Tools: The Club is trying to get an inventory of "special tools" that people have acquired for Corvairs. The idea is to make them available as needed when people are working on their car. For instance, I have a Kent Moore "J-21928". This is a special tool designed to adjust the tension bars on the Corvair hood. Similarly I have tools designed to remove the headlight and windshield wiper switch nuts without damage. What do you have in your inventory? If you have some special tool for working on Corvairs – and are willing to loan it out under whatever conditions you specify – how about dropping a note to Bob Hall or Jim Simpson and we'll put together a list.

Jim Simpson

Fighting Structural Rust: I have made sporadic stabs at fighting structural rust on all of my Corvairs, but, with the exception of a '65 Monza convertible that I rehabbed for friends, I've done it piece meal and haven't gone through the whole body on them. On the convertible I cut out the rocker caps at the front and back on each side (fairly easy as they were pretty rusty) flushed the rockers with a pressure washer from front to back until no debris remained and then ran a 4" steel bristle duct brush with a pipe for a handle back and forth to clean out surface rust. Because convertibles have an inner steel beam to stiffen the roof-less body (along with "A" pillar and inner side body braces) I had to trim the brush bristles with wire cutters to flatten one side to get good contact on the inner side of the beam. I couldn't do as good a job on the area between the steel beam and the inside of the outer rocker because I didn't have a steel bristle brush small enough to get everywhere, but the power washer did a good job clearing the debris in this area as well. I dried the rockers using a shop vacuum with the hose reversed to blow air through them.

To protect the metal surfaces (before POR15) I used Rustoleum Rusty Metal Primer (fish oil based) applied by an attachment on a rented sprayer that had a 360 degree fan spray pattern. I cut and bent pieces of coat hanger to make a two legged skid to support the sprayer and keep it more or less in the middle of the rocker and pushed it



back a forth a few times to coat the exposed metal. For the outer, tighter area between the beam and exterior rocker I just shoved the spray attachment through without the wire legs.

Earnie's Body in Rockville did the paint stripping and repaint for me (RIP Earnie—that's how he spelled it) and he let me treat the area UNDER the front and rear air grills, the back side of the door hinge mounts and other hidden areas with Rustoleum as well.

The front suspension cross member and rear suspension pieces were taken to Allentown PA to be alkali dipped at Redistrip. Then I brought them home, washed the alkali residue off and painted them with Rustoleum rusty metal and clean metal primer with a black paint top coat.

All of my efforts were minimal compared to what car manufacturers do today to fight rust on current cars, and the convertible did keep rusting in places over time, but the areas I treated had very few problems.

I have attached some photos that show a cross section of an early model rocker (with heating duct) and a late model coupe and convertible rocker as illustration. I have clearer black and white negatives of my earlier work somewhere, but I haven't been able to locate them.



Early Model



Late Model Coupe; no, the spider is not a standard Chevrolet part.

If you are planning to do a complete restoration or just want to slow the progress of rust on a favorite car the time (a lot) and (relatively little) money will be well spent on safeguarding structural parts of your cars.

Bob Hall

Car Stalling!: Last Sunday, September 29th, my trouble with the Corvair began. On my way to a car show the car stalled on me a couple of times. This was even after I had increased the idle speed to prevent that from happening as I waited for lights to change. But I arrived at the show without any further problems.

After the show as I made my way home it not only stalled, it went completely dead! I managed to get it re-started only long enough for it to go dead again. This happened four times before I finally reached home. I parked it in the garage for the night. The next morning, I started the car and let it idle for about 10 minutes, then I took it out for a test drive and everything went well. Feeling confident that whatever was wrong had miraculously cured itself. WRONG! During the next test drive the problem re-surfaced.

Being fortunate enough to have friends like Jim Simpson & Bob Hall to volunteer to help solve the problem is a blessing. Jim came over Thursday morning to help; Bob had another commitment, but offered advice. It had been a few days since I told Jim about the problem, and he deduced the problem seemed to be more electrical than fuel.

As usual he brought along his box of electrical magic. First, he checked the system using an Ohm meter to check continuity. Then he switched to the volt meter to see if there was 12 volts at the coil; there wasn't, it was about 5 volts. Of course we weren't sure if the points were open so we switched back to an Ohmmeter across the distributor and rotated the engine by hand to get to a position where the points would be open. Funny thing, but we never found such a position, just one where the resistance went from zero to about 4 Ohms.

Jim suspected a shorted condenser, so with further inspection we removed the dizzy cap, rotor and dust cover and observed the points as the hand rotation continued. Amazingly, the points never moved, they remained closed even

when the rubbing block was on the top of one of the distributor cam lobes. “Aha” we said and concluded that the points rubbing block was worn down.

So a new set of points, condenser and rotor were installed. The timing and dwell were checked, and everything looked right. Jim & I gave the car another test drive, and it ran just fine. Thanks, so much for Jim and his ability to trouble shoot these kinds of situations to a successful end.

P.S. Because of this problem I wasn't able to take the Corvair on the road on the 50th anniversary, but at least I'm back on the road!

P.P.S. Of course nothing is that simple! I decided to take the car to show and sure enough, the car stalled yet again. While Jim and I are confident that we'd discovered (and fixed) one problem, there must be still another to be uncovered. More on this saga next month.

Jerry Yates

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

We're still in the gap of the *Group Corvair Comments* archive for August, September and October of 1979.

The cover photo for the October, 1979 *CORSA Communiqué* was of the red, white and blue American flag painted Corvairs of the Zenobia Shriner's Temple of Perrysburg, Ohio. They had eight late convertibles and a van that they used in parades. (I just checked their web site and they apparently still turn out these Corvairs for parades!) They were a featured attraction at the 10th CORSA Convention, held that year in Detroit. The *Communiqué* focused on the convention – and it was a great one with 265 Corvairs parading through Detroit's northern suburbs to the GM Tech Center for the concours and car show. GM brought out their Corvair show cars and conducted tours of the facility. Other tours included the GM assembly plant at Willow Run, the main plant of the Corvair. And if you needed a Corvair or some parts for your car, the CORSA Classifieds six full pages filled with items you can only dream about today. (Yes, Yenko Stinger YS096 was still listed.)



Ward Bourgondien made an appeal for Corvairs to turn out for the Rockville Antique and Classic Car show in the October, 1989 issue of the *Group Corvair Comments*. (Sound familiar?) Ward had worked to create a separate section for Corvairs. He noted that about 350 cars had shown up in 1988, four of which were Corvairs. (Last year, we turned out over 500 cars, but again, only four Corvairs.) In the Tech Topics, we noted that while Chevrolet said that the rear wheel bearings on Corvairs were “lifetime lubricated”, grease had a definite life and basically wears out. Thus the rear bearings do require some periodic attention. We also noted that you should check the ignition coils on your Corvair to ensure it wasn't mounted so low that the bottom was rubbing on the engine sheet metal. If it is, eventually it will wear through and the coil will fail. Finally there was only one Corvair for sale in the 'Vair Vendor – a '65 Monza that hadn't been run for 4 years; \$350 if you hauled it, \$400 if you wanted a battery and oil so you could drive it away.

Even though the CORSA Convention had been covered in the September 1989 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* the October issue had one of the “hard luck” stories. In this case, it was a case of “press on regardless”. Del Philips drove his Corvair from San Francisco via Seattle to the Kansas City convention. Along the way the engine ran increasingly hot and started pinging. High test gas and octane booster helped, but apparently not enough. Somewhere around Sioux City, Iowa, it developed a vibration and was smoking rather badly along with using a considerable amount of oil. It finally died about 60 miles outside of Kansas City; later dissection showed it was trashed with bent rods, a broken piston and more. Del found a rather tired 140 hp engine in the flea market and after having it installed, he headed home. As he said, oil consumption became a problem with a stop every 40 miles to add oil and changing the #2 cylinder spark plug every couple hundred miles as it fouled with oil. He finally got home,

averaging 24.5 mpg gasoline and 41 mile per quart of oil for the entire trip. But he made it! Under Tech Topics, there was an update by Group Corvair's John Moody of his series on fuel pumps. The issue closed with four pages of ads; the most notable was Bill Cotrofeld offering Yenke Stinger YS002 for sale; 2,100 miles, never registered, always a race car, "not cheap".

Group Corvair members were busy with car shows based upon the October, 1999 *Group Corvair Comments*. There used to be a major car show at the Laurel, MD horserace track sponsored by the Lions club. But in 1999 there were only two Corvairs shown; everyone else was out of town, probably at the Gettysburg Corvair Show. Rockville was coming up and at that time, they had a couple of moving events that Corvairs did very well in – a "cranking" contest in which the driver ran once around the car, jumped it and started it, and drove 50 feet. Corvairs regularly beat out other cars because of their great traction. The event was on grass and most other cars would spin their rear wheels while the Corvairs motored off to a win. The Vair Vendor offered five cars ranging from a couple \$600 project cars to a very good '64 being offered for \$6,500.

The October, 1999 *CORSA Communiqué* featured two long-term owner's cars, a Greenbrier that spent most of its life as it was designed to do – a hard-working business van – and a '61 Station Wagon. Under tech topics, Bob Ballew addressed the long-standing problem of getting more of the transmission fluid out of the Powerglide transmission when doing a fluid change. It involved compressed air and he noted that if you use too much air pressure, ATF would "spray all over the neighborhood". I wonder how he discovered that? The *CORSA Classifieds* had shrunk to three pages with only one page of that being cars. But there were some pretty interesting parts available.

Vair Vendor

Available: 1961 Monza four-door sedan. Spotted at the B&B auto salvage yard, 18911 Central Ave, Upper Marlboro, MD. 301-249-5111. Looks pretty rough, but the salvage yard owner says it runs well. While the yard owner says it's a '62 and it does have '62 tail lights, the engine and most body trim indicates it's a '61.



For Sale: 1965 4-door, Light blue, powerglide, fair condition. This is the late Ben Petree's daily driver and was last run about 4 years ago. Was maintained by Jack Dempsey until Ben could no longer drive; parked under shelter since then. Asking \$1,000 but willing to listen to reasonable offers. Contact Caroline Inglehart, only between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., 301-775-0379.

For Sale: '64 Corvair Dune Buggy. New lower price. It has a Maryland title and "Street Rod" tags as a '64 Corvair. Built in 2009, street legal, tagged as a 1964 Corvair with "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, but it is fun to drive! Asking \$3,900 or an offer I can live with?? Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278, Nanjemoy, MD.

For Sale: 1965 Monza 4-door. 26k miles, recent seat covers, repainted about 10 years ago. Asking \$10,000. Denny Shue, 717-818-2904, Dover PA.



For Sale: Doing some house cleaning: 4 Clark's Extra Heavy Duty U-Joints, used less than 25 miles, excellent condition, \$50. 1965 Rear Engine Mount (NOS), \$35. Early model bumper brackets, 8 of 10, not bent or damaged but some surface rust plus 11 bumper bolts, \$10. Late model brake shoes – Clark's relined, full set, front and rear, less than 50 miles on them, \$45; AC Delco Professional, full set, front and rear, less than 50 miles on them, \$35. Two sets of brake hardware kits to convert to manual adjusters, \$25. Four tires, Toyo Extenza A/S 195/70-14, full tread, less than 200 miles. Carter P4070 electric fuel pump, new, in box, \$45 – note, too large for under body mount on Corvair. Also manuals, new shocks and sway bar for Vega. Bob Walker, bohrstn@gmail.com or 703-709-7246.

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