



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVIII, No. 4

April 2020



## Fashion in the Age of the Coronavirus

### CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

**Check with sponsors on all events for the foreseeable future!**

#### April

21 – **Group Corvair** Business Meeting: Guess what, our meetings are postponed until further notice.

#### May

17 – Corvair Ranch open house. (No official word yet, but VERY likely to be canceled!)

19 – **Group Corvair** Business Meeting: Very much TBD.

29 – 30 – Virginia Vair Fair, hosted by the Central Virginia Corvair Club. (Still on the calendar, but don't count on it.)

#### June

6 – 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Orphan Car Tour. Postponed until 2021.

13 – NECC track day at New York Safety Track, Oneonta, NY. [www.neccmotorsports.com](http://www.neccmotorsports.com) (No word yet.)

16 – **Group Corvair** Business Meeting: Very much TBD.

20 – Invasion of The American Museum of Tort Law, organized by Frank Winchell. For information, see [www.frankwinchell.com/welcome/](http://www.frankwinchell.com/welcome/) .

## July

6 – 11 – CORSA 50<sup>th</sup> International Annual Convention, Crown Plaza Hotel, San Diego, CA. Officially postponed until 2021.

Date to be determined – **Not Quite Fourth of July picnic** hosted by Jerry and Diana Yates. (Unless the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically improves, this will be canceled or postponed until 2021.)

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## From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

I hope everyone is riding out the coronavirus pandemic as safely as possible. The better we protect ourselves the more we protect our over worked health professionals. We have donated unused N95 masks and nitrile gloves to our local hospital and were surprised by how much they were appreciated by the staff at the donation point. If you have any N95 masks or nitrile gloves of your own that you can donate give your local hospital or emergency service provider a call to see if they can use them.

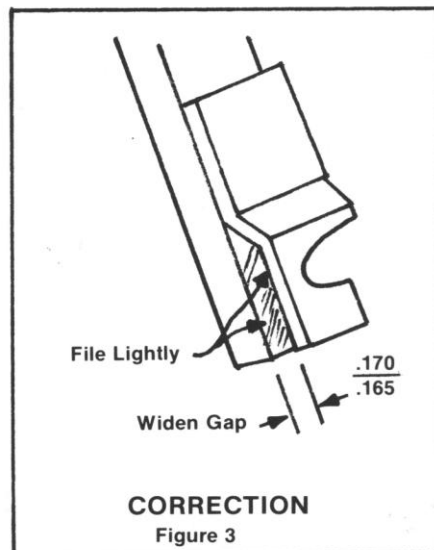
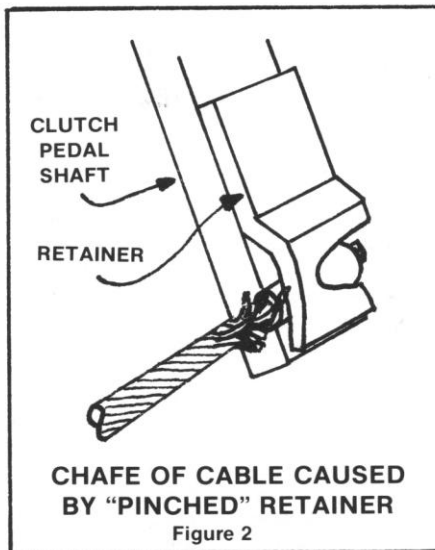
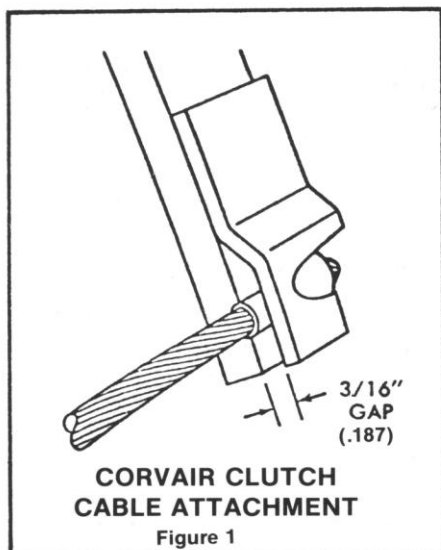
Group Corvair won't meet in April for obvious reasons and you may have heard that the San Diego convention has been postponed until 2021 with subsequent conventions moved back by one year. We will still be able to meet in San Diego—just one year later. And we can still work on our Corvair projects, but maybe, at a time when hospital capacity is severely strained, we should postpone the more potentially dangerous jobs. I've been sorting and cleaning my stash of evermore valuable Corvair parts now that Corvairs are getting more respect. So are Corvair owners. Take care of yourselves.

## Minutes of the March Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

The plan had been to meet at the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant on March 17. But out of an abundance of caution due to the coronavirus pandemic, the club officers decided to cancel the March meeting. As a result, there are no minutes. The newsletter will continue to be sent out (hint: Send your Corvair related stories to the editor!). We will let you know when the meetings resume.

## Tech Topics



# Corvair clutch cable replacement

### From Chevrolet Service News

Chafing of the 1965-66 Corvair clutch cables (at ball end) is due to pinching of the clutch pedal shaft cable retainer. Field reports indicate a "pinched" retainer results in a cable break (See Fig. 2).

Before replacing the clutch cable, spread the retainer to obtain a correct gap.

Here's a tip that never made it to any of the shop manuals, '65 thru '69. Note that GM felt it worth reemphasizing after two years and even threw in

an extra .017 to boot. For added safety, a light touch of a file to the 2 edges shown by arrows should also help.

The purpose of this article is to reemphasize the importance of checking the clutch pedal shaft cable retainer gap when replacing a Corvair clutch cable. The gap at the retainer should be 3/16". It should also be noted here that both sides of the cable call seat should be lubricated with zinc oxide grease to insure that the cable's ball can rotate freely.

From the April, 1980 issue of *CORSA Communiqué*.

## Brake and Wheel Lubrication

Bob Hall

Drum brakes require lubrication for quiet operation and reduced wear of the moving parts. A little high temperature GM Brake Lubricant or Lubriplate Brake Lube goes a long way when applied to the anchor post, the hooks on brake springs, brake adjustment parts—especially the threads on the star wheel and the backing plate shoulders that the brake shoes rest on. On two occasions I have had backing plates with shoe shoulders worn all the way through on high mileage beaters and have had to pay to have the holes welded up and filed smooth to properly support new brake shoes.

**A thin smear goes a long way so be sure that no excess can migrate to the brake shoe lining or the drum surface.**



Brake Lube is also effective when used to prevent brake drums from rusting tight onto wheel hubs. Whenever you pull a drum be sure to wire brush the side that fits flush to the hub face, the hub face itself and the circular hub shoulder that the hole in the drum fits over. Then apply a thin layer of brake lube to these surfaces to prevent rust from locking the drum to the hub. If you have ever had to separate a "frozen" drum from a hub you will understand how important a little high temperature Brake Lubricant/Brake Lube can be. Again, a light coating goes a long way.

## A Quick Primer on Nuts and Bolts

Jim Simpson

There's been a lot of to and fro on-line regarding how much you should tighten lug nuts on our Corvairs. I thought I would try to clear it up a little.

Nuts and bolts are designed to clamp two things together such as a wheel to the hub. They do that by stretching the bolt to apply tension on the things being clamped together. Yes, the steel in the bolt does stretch a little just like a very stiff spring; as you tighten the nut, the threads act like a ramp and pull (apply tension) on the steel body of the bolt. The more you tighten the nut, the more tension is placed on the bolt and the more clamping force is applied.

Now this is where it gets a bit complicated. Ideally, you would measure the stretch of the bolt and from that be able to derive just how much tension is being applied. (Remember, it's a spring, it gets harder to pull the more you stretch it.) And in fact that's what's done in critical and high performance applications such as rod bolts on racing engines and nuclear reactors. They calculate just how much stretch to apply based upon the dimensions and materials of the bolt and tighten the nut until the bolt stretches just that amount. But that's not practical on something like the wheel studs on a Corvair.

So what can be done? Remember that the threads act like a load or weight on a ramp. The more the load, the harder it is to move that load up the ramp. You can measure how hard it is to move that load – that's the amount of force (twisting force, or torque) it takes to tighten the nut or bolt. The more torque, the more "load" and the more stretch (force) is being applied to the bolt.

There are tables that give you the amount of torque you should apply to a given size and material (grade, that is, strength of the steel) of bolt. These tables usually provide a torque that will stretch a bolt to 80% of its design maximum. (If you exceed that maximum, then the bolt will permanently deform and ultimately break.)

These tables make some assumptions. First, they usually assume the treads are clean and dry – no rust, no oil or grease. Now remember that ramp analogy for the threads? How can you make it easier to haul a load up that ramp; keep in mind that it's friction that's giving you the drag? How about putting some grease on the ramp – that will certainly reduce the friction. Same with thread on a nut and bolt. So what does that mean for how much force (torque) you need to apply to get the maximum clamping force without overloading the bolt? It means that if you lubricate the threads, it takes LESS torque to get to that 80% of the maximum strength of the bolt. As a rule of thumb, it takes about 40% LESS torque to achieve the same clamping force as with a dry thread.

This was a long way to get to the point – how tight should you torque the wheel bolts on a Corvair? The book says to torque them to between 55 and 65 lbs-ft. These are 7/16" x 20 tpi bolts; Chevrolet doesn't specify the grade steel, but most people assume they are "grade 8" since they are in a critical application. The tables I've consulted specify 80 lbs-ft as the maximum torque for that size with **dry** threads and 60 lbs-ft for **lubricated** threads. I'm guessing that Chevrolet assumed the typical mechanic would have some oil or grease (or just greasy road grime) on the threads lubricating them. And yes, you should use a torque wrench to tighten them, few of us can judge this just by feel.

## Something to Confound the Clerk at the Local Parts Store

A Corvair owner went to a local parts store and met a young parts clerk at the counter. He asked the clerk what he should do when his Corvair had a coolant leak and left air all over the garage floor. The look on the clerk's face was priceless.

Derived from the Mid-Maryland Corvair Club newsletter.

## Corvair Preservation Foundation Raffle



The Corvair Preservation Foundation (CPF) is raffling off a freshly restored 1966 Corvair Monza Sport Coupe. The drawing will be held on May 15, 2020. You do NOT need to be present to win! The proceeds from the raffle will help support the new Corvair Museum on historic Rt-66, in Glenarm, Illinois. "Thoroughly reconditioned throughout with new paint, upholstery and many NOS parts." The car is painted Danube Blue with a blue interior and has 140 hp – Powerglide power train. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased directly from the CORSA web site:

<https://www.corvair.org/index.php/merchandise/corvair-raffle>

As far as I know, this is still on although there might be some delay in your being able to take possession. That said, time is running out on getting your raffle tickets. Jim Simpson

## Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

In April of 1980, things seemed to be pretty normal. According to the *Group Corvair Comments* the calendar was chock-a-block with moving events including both autocrosses and rallies. It does seem like though that formal tech sessions had pretty much disappeared. Mike Harrison was coordinating a possible purchase of a variety of new ring-and-pinion gear sets for the Corvair differential – 3.08, 3.27, 3.55, 3.89 and 4.11 – toughened for racing. As far as I know, this never happened. There were three Corvairs for sale; a '69 with low mileage but in need of a new engine, a '65 convertible with recent overhauls of the engine, transmission and suspension for \$500, and a '64 panel van that needed some work for \$400.

The lead article for the April, 1980 *CORSA Communiqué's* was “The Ultra Van Story” by W. Christy Barden. While I had been aware of the Ultra Van for many years, I didn't know that the first one dated back to the summer of 1961 and had been built in his own garage by David Peterson in Oakland, California. The Slalom (Autocross) convention rules were published covering everything from course layout to vehicle classification. There was a good mix of Tech Topics – dealing with lower octane gasoline, modifying carburetors for racing, some tips for the turbo carburetor and finally one that is worth reading today – checking the late-model clutch cable attachment. (I'll include that one in this month's Tech Topics.) In the “if only I had a time machine” category, there were lots of good buys in the *CORSA Classified* – vans, wagons, Spyders, Corsas and Yenke Stinger YS-109, \$3250.

In the next decade, the April 1990 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* reinforced the message that we were working on getting ready to host the 1991 *CORSA International Convention*, in fact, we'd just made a \$1,000 deposit on the hotel. The 1990 convention was to be held in Ontario, California and several Group Corvair members were planning on attending to see how it was run as well as advertise our convention. Jack Dempsey had just hosted a tech session at Hot Air Enterprises and Vern Parker had featured Aldo & Helen Argenteri's original 1960 Corvair in his Washington Times “Out of the Past” feature column. I had contributed a Tech Topic on rebuilding the late-model manual gear shift, both the shift tube and the base of the gear shift lever itself. As it turns out, the gear shift lever base needs periodic lubrication plus there are wear items in there that can, and should, be replaced periodically. This solves a lot of hard shifting problems. Only two cars for sale, a '64 Monza 4-door for \$2500 and a '68 Monza coupe for \$1500.

The April 1990 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* had a great article about another rear, air-cooled, engine car, the Czech Tatra. The designer, Hans Ledwinka, was incredibly creative; his first automobile prototype in 1904 featured a 4 cylinder engine with an overhead cam and hemispherical heads. His 1934 Model 77 Tatra had a lower coefficient of drag than many modern cars, a 3-liter, single overhead cam, air cooled V8 with hemi-heads. And it was rear engine with a 4-speed transaxle. As of 1990, the company was up to the type 613 still with an air-cooled, rear mounted V8. Since this was the April issue, there was a one-time feature “Tech Slips” with the “top ten” worst repairs anyone had seen. It's amazing what some shade tree mechanics will do to “fix” a problem. The issue closed with a page and a half of cars for sale; nothing exotic, but a decent selection of years and models – all except for 1968's.

Reading the April 2000 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* was interesting, at least from a meteorological standpoint. While there was no date specified, March went out like a lion instead of a lamb. Overnight the temperature dropped from the upper 70s to freezing – a 48 degree drop – and we got a moderate covering of snow. Beyond that, I had just acquired a “snap” type torque wrench and thought it was the greatest thing since sliced bread. There were two vans plus three cars for sale.

The *CORSA Communiqué* April, 2000 issue was the *CORSA* election issue so several pages were filled with biographies of the various candidates. There was an amusing story of trying to find a somewhat used Greenbrier out on a farm. After hours of searching, they found it completely buried by vines, brush, small trees and whatnot – the earth was trying to reclaim it. As you might expect, there wasn't much to salvage. In the *CORSA Classifieds*, the car ads were down to a single page and just like ten years earlier, no '68s were 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. 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.