



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVIII, No. 9

September 2020



1966 Cutaway Corvair  
Owned by Pikes Peak Corvair Club

## 1966 Cutaway Four-Door Corvair Monza

### CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Check with sponsors on all events for the foreseeable future!

#### September

12 – 31<sup>st</sup> All-GM Car Show. Limited space due to pandemic rules, rain or shine. New location – CACI Parking Lots, 2720 Technology Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD. They are emphasizing pre-registration at <http://www.mdcamaroclub.com/shop> Check the website for more information.

15 -- **Group Corvair** Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Virtual meeting (Zoom); watch your inbox for info.

19 – 41<sup>st</sup> Corvair Day hosted by Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Eastern Museum of Motor Racing, 100 Baltimore Rd, York Springs, PA. (Show will be held on the adjacent Latimore Valley Fairgrounds, 314 Latimore Valley Rd.) Register by 31 August - \$12, \$15 at the door. Rain or shine.  
<http://www.centralpacorvairclub.org/events-1> or look at their July newsletter on the same site.

TBD – Cleanup and photoshoot of Pete Frailey’s garage. See Bob Hall’s “From the Oval Garage”.

## October

9-10 – AACA Eastern Fall Nationals at Hershey, PA. There will be no flea market or car sales this year and the event has essentially been reduced to a one-day concours. Check the website for details:  
[http://www.aaca.org/Meets/aaca\\_calendar.html](http://www.aaca.org/Meets/aaca_calendar.html)

17 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show – Cancelled. The 2021 show will be Oct 16; so, save the date!

20 -- **Group Corvair** Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Virtual meeting (Zoom); watch your inbox for info.

## November

17 -- **Group Corvair** Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Virtual meeting (Zoom); watch your inbox for info.

## Continuing Events

Cars and Coffee Bethesda is meeting every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. weather permitting. Corner Bakery, 10327 Westlake Drive, Bethesda, MD. They are **strongly** promoting social distancing and masks, so be prepared.

Cars and Coffee Great Falls, VA meets every Saturday from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. weather permitting. 760 Walker Rd, Great Falls, VA. Check with the organizer for rules, but I suspect social distancing and masks required.

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## From the Oval Garage

**Bob Hall**

Plans to organize and auction off Pete Fraley’s garage tools and miscellaneous Corvair (and some other car) parts continue despite the pandemic. Three of us have signed on to organize and clean the garage (while socially distanced) by the end of September. Once this work is done, we will post photos and schedule a Zoom auction a week or so later to sell off what remains of Pete’s automotive heritage. For those who have visited the garage in the past be advised that the Corvair Ranch bought the major part of Pete’s Corvair related inventory before he died. What remains are mechanic’s tools, garage equipment (jack stands etc.) and small parts.

My efforts to inventory my own parts and re-organize them moves forward in fits and starts. 54 years of Corvair ownership adds up. Our 1964 Greenbrier is running reliably now, but not as well as it should, so I am still fine

tuning it. It will get a new engine top cover and belt bearing later in September. I hope all of your own projects are moving ahead.

## **Minutes of the August Virtual Meeting**

**Marolyn Simpson**

Group Corvair members started logging into our August 18 Zoom meeting at 7:30 pm. There were seven members online when Bob Hall started the meeting at 7:38. The minutes from the July meeting were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. There were no expenses and no income during the last month. Jim has not charged the club yet for the Zoom license since he is also using it for personal meetings.

Since an in-person sale or auction for the Frailey tools probably will not work out, Bob suggested that two or three club members could help cleaning out the Frailey garage. Barbara Frailey wants to get the garage cleaned out so she can put her car in it this winter. Bob will try to contact Barbara again before proceeding with the plans.

Bob is looking for stories of the old racing days. For instance, the now closed Upper Marlboro racetrack introduced the Yenko Stinger! If anyone has a story or anecdote about Corvair racing in the "good old days", please write it up and send it to Bob. We could print of series of stories in the newsletter.

Bob said he has digital repair manuals for all GM models for 1995 through 2005. Contact him if you'd like access.

There was some general conversation about repair work currently being done. Bob said his Greenbrier is now running but there is still work to do on it. It idles but the right carburetor still needs attention. Jerry Yates is still working on his rear grill. Even after several tries, the paint color still does not match the body of the car.

Several tech items were discussed such as paint touch-ups and the use of heavy duty "saran wrap" to protect a car during transit. The discussion also included prices of Corvairs (and other cars) back in the 1970s.

That lead to reminiscences of Group Corvair meetings back in the early days of the club. Topics covered included various meeting locations, members, and activities. It was an interesting trip down memory lane.

Jim suggested that he may try to put together a tech session podcast on overhauling and upgrading alternators.

Bob Walker reported on the work he has been doing on his car such as getting a number of parts powder coated.

Bob Hall related his experience of watching "All Girls Garage" the previous Sunday – they worked on a Corvair. One of their main activities was working on the headlight rims. (The show was essentially a spotlight for Original Parts Group's line of Corvair restoration parts. OPG does have a nice, glossy, catalog!)

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm.

## **Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month**

**Jim Simpson**

Wow, the September 1980 *Group Corvair Comments* newsletter was short and to the point. Our August meeting was in the parking lot of Jim McKay Chevrolet – we were displaced by a CPR training session in their conference room. To cap things off, none of the club officers were able to attend. We published the fourth in a series on engine cooling; this one was about ensuring good seals around the engine, particularly spark plug boots. We had five cars for sale – none of them has a price listed! And that was about it.

The results of the 1980 CORSA National Convention in Atlanta were it the September *CORSA Communiqué*. Of note, Mike Leinhard, past president of Group Corvair, won best in class and best of show with his freshly restored '65 Corsa. David Langsather (I believe proprietor of Dale Engineering) provided a three-page tech article giving his secrets to bolting a Corvair flywheel to eliminate the problem of the factory rivets working loose. In the CORSA Classified, the highest priced Corvair was \$4,200 (a '63 Rampside that took 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the CORSA Nationals) with plenty of genuinely nice ones for \$2,000 or less.

The September 1990 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* reported on our meeting with the CORSA board at the Ontario, CA, CORSA National Convention. They approved of our planning and budget for the 1991 convention after going over everything with a fine-toothed comb. Our special fluorescent yellow or green tee-shirts advertising

our convention were a big hit and we got a lot of questions about our plans! Under tech topics, there was a non-Corvair note regarding just how rugged the Ford Model T was. Turns out back in 1916 a preacher in west Texas had just made a Christmas house call on a remote ranch. On the way back he hit a large rock that holed the oil pan. His temporary fix was to use the chewing gum he was carrying as presents for the parish children along with an old pant leg and some bailing wire to patch the hole. He refilled the crankcase with 10 lbs. of lard the farmer had given him (melted over a fire) and that was enough to get him back to town. Apparently, there was no damage to the internals of the engine! John Moody contributed his thoughts on adjusting valve lifters – he liked to exercise them their full range while the engine was running and then center them. Lots of ads for services, but no cars for sale.

Guess what? The September 1990 **CORSA Communiqué** was pretty much devoted to the just completed CORSA National Convention. I didn't see the long-distance award winner listed, but the farthest east of any of the cars listed in the results are a toss-up between Wisconsin, Missouri and Louisiana. As you might expect the vast majority of the cars were from California. Several Group Corvair members attended to present our plans for the 1991 convention. The CORSA Classifieds were only a bit over two pages, including parts and want ads. But there was a good selection of Greenbriers, Rampsides and Lakewoods available along with what appeared to be a late-model Fitch Sprint Corsa. Prices were up a bit, but \$4,000 - \$5,000 would get you an excellent car or FC.

The September 2000 issue of **Group Corvair Comments** stayed right with the convention theme. Among other shows, Marolyn and I, along with several other Group Corvair members, had just returned from the Daytona, FL CORSA National Convention. Hot and humid (90+ in both departments) since this was mid-summer in Florida. But some great cars, food, parts and vendors, and guest speakers. I don't know how many people remember Smokey Yunick, but he was a master NASCAR mechanic and designer. He was famous for his ability to skate the limits of the NASCAR rule book (and frequently go well beyond the rules). One of his "innovations" was to increase the fuel load; NASCAR specified the size of the fuel tank but didn't mention the fuel lines. He installed 11' of 2" diameter tubing, enough to hold an extra 5 gallons of gas! We had three cars for sale; the best buy was probably a '66 parts car with a turbo engine for \$500.

Just in case you haven't caught on yet, September is convention reporting time. The September 2000 issue of the **CORSA Communiqué** stayed right on track with the results of the Daytona convention. Group Corvair had made a pretty significant contribution to the event by trucking down our just refreshed cut-away Corvair drive train. I mentioned that Smokey Yunick spoke, but they also had Deke Hundley and Maury Schumacher who had participated in the famous 1961 "Darien Gap" Corvair expedition. They reported that the only problems they had with the Corvairs were the throttle linkages because they were exposed on the bottom of the car. The biggest problems were with the "support" vehicles – three Chevy trucks that broke axles and drive shafts. Jerry Thompson, winner of the 1967 SCCA D-Production championship in a Yenko Stinger, spoke about his racing career and his parting of ways with GM in the early 1970s – as an automobile engineer, he "didn't want to end up hating cars". His championship win was right there at Daytona! Just one page of ads; prices for FC's were creeping up.

## Some Random Notes

Thanks to Bob Winokur for passing along these links:

<https://classicmotorsports.com/articles/chevy-corvair-vs-porsche-356-comparison-test/>

For decades, people have called the Corvair the "poor man's Porsche". Well, Classic Motorsports Magazine decided to put it to the test in this comparison of a like-new 1965 Porsche 356C and a restored '63 Corvair Monza Spyder. Back in the day, the Porsche cost about 70% more than the Corvair (\$4870 vs \$2846); today it's more like a 10 to 1 difference in price.

Their verdict? *"No Porsche enthusiast worthy of his string-back gloves will choose the Monza over the 365..."* But for the rest of us, *"For dollar-conscious enthusiasts seeking a sporty '60s car with many of the Porsche's attributes at a fraction of the cost, the Corvair offers an appealing alternative."*

And for a bit of levity in these coronavirus pandemic times, how about this article about applying for a spot at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance:

<https://www.hagerty.com/media/entertainment/when-pebble-beach-concours-delegance-deservedly-denied-my-car/>



## Tech Topics

**Repainting a Corsa Dash.** If you ever want to repaint a Corvair dash, talk to our own Jerry Yates. He's done some amazing work on his own car's dash and has the photos to prove it.

According to Jerry: Whenever I repaint a Corvair dash, glove box surround or glove box door, I start by stripping off all the old paint with a chemical paint stripper. Then I wet sand each item with 800 grit sandpaper. Finally, I make sure the surface is free of any contaminants by wiping the surfaces with a solvent (Brake Clean).



**Masked and Ready for Paint**



**Stripped, Ready for Masking Tape**

The gauge cluster has to be taped. (This takes a little time and patience, but once you get a feel for it, it goes pretty quickly.)

I use VHT "Wrinkle Plus" paint and follow the instructions



on the can.

It's important to use smooth, even strokes. I usually apply four coats, one vertical, one horizontal and one each on the diagonals allowing 5 minutes between coats.

There are various ways of getting the desired finish. I prefer using a heat gun. Patience needs to apply here as well; don't rush, let the wrinkle spread as you go.

Here are some finished pieces:





## ‘Vair Vendor

**For Sale: '64 Corvair Dune Buggy.** New lower price. Built in 2009, street legal, Maryland title, 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 600 miles on them. Fiberglass body was new old stock, a Berry “Mini ‘T’ 2”, built in California by Berry in late ‘60s / early ‘70s. 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: 1964 Spyder Convertible.** This one needs to be saved! 150 Hp turbo! One of only 4,761 Spyder convertibles built in '64, the year that the rear suspension was upgraded with a traverse leaf spring and they went to a



164-cu. in. engine. Black, 4-speed, 3.55 positrac differential, tinted windshield. I was told that the engine was rebuilt but I don't believe that after checking it over when I got it home three years ago. It looks like it's had a clutch replacement, but the engine appears to be largely untouched. (It is not currently running.) Has a straight



body, all glass is nice, rust free doors, no rust trunk, some rust in the front floors, but the rear floor is great (rare on a convertible). The front bucket seats will need to be replaced. The battery box and part of the inner fender were cut out probably due to a battery leak. The Spyder dash, radio, black padded dash, and manual top are all nice. Good Maryland title in my name. I've got over \$2,800 invested, Old Car price guide for a #5 parts car '64 Spyder convertible is \$2,400. I'm asking \$1,550 or best offer. My loss is your gain. Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278, Nanjemoy, MD. (I've also got a nice '64 Spyder engine lid, \$150, OBO and a '65 coupe/convertible right door with hinges and vent window but no door glass, \$85, OBO.

**For Sale: '65 Monza Convertible.** Owner has health issues and needs to downsize. Purchased in Florida 8 years ago, repainted from red to current light blue. 110 engine, rebuilt 5 years ago, powerglide transmission. 67k miles; been sitting under cover last 3 years. It will start, but not keep running, probably old gasoline. Asking \$7,500, contact Tim Stefan, 410-960-3229 or [tim.stefan@verizon.net](mailto:tim.stefan@verizon.net). Fallston, MD.



**For Sale: Set of four 1965 13" wire wheel covers** with three prong spinners in excellent condition plus matching set of six 13" x 5 1/2" steel rims. \$750 plus shipping. Don, 302-313-5552 or [Don.lintvet@gmail.com](mailto:Don.lintvet@gmail.com)



### **“Ran When Parked”**

Spotted on a rafting trip on a river in Missouri.