



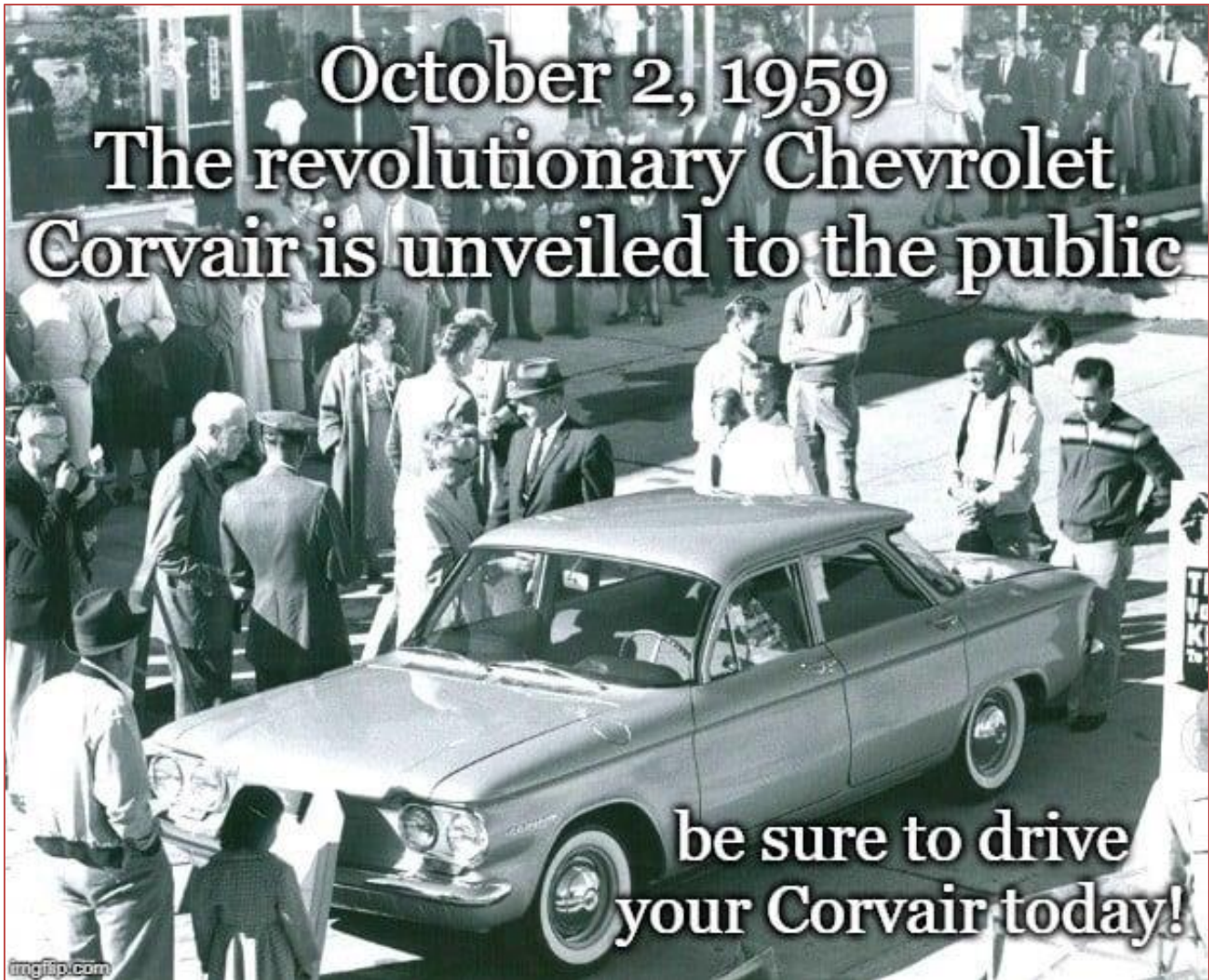
Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVIII, No. 10

October 2020



A Bit Late, But a Reminder to Drive Your Corvair!

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Check with sponsors on all events for the foreseeable future!

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

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

17 – 18 – Chesapeake Bay Motoring Festival. Kent Island Yacht Club, 117 Yacht Club Drive, Chester, MD) is hosting two days of shows. Saturday will be Hot Rods, Muscle Cars, American Classic and Special Interest cars, Sunday will feature previous “Award Winning” motorcars. Tickets are \$30. For information: <https://chesapeakebaymotoringfestival.org/>

20 -- **Group Corvair** Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Per the Group Corvair Bylaws, we are supposed to start our search for club officers for the coming year. It’s going to be a 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.

December

22 – **Group Corvair** Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Normally we’d have a Christmas Gala event, but it looks like we’re going to continue our Virtual meetings (Zoom); perhaps everyone can dress up for the occasion or we can sing Christmas carols! 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

Jim Simpson, Jerry Yates, and I spent a Saturday in September, cleaning and sorting out the Frailey garage. As mentioned before, the Corvair Ranch bought Pete’s Corvair parts earlier. Only some small Corvair-related parts are left, but a full complement of shop tools remain. We plan to post online photos and descriptions of the tools and remaining parts in late October. Anyone interested in buying will be able to make a bid before a final cutoff date. Depending on health concerns we may be able to do a tour of the shop and sale items via Zoom or Microsoft Teams prior to the final date. If you are on the newsletter email list, you will receive further updates.

At our September Zoom meeting we spent some time reminiscing about Marlboro and the cars and owners that raced. Byron LaMotte updated us on a car show and tour he organized, and Bob Walker talked about his progress renovating and assembling parts for his project. Jerry Yates and Jim Simpson continue to refine their 1966 Yenke clone (Yates) and 1966 Corsa turbo (Simpson). They will be ready to go when we CAN go again to car shows.

We hope the Virginia Vair Fair and Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show will be held next year. Carol and I are looking forward to Hershey in 2021 because our youngest son and his wife bought a house less than ten miles away so it will be easy to attend the show for the whole weekend.

Let us know how your own projects are going and what, if any, help you may need keeping your Corvairs roadworthy.

Minutes of the September Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

As we have done the last few months, Group Corvair members met virtually on September 15 with the Zoom meeting beginning at 7:30. There were seven participants. As usual there was general conversation as we were waiting for everyone to sign on.

The minutes of the August meeting were approved as they appeared in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report with no new expenses or income during the last month.

Bob Hall, president, is planning to have several members meet at Barbara Frailey's home the last week of September to organize and photograph the tools and equipment that Pete had in the garage. (Some things may be thrown out.) Next will be an online sale, possibly by sending out an email with the pictures and have people bid on them by a given deadline.

In a related discussion, there was a discussion about businesses that do estate sales online. One site, bring-a-trailer auction, recently sold a Corvair. This reminded everyone that Pete Frailey had a rear-engine V8 (Olds 215 cu. in.) that he used to take to shows and other gatherings. No one knew what eventually happened to it.

Another topic brought up at the meeting was the highly modified, blue Corvair in the centerfold of the September Communique. This car is effectively a Corvair-bodied, Porsche 911.

Byron LaMotte informed everyone about the rally he is planning. It will be capped at 65 vintage cars with a great variety planning to participate. The 62-mile course will go through several counties on the eastern shore. There will be a box lunch at a restaurant along the route. Prizes will include one for the oldest car that finishes and one that breaks down the most but still finishes the route. The entry fee is \$50 per car.

A suggestion for the October meeting is for Jerry Yates to talk about his adventures working on his Corvair. He admits that not much on his car is original.

Bob Walker has been working on gathering material about early racing at Upper Marlboro. He can give us an update at a future meeting. Jerry related memories of experiences at Upper Marlboro. That was followed by more reminiscences of early racing.

Bob H. has a digital shop manual covering most 1995–2005 models. If you want him to send the section of the manual for a specific job you need to tell him what the job is (ex. brakes, steering) and the car and year. He has already had several requests for these manuals.

The meeting ended at 8:52.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

In October 1980, according to the *Group Corvair Comments* newsletter, our meetings had moved to the Skyline Restaurant, just off Suitland Road, ½ mile from the Andrews AFB main gate. Three Group Corvair members who attended the Atlanta CORSA Convention did very well: Mike Lienhard took "Best of Show, 1st Place in "Late Closed Factory Stock Restored" and was promoted to "Senior Division." Bill & Ele Amey won a 1st Place in "FC Factory Stock Restored", 1st Place in the rally Novice class, 1st Place in the Econorun "FC Automatic" class. And Mark Holmund took 2nd Place in "Late Model Open Modified" class. Congratulations all! There were two cars for sale, a '65 Corsa turbo convertible and a '68 Monza convertible. Unfortunately, no prices were listed.

The October 1980 *CORSA Communique* had a follow-up article to the Atlanta CORSA Convention by Larry Rollow, winner of the Ed Cole Award. This was supplemented by a number of Chapter News articles about their

events. The *Communiqué* included four pages of Tech Topics including a good article on the value of the harmonic balancer by Bob Helt. The ads were still plentiful in 1980 with four pages of cars with another four pages of parts and services. I didn't notice anything exotic, but there was a good selection overall.

The October 1990 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* was a shortened edition with not much to report. The Tech Topic article can be summarized to "Install gaskets on top and bottom of the Bakelite spacers under the carburetors. These will greatly reduce the chances of vacuum leaks." Four engines were for sale – make offer!

Luckily, the October 1990 *CORSA Communiqué* was a bit more interesting with 12 pages devoted to Tech Topics and related materials including an index to all the previous tech articles. The ads continued to shrink; they were now down to just three pages. Prices were good, but I didn't see any "must buy" cars.

I was both editor and club president in October 2000 and the *Group Corvair Comments* certainly reflected that. The "From the Oval Garage" ran a full page and more. Our Fall Flea Fair just squeaked in, escaping Hurricane Helene. Among the cars that were displayed was an early model convertible with an after-market fiberglass hardtop. I don't think I've seen one since then. We were also preparing for the Rockville show. The special display this year was to celebrate the millennium of the automobile – a full century of cars. A Corvair Spyder, then owned by Allen Bristow, was selected to represent the year 1962! For some unknown reason, we published an "infomercial" for Alemite CD-2 oil additive. If you can believe the claims, CD-2 will cure badly worn rings. On the other hand, if you read the claims carefully, they also say that you need to use a heavy, single-weight oil for it to do its magic. My bet is that the thick oil is the major reason for any reduced oil consumption. We had three cars for sale, a '60 automatic, unknown year Monza 4-door with A/C, and a '65 coupe, 140, 4-speed with many Fitch Sprint mods.

The October 2000 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* had some "clean-up" articles on the Dayton CORSA Convention. One that might be of particular interest to us in the Washington, DC area, was by Bill Stanley who lived in New Jersey and chose to use the Amtrak AutoTrain service to get his '63 Monza convertible down to Florida for the convention. His experience was very positive and really does make me think about taking a train ride again sometime. Supplementing this was the story of "The Little Red Car that Could" by Bette Carpenter. This was the car that took the William L. Mitchell award at the convention. While only peripherally Corvair related, there was an article on Ralph Nader and his run for US President; he was unsuccessful, but the ramifications of his run still live on. The 97,488 votes he won in Florida – the key state in the 2000 election – was more than enough to have decisively tipped the election! (The difference between Gore and Bush was only 537 votes.) Under Tech Topics, Bill Anderson wrote about black paint with an emphasis on picking the right degree of gloss. The upshot of the article is that the original manufacturers were probably a lot less particular about the final gloss than some current automobile marque concours judges. The CORSA Classified were dramatically smaller with only a half-page of cars and another half page of parts and services. Of note, prices for Greenbriers and Rampsides had not yet taken off.

Byron "Brud" LaMotte Designs a Rally

Our very own Byron LaMotte is on the board of the Oxford Community Center on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Recently the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 have been chafing on the locals, so they came up with an idea for a "Covid-friendly event" – an automobile rally. It all came together on Saturday, Sept. 19 when the owners of over 60 classic, vintage, and other sporty cars gathered at the Community Center for the start of a 62-mile road rally.

They were blessed with perfect weather – a great break from the near-tropical weather of the past summer. This was the first of what they hope to be a future series of charity road rallies. Starting with a boxed breakfast, they traveled from the Oxford Community Center to 98 Cannon Riverfront Grill in Chestertown where the rally ended with another box lunch and awards. Byron created the "Klunker Award" that was presented to Paul Scuderi, owner of a 1973 Triumph Stag which came across the finish line smoking. Can you identify the original hubcap?

And of course, what would a rally be without a couple of Corvairs?



Klunker Award



For more details and pictures, go to the Talbot Spy newspaper website: <https://talbotspy.org/91181-2/> and the photo page: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/dgQzNcfeV6FTpHVW9>

Tech Topics

Electrical Woos? Even the newest Corvair is now over 50 years old and time and moisture is not kind to electrical terminals, particularly the fuse holders on convertibles. If you have problems with groups of electrical items, such as Mark Welte of Mid-Continent Corvair Association reported in their newsletter, then check out the fuse box under the dash. He had no power to the brake and taillights, dash lights and courtesy lamps on his '65 Corsa convertible. He discovered the cause was rusty fuse holders. GM in their wisdom (and in an effort to save money) used tinned steel clips to hold the fuses instead of more expensive and more corrosion resistant phosphor bronze. No matter – Mark discovered that a thick, foam, emery board worked well to cure the problem. It fits well between the clips, is sturdy and flexible enough to work the angles necessary without breaking and the underlying foam has enough give to let the abrasive layer follow the inside curve of the fuse holder.

After disconnecting the battery “just in case”, he cut the emery board end square to give it a bit better fit and while it was a bit tedious, it worked well. After blowing the dust out and reinstalling the fuses all circuits were good again. (Editor’s note: Since these are steel contacts, I’d recommend spraying them with something water repellent such as WD-40 to help keep moisture out and slow future corrosion. Since there’s a firm metal-to-metal contact, the WD-40 won’t interfere with the electrical connection.)

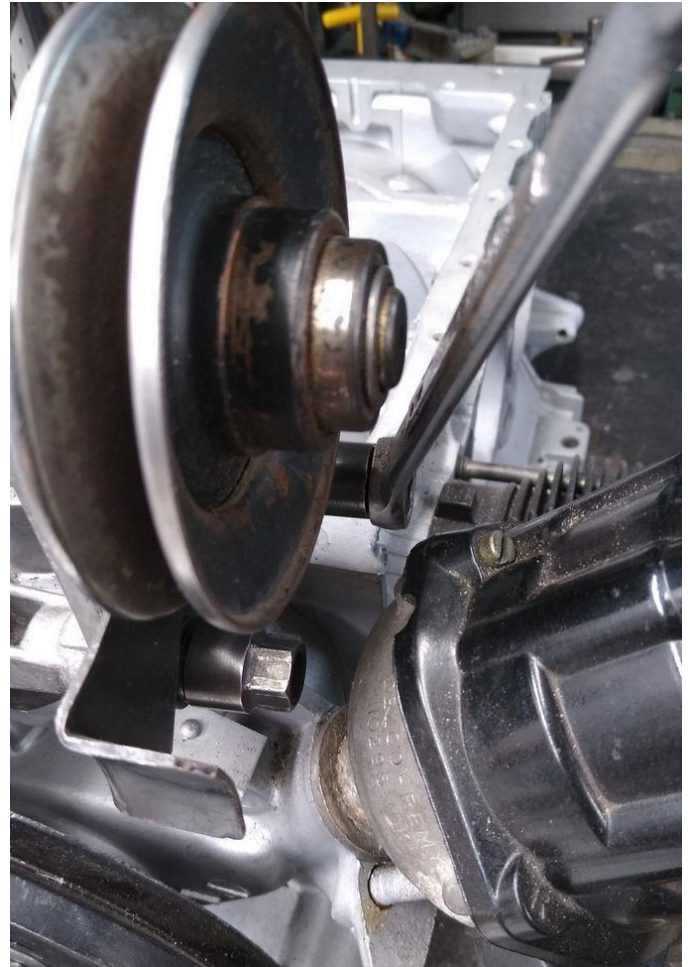
And More on Chasing Electrical Woos: As the note above observes, all Corvairs are at least 50 years old and that makes all electrical connections somewhat suspect. With cheap, modern, sensitive digital voltmeters, it’s pretty easy to check connections. Even the cheapest (frequently free) meters from places such as Harbor Freight have a 0.2-volt full scale range. That means they can detect a voltage difference as small as about a couple thousandths of a volt! That’s pretty small.

If you remember “Ohms Law” (or even if you don’t), you can apply it to see how good a connection any terminal makes provided you can get to each side of the connection. Ohms Law states that Volts = Current x Resistance. Resistance is the enemy of current flow. The lower the resistance the better. So, if you measure the voltage from one side of a connection to the other when it is powered and current is flowing, you can get an idea of the resistance between those two points. For example, low-beam headlights draw nearly 5 amps each. (We’ll call it 10 amps for the two.) If you turned on the headlights and measured the voltage across the main connector in the engine compartment (use the voltmeter probes to touch the terminals of the heavy Red wires on each side of the connector) you would see a (hopefully) small voltage. That’s the voltage drop caused by any resistance in the connection. Ideally it would be very small – less than a 1/10th of a volt. If you did see a 1/10 of a volt, then the resistance can be calculated using Ohms Law to be 0.01 ohms. By probing across the various connections, you can pretty quickly determine if any are poor due to corrosion or by being loose. Any connection that has a voltage across it of more than a small fraction of a volt – while there is something drawing significant current – is suspect.

Ever Have to Change a Fan Belt? If you own a Corvair, that’s a rhetorical question if there ever was one! The first time you did it, I’m sure you discovered just how hard it is to get a standard 9/16” wrench down to the nuts

buried below the idler pulley. I'm sure you already own one of the late John Moody's special "bent wrenches", either one of his originals or a clone from one of the Corvair part vendors. They certainly help a lot. But what happens when you are out on the road and your favorite special fanbelt wrench is back home in the toolbox?

Russell Davis of Blue Chip Tools Co. has come up with another solution – extended nuts that allow a normal wrench to fit! It's a one-time, permanent solution. His kit, as shown in the photo, has seven new parts plus a couple of "disposable" nuts used during the initial installation. As you can see, there's a new stud that replaces the one closest to the rear of the car, the one that locks the idler arm in place. The two nuts already on the stud are used to install it, then tossed (or put in your hardware collection). The shorter of the two new nuts along with the larger of the two flat washers and a lock washer go on that stud. The longer nut, smaller washer and lock nut go on the pivot stud of the idler pulley.



As you can see, you can get a standard box end wrench down to the new nuts.

Unfortunately, his web site is still under construction so I can't give you prices and availability, but he does have a presence on Facebook (Blue Chip Tools), an email address: bluechipmach.rd@gmail.com, and a phone number: 757-642-0665. His Facebook pages say that he does have a brochure and price list available on request.

I've purchased some of his other specialty products and think they are very well made. In this case, you do seem to get what you pay for.

Jim Simpson



"Rope Drive" Pontiac Tempest; Swing Axles Just Like Early Corvair

Corvairs Do Go Fast



This is the current (as of 20 August 2020) record holder of the Southern California Timing Association's F/Classic Production class at 146.125 mph. (The SCTA runs the Bonneville Salt Flats Speed Week.) As you might expect, it's a pretty highly modified Corvair engine, but still a Corvair! Michael LeVeque at LeVair Performance did the engineering. Read all about it at: <https://www.hagerty.com/media/motorsports/corvair-racers-capture-land-speed-records-on-the-bonneville-salt>

'Vair Vendor

For Sale: Two Sets of 13" Custom Wheel Covers. Remember "Racing Covers", "Moon Covers" or "Baby Moons"? From Pete Frailey's estate, there's a new-in-the-box set of spun aluminum "Racing/Moon Covers" including the original instruction sheet. Asking \$30 each, OBO. Proceeds go to Barbara Frailey.



Spun Aluminum "Racing/Moon Cover"



And I also have a set of "Baby Moon" covers, same price (\$30 each, OBO) for sale. Contact Jerry Yates, 301-262-8428 or yatesj@verizon.net.



Baby Moon Cover

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. 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



Found by Jerry Yates

Early Mockup of the 1965 Corsa. Note What Appears to be “Monza Spyder” Emblems on the Front Fenders, No Corsa Badge on the Rear Fenders and Genuine “Knock-off” Wire Wheels