



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLIX, No. 1

January 2021



Welcoming the 1961 Corvair Lakewood (I like wagons!)

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Check with sponsors on all events for the foreseeable future!

January 2021

- 1 – It is time to pay your **Group Corvair dues!** A bargain at \$12/year, payable to Group Corvair and sent to Jim Simpson at 3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035.
- 19 -- **Group Corvair Business Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. Even with the advent of the new coronavirus vaccines, it looks like we're going to continue our Virtual meetings via Zoom! Watch your inbox for info.
- 20 – Inauguration Day! Normally there would be a parade, but not this year so don't look for invitations to participate.

February

- 15 – Group Corvair Meeting, 7:30 p.m. We're still going to be Zooming right along. Watch your inbox for info.

March

16 – Group Corvair Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

Happy New Year to everyone! We hope you and your family are healthy and that daily challenges aren't proving overwhelming. Now that vaccines are being administered there is real hope that things will be opening up in 2021—including car shows. Mean time protect yourselves and your families.

January is club dues time for the coming year so send in your payments if you haven't already done so. Don't forget CORSA—they provide support for us all.

At the end of December Pate Frailey's widow, Barbara, gave her approval for the final details of the on-line auction of his garage and woodworking tools. Look for the list of items with photos and reserve prices being sent separately. This will be our first virtual garage sale during a pandemic, but we hope it will be our last. We miss the face-to-face interaction.

Let the club know how your projects are going and if you need any help. We hope to "see" you at the January meeting where we'll be able to catch up.

Minutes of the December Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Group Corvair's Christmas Zoom meeting was held on December 15. Logging in to the meeting got started a little after 7:30 due to technical difficulties at our end but when those were cleared up, we had 10 participants. Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order at 7:45.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. There were no expenses for the last month, but he has started receiving dues for 2021. [Reminder: 2021 dues are due. Please send a check payable to Group Corvair to Jim Simpson, 3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035.]

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as they appeared in the December newsletter.

Bob H. brought us up to date on the Frailey garage sale. He has been in contact with Barbara Frailey and she has approved the reserve amounts for Pete's tools. We'll distribute a spreadsheet listing the items for sale to everyone who receives our newsletter with an emphasis on getting it to the local area clubs. Photos will be available on either Dropbox or Facebook (we're still working on that) and payments (checks or cash) will be to the club. (We'll act as a direct passthrough on the money; everything we take in will go to Barbara Frailey.)

Jim S. recently received a statement from Bank of America about new fees that may be applied to our club account. There was a discussion about other banking options such as moving our account to another bank.

Jim S. has been working on archiving the club's old newsletters. He has most of them but there are some gaps. Ron Fedorczak has found a stash of old newsletters and may be able to supply some of the missing ones.

Rob Neighbour and Andrew Dan have not attended a meeting for several months, so they gave us an update on some of their activities.

There was a discussion on possible attendance of several club members at the San Diego convention now scheduled for July 27-31, 2021.

The next order of business was the election of officers. Gus Torbert made a motion to re-elect the current slate of officers. Rob seconded the motion. The motion passed. The current officers will continue for another year.

Rob proposed a future virtual tech session for help in positioning engine stickers. He's had a set for a couple years now and needs help in getting them right.

Bob Walker brought us up to date on the work he has been doing on reassembling a Corsa. He said the work is slow and he has not made a lot of progress.

Bob Hall thanked Bob Walker and Jerry Yates for their latest article on early racing at Marlboro that appeared in the December newsletter. That led to a series of reminiscences by several club members of early Corvair adventures.

The Zoom meeting ended at 8:52.

The Queen's Gambit; Jolene's Car

Bob Hall

My family and I enjoyed Netflix's hit series "The Queen's Gambit", especially when the supporting character Jolene drove up in her 1965 Monza. The part of the story that includes the Corvair was apparently shot in Canada and I would be interested to learn who owns the car. Based on what I saw it is a 1965 Monza with a nicely done aftermarket dual exhaust and silver painted cove area like a Corsa. The rear decklid emblem was too small to see if the engine was originally a 140 or 110. The wheel trim rings were missing, there were no Corsa emblems on the front fenders and the location of the Corvair script on the front trunk lid, the style of the Monza emblems, the vertical embossed pattern on the front seat backs mark it a 1965. I would guess it had a Powerglide based on how it was driven. I was a little disappointed to see it riding low at the front until my oldest son, who does production and post-production sound in Los Angeles, said that the sound team would have loaded the trunk with batteries and the recording equipment.

The Russian Chaika, and old American cars added to the authenticity of the series. If you have access to Netflix, we recommend that you see the series.

Newsletter Archives

They're still not complete, but as the minutes pointed out, Ron Fedorczak might have several of the missing issues. I don't want to put a link in the newsletter – it goes to a very wide audience – but if you are interested in having access, let me know (simpsonj@verizon.net) and I'll set you up.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

For some of us, 1981 doesn't seem like it should be that far back in time, but sure enough, January 1981 was forty years ago! The January issue of *Group Corvair Comments*' calendar listed our annual Award Banquet at Tuckers Restaurant in Suitland, MD. (We'd been planning to have it in Northern Virginia, but apparently that fell through.) We were going to eat from a buffet which included Steamship Round of Beef, Southern Fried Chicken, Baked Macaroni au Gratin, Ham & Cheese cold plate and a wide variety of sides. All this for \$6 a person. We were still very much into holding autocrosses, so much so that we were going to build our own set of timing equipment. Unfortunately, it was never completed. Not much for sale; some parts from a '67 4-door and Group Corvair club merchandise.

The highlight of the January 1981 *CORSA Communiqué* was, in my opinion, an article on Chevrolet's development efforts on a fuel injected (FI) Corvair engine. Starting in summer 1962, Chevrolet Engineering embarked on a series of tests to determine the feasibility and practicality of introducing FI on the Corvair. Keep in mind, this was long before modern electronics so the FI systems of the day were complex mechanical systems. It was noted that when Chevrolet introduced FI on the 283 cu. in. V8, it was a nearly \$500 option on a \$2,500 car. If there were problems, the FI unit had to be calibrated on a flow bench so the normal "fix" was to install a factory rebuilt unit. As it turned out, by early 1965 they had a good running design that was about ready for release to production. But it wasn't cost effective; it did produce a bit more power than the new 4-carb (140 hp) engine, but that came at a much higher cost. (If modern electronic FI systems had been available, it might have been a very different story.) Seth Emerson contributed an article on the use of Corvair drivetrains in various "all-terrain" military prototypes. One, the Lockheed "Twister", used two 140 hp engines. As was typical back then, there were four pages of cars for sale plus another two of parts in the CORSA Classified with examples of just about every model and style.

It's amazing what a decade of inflation does to the cost of a banquet. In the January 1991 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* our Awards Banquet was going to be at the Golden Bull restaurant in Gaithersburg. Just as ten years earlier, it was to be a buffet, but the price had gone from \$6 to \$19! Part of that increase was due to the club not subsidizing it that year; we were economizing to ensure we could cover the up-front costs of the convention. And yes, this was our year for the CORSA International Convention, 22 – 27 July 1991. Besides the Chairman (Ward Bourgondien), we had 17 different working groups ranging from Advertising to Tours. There was a short discussion of polyurethane suspension bushings. In short, they seemed to be good replacements for the stock rubber bushings and improved handling with little compromise to comfort. On the other hand, the ones available then were BRIGHT RED. Two cars were available in the Vair Vendor, a '62 Monza wagon and a '67 Monza coupe. Both were a bit rough, but prices seemed reasonable.

The *CORSA Communiqué* for January 1991 was, to be frank, boring. Of course, the content of the *Communiqué* depends upon articles submitted by the members, so it wasn't the fault of the editors. There were four articles about cars and their owners, four pages of now dated tech tips, and another "Stock Is" article covering the various optional tissue dispensers over the years. The CORSA Classified ads had shrunk to a page of cars and two of parts. And the articles advertising our upcoming CORSA Convention hadn't started yet.

Just as I noted for the 1981 issue review, I'm having a hard time wrapping my head around the notion that the January 2001 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* was 20 years ago! We were meeting at the New Carrollton Community Center and planning our banquet at the Calvert House Inn, in Riverdale, MD. There was a delightful article by John Moody titled "Why Corvairs" that described his early love affair with Porsches (in the 1950s he owned a succession of Porsche 356s that would be worth a modest fortune today) that ended when he was working in Paris, France. He found they were just impractical in the traffic and streets of Paris. But he did attend the 1964 Paris Auto Show and while there he was smitten with the new for 1965 Corvair Corsa convertible. When he finally returned to the US in 1972 and was floored by the price of new Porsches, he thought back to the red Corsa convertible he had seen in Paris. That led to acquiring five Corvairs plus three more that he stripped for parts. (One was apparently a Yenko Stinger.) He also converted his '71 VW camper to Corvair power, something he said so transformed the camper that he would have ripped out the VW engine when it was brand-new! The Vair Vendor had five cars for sale, two of which were parts/need a lot of attention cars and the other three seemed decent.

The January 2001 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* featured four articles on the Yenko Stinger ranging from YS-9700 (the 1969 special Yenko built for Goodyear to test tires) to a memoir by Warren LeVeque of how he got into racing Stingers. In the Tech Topics, there was a note about using genuine "Goodwrench Steering Gear Lubricant, GM part 1052182 in the Corvair steering box. Of course, it's been discontinued, but take a look at the tech tips in this issue of the newsletter. The rest of the *Communiqué* was devoted to Chapter News and the single page of CORSA Classifieds. Not a lot of selection anymore.

Tech Tips

Steering Box Lubrication: As noted in the January 2001 issue of the *Communiqué* genuine "Goodwrench Steering Gear Lubricant, GM part 1052182 should be used in the Corvair steering box. Of course, since then it's been discontinued, but a quick search on the 'net came up with some potential substitutes. First there is GM #12377985. Although GM recommends this for manual steering boxes, it appears to be a standard lithium chassis

grease and not really fluid enough for a steering gearbox. Next up are **Champion NLGI #00 EP Pour Grease** and **Penrite Semi Fluid Grease** (also a NLGI 00 grease). The manufacturers describe them as being excellent for manual steering boxes. Since they are a semi-fluid, I would expect them to come a lot closer to what Saginaw had in mind when they built the steering boxes. And if you want to go a bit farther afield, there's **Dynolite's Steering Box Lube**, made in the UK and sold in the US by Moss Motors, a specialist in British Sports Cars.

Various sources have also suggested mixing a 50-50 mix of lithium chassis grease with 90 wt. gear oil. If you go this route, make sure you mix them well before filling the steering box; they won't mix on their own.

The bottom line is you need a lubricant in there that's not going to leak out around the pitman arm shaft but is still fluid enough to flow into the recirculating balls to keep everything well lubricated. Jim Simpson

'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.



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.



Spun Aluminum "Racing/Moon Cover"

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



CHEV CORVAIR GOES RALLYING

TAKES FIRST PLACE IN 1961 CANADIAN WINTER RALLY—Any rally is a soul-testing endurance run. Competing cars must maintain specified average speeds (within legal limits) over a route revealed just before take-off time. You don't even enter rallies—especially this one—unless you've got an abiding trust in your car's traction, braking, handling and reliability. The Canadian Winter Rally involves 1,265 miles of what drivers called "North America's worst roads," from Toronto to North Bay, Ontario, and back. Twenty-three hours of virtually non-stop driving the first day, thirteen the second . . . and dozens of checkpoints along the way to make sure competitors kept to the murderous route. Nearly 200 cars started, 43 of them in Corvair's engine class. Of the starters, some fifty succumbed to the treacherous ice and snow—but every 1961 Corvair entered came through without mechanical difficulty. And—for the first time in the rally's nine-year history—one make and model was first overall and swept the first five places in class: Corvair! **CORVAIR TAKES FIRST PLACE OVERALL: FROSTBITE 500** After the

Canadian Winter Rally, winning team Dick Doyen and Clay Gibbs of the Corvair entries decided to go on to Wisconsin's Frostbite 500 (a wonderfully apt name) Rally. Their '61 Corvair got a grease job, an oil change and three new front wheel bearings. And—just one week after the CWK's 1,265 thoroughly miserable miles—it started another 500 frozen miles of rallying! This time Corvair kicked all 79 starters, to win the icy grind. Remember, both of these events involved open competition with some of the world's best automobiles. You can't buy success in rallying. You don't luck your way through. A car wins on its merits, pure and simple. And these are the same merits so important in your own driving: traction, handling ease and sureness, braking, durability. Proud of Corvair's performance? Of course. And we think you'll get a kick out of experiencing the Corvair's remarkable driving abilities for yourself. Your Chevrolet dealer's the man to see, naturally. Make it soon—and enjoy yourself! . . . Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Detroit 2, Mich.

