



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLIX, No. 5

May 2021



Have You Ever Felt Like This?

(Contributed by Jerry Yates)

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Check with sponsors on all events for the foreseeable future!

May

18 -- **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. Yes, another virtual (Zoom) meeting. Look for the invite in your email on about 16 May.

22 – NECC Motorsports Track Day, New York Safety Track. Visit www.neccmotorsports.com for details.

June

5 – 29th Annual Orphan Car Tour from Burkittsville, MD to Bluemont, VA. Limited to “orphan” cars (discontinued makes – yes, they have said that Corvairs qualify) at least 25 years old. For information:

<http://www.orphancartour.org/> or contact Jon Battle, 540-364-1770 or tourdirector@orphancartour.org. (This will

be contingent upon the coronavirus pandemic situation. The organizers will be reviewing things in mid-April so be sure to check their website for updates.)

15 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

July

20 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

~~17—23—CORSA National Convention~~ **CANCELLED**. I believe they plan to put this back into the normal rotation so the next west coast CORSA Convention should now be in 2024. Atlanta, GA will host the convention in 2022.

31 – NECC Track Day, Pocono Raceway North Course. Visit www.neccmotorsports.com for details.

August

17 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

21 – FSK Antique Car Club 36th Rose Hill Manor Show, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Rain date 8/22) \$15 entry fee, judging by other participants from other classes. Raffle tickets benefiting three charities. 1611 N. Market St., Frederick, MD.

September

21 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

October

16 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show – Tentative.

19 – **Group Corvair Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

Our cooler than normal Spring continues, but for a shade tree mechanic that isn't a bad thing. Paint appreciates a careful wash and wax more at 70 than at 90 degrees. For my part I have been polishing and "waxing" (with a ceramic polish) my Greenbrier's white painted bumpers that weren't clear coated like the body paint. I had planned on installing chrome bumpers after the body and paint work were completed, but the painter felt so strongly that painted bumpers complemented the white belt better that he stripped and painted the bumpers white to match and added chrome bumper bolts. And I now agree with him, but I do have to periodically protect the bumper paint. A good body/paint person is a craftsman. It can never hurt to let them know that you are open to their ideas about how to best improve your car—even if it is to be a completely stock restoration.

I've been cleaning and inventorying Pete Frailey's mechanical tools that I purchased a few months back. Next, I need to set aside those tools that are duplicates to my own so I can take them to a swap meet to offer to others who might need gaps filled in their own Corvair tool sets. We have to share the treasures.

I plan to add a two-speed wiper/washer to the Greenbrier to replace the single speed wipers and found the wiring information I needed in the wiring diagrams Bob Kirkman sent me over twenty years ago. Even posthumously Bob is still helping Corvair lovers. Wiring diagrams may look arcane at first, but once you understand them troubleshooting or adding to your Corvair's electrical system is much more straightforward—and you're much less likely to start an electrical fire that can destroy your project.

We plan to have a tech session on balancing four carburetors as Byron LaMotte has suggested sometime this summer. If you have an interest in participating let us know. We will send out a separate email with specifics when we have them.

Finally, a shoutout to Bob Walker who gave me the information on the Cadillac split master cylinder that is recommended for dual braking conversions on forward control Corvairs like my Greenbrier.

We plan to continue our monthly Group Corvair meetings via Zoom at least for the foreseeable future because a side benefit has been increased attendance by those club members who live furthest away from our usual meeting locations. For my part I plan to attend our May meeting from Los Angeles where we'll be visiting one of our sons. I'll look forward to "seeing" all of you there.

Minutes of the April Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

After the Group Corvair members had logged in, the April 20 virtual meeting was called to order by the president, Bob Hall, at 7:39. Byron LaMotte made a motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting as they appeared in the newsletter. Jim Simpson seconded the motion.

Jim gave the treasurer's report. Expenses for the last month were \$35 for the chapter filing fee; there was no income for the last month. His plan for the next month is to get the document notarized to reinstate the club's corporate status. A discussion followed on the club's status and history as a corporation.

Since the weather is warmer and folks are becoming anxious to start more projects, there was a suggestion for a tech session, possibly at Byron's house on the Eastern Shore, to synchronize and balance carburetors. It was noted that some other recent club newsletters have had articles on this subject. This tech session would probably take place mid-day sometime in June. Watch the newsletter or your email for more details.

Jim picked up a box of old newsletters that Pete Frailey had collected. He is keeping any of them that he needed to fill out his collection and now wants to find a home for all the extra "Windmill" and other early newsletters. If anyone is interested, let him know.

Bob has wrapped up the Frailey sale. Barbara Frailey expressed her appreciation for all that Bob and other club members did to help her clean out the garage. Although most of the tools and Corvair related items have been sold, there are still some Mercedes parts left.

There was a general discussion on the increase in Corvair prices. Several Corvairs have been in the news lately such as the Jay Leno cars, which has put them in the public's eye and driving up demand. Also, many parts are currently available, including reproductions, which makes it easier to rehab and maintain the cars adding to their appeal.

Jerry Yates had some idle pulley bolt extenders, but he found they were far too difficult to use. They interfered with the distributor. This led to a general discussion followed including the topics of the idle pulley bolt extenders, Nash fans, and refurbishing the interior--especially door panels.

Everyone was reminded that there is now a vacancy for the office of Vice President of the club. Anyone who is interested in serving should let the other club officers know.

Lee Cramp has moved and is currently located on Rt 180 (Jefferson Pike) west of Frederick.

Bob Walker brought us up to date on his project car. It now has a new engine and transmission, but he has not fired it up yet. He explained some of the details of the work he has been doing.

Bob H. is putting a dual master cylinder on his Greenbriar. He was interested to know if anyone had any experience with that project.

Jerry Yates asked about the consensus on electric fuel pumps. Most of the members had a favorable opinion of them.

Since the pandemic is becoming more under control, we are starting to think about when it would be possible to have in-person meetings again.

The meeting ended at 9:22 pm.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

According to the May 1981 issue of *Group Corvair Comments*, we'd been pretty busy over the last month. We had held a MWCSCC Championship Autocross with 92 entries. We'd gotten off to a late start, so we were still running as it got dark, and the timing equipment failed toward the end of the event. We did have stop watches so everything worked out ok. We moved our meetings to the Palazzo Restaurant in the Markham East shopping center to give our Virginia members a break from traipsing out to Maryland. There was a brief tech tip on using Bosch W8AC spark plugs. These were originally intended for air-cooled VW Beetles, but worked well in Corvairs. (Like all good things Corvair related, these plugs have evolved over the years and the closest current equivalent is the Bosch 79026 WR8AC – a resistor plug with nickel electrodes. But you can still find NOS W8AC plugs on eBay.)

A good one third of the May 1981 *CORSA Communiqué* was devoted to the “Rally to the Rockies” CORSA Convention to be hosted by Rocky Mountain CORSA and the Pike’s Peak Chapter. They really had a full program planned. They included an article featuring lady competition drivers who shared their experience and enthusiasm for autocrossing Corvairs. CORSA was holding elections for new Division Directors – boy, were they young-looking. I wonder what happened to all of us. Lots of good cars for sale, but nothing special caught my eye.

By May of 1991, things were heating up for our upcoming CORSA Convention. The *Group Corvair Comments* had a practice rally scheduled to check our readiness to hold the convention rally. The rest of the calendar was about full with something (and frequently two things) for every weekend into August. Our membership seemed to be at what must have been an all-time high; we listed 110 separate entries with about 155 actual members counting couples. The convention hotel – the Sheraton in New Carrollton – was full as of the first of April and we were rapidly filling the nearby Holiday Inn and other local motels. The ‘Vair Vendor had a couple cars ('63 Spyder, '64 coupe) as well as a modified differential for sale; it had been strengthened by installing four vs the normal two. Finally, there was a good article about the difference between “Stated Amount” and “Stated Value” automobile insurance policies. The bottom line is that you need to read the fine print on any policy VERY carefully and if in doubt, talk to an insurance lawyer. You might be unpleasantly surprised.

By comparison with the 1981 Denver convention, we only had a single page about our upcoming CORSA National Convention in the May 1991 *CORSA Communiqué*. But it seems we did not need to advertise very much – the convention hotel was already fully booked. Larry Claypool continued his series “Stock Is” with an article on some of the rarer dealer installed accessories. Under “Tech Topics” there were a couple of suggestions on repairing Powerglide transmission shift cable leaks. In the page and a half of cars listed in “CORSA Classified” there were several nice cars at good prices, but nothing exotic.

The May 2001 issue of *Group Corvair Comments* showed that the car season was well underway. There had just been an open house at the Corvair Ranch up in Pennsylvania. This had been followed by the Virginia Vair Fair down in Fort Monroe (Hampton, VA). And coming up was the Mid-Maryland Corvair show. There were three cars available – a '62 project car (free!), '65 Monza 4-door, automatic and air, and a '66 Monza convertible. John Moody closed the issue with an entertaining explanation of a series of problems with his VW Camper – Corvair engine conversion. To make it short, he found that a bad carb float that allowed gasoline to seep into the engine cured a different problem – a noisy valve lifter. (He discovered the gas in the crankcase before starting the engine, so no damage was done.)

I found the most interesting section of the May 2001 issue of the *CORSA Communiqué* to be the “Open Forum” – letters to the editor. Dave Newell provided production numbers for 140 hp engines in 1967 – 98 total. Only 45

were without air injection emission controls and a manual transmission. That would make any '67 Corvair with a 140 hp engine a pretty rare bird. James Rice reported on how Corvair parts, particularly taillights, showed up in several race cars in the 1960s including Jim Hall's Chaparrals and on a pair of Penske Ferrari 512Ms. The cover story was about the creation of Rick Norris' '66 Corv-8 based upon a Crown conversion kit. Beautiful job!

Getting to Know Our Members

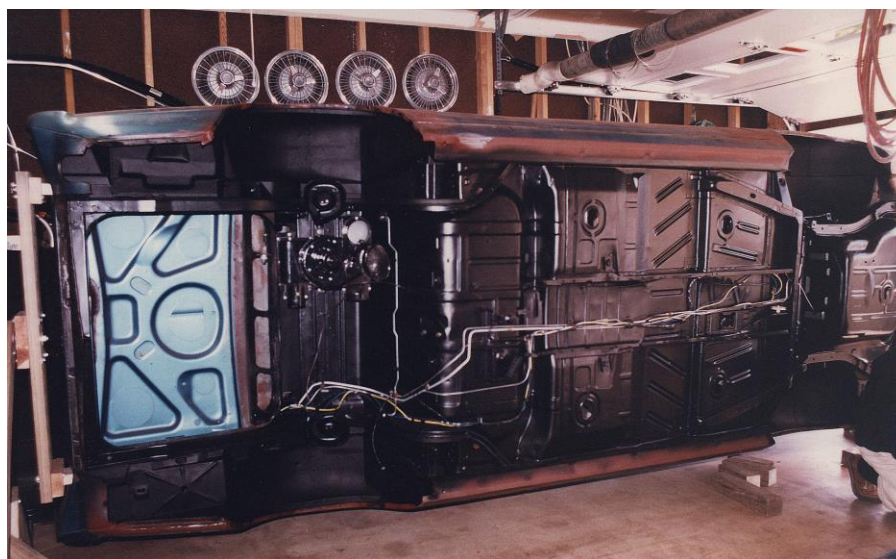
Jim & Marolyn Simpson

In the April newsletter, we left off with the car sitting in the garage up on jack stands. I would come into the garage occasionally and contemplate the mess on the underside of the car – years of road grease and grime and even worse, an after-market “rust proofing” coat that covered everything with a thick layer of what looked like tar. Eventually we would have to take it on, but just how?

At the time there wasn't any real hurry. A year would go by where I would go into the garage, take a look at the car, think about all that grease, grim and tar, and say “not now”. Marolyn was convinced that this was a project that would never be completed. We did think about pushing to get it all done for the 1991 CORSA convention that Group Corvair was going to host here in Washington. But then we got caught up in our professions and in working on the convention itself. (Marolyn and I “volunteered” to do registration. That is worth a story by itself.)

It wasn't until they announced in 1994 that the 1997 East Coast CORSA convention was going to be in Lake Placid that we decided we really needed to complete the Corvair. Lake Placid looked like a great place to go and we thought we really should have a Corvair there as well. That got us motivated; we had a little under three years to get ready. Of course, the underside of the car was still a mess – it had not improved one bit by setting in the garage for the last 10 or 12 years...

We tackled that with the help of Group Corvair. I built a rotisserie using leftover wood from building a deck on our house. (A bare Corvair body is really pretty light – I was able to lift either end off the jack stands!) Once the car was bolted up to the rotisserie (via the bumper bolt holes and some wooden spacers), we flipped the car onto its side and a half-dozen brave Group Corvair members descended on it with propane torches, putty knives, wire brushes, and a lot of elbow grease and stripped the underside of the car down to the original bare paint and metal. Now that we had a nice clean underside that was easily accessible while on the rotisserie, I painted the bottom, sprayed undercoating where the assembly manual showed it should be, installed new fuel and brake lines, a new wiring harness, and did all the other things reasonable to do



while the car was on its side. Then again with help from the club, we flipped it back upright and installed the suspension, brakes, and drivetrain. It was a memorable day when we dropped it back onto its wheels and tried to fire the engine for the first time. Of course, the distributor was installed 180 degrees out, but we figured that out quickly. Once that was sorted out, it ran! And I was able to drive it around the block successfully.

The hardest part in the whole restoration process was finding a body shop that would take on the needed bodywork and paint. Just about every local shop we talked to refused us; they just weren't interested in old cars. Their profits lay in quick crash repairs of new cars, and besides that, owners of restoration projects are notoriously finicky about the work. Old cars just took too much time and effort. But we finally found "The Hotrod Garage" in Crofton.

They have since disappeared, but at the time they used three bays of a major body shop whose owner was into hotrods. They built custom hotrods but would take on a vintage car as time permitted. After some discussion and inspecting our Corvair, they took on the job. There was one hang up though. Their painter, Richard Gimp – a well-known and highly respected custom auto painter – had to like you, the car, and the color before he would take on the job. As I recall, he was into green that year and we wanted to stay with blue. But all was not lost; the shop had a backup painter, the DuPont products demonstration painter, George Schrieber, and he was willing to do the painting. He did a great job. (We've seen Richard Gimp recently at the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Shows. He's stopped by and commented on how good the car looks; perhaps he wishes he'd taken it on at the time.)



We got the car back from the body shop at the end of March 1997. While the paint was done and the running gear was finished, there was no interior, the trunk needed to be refinished, the glass was still out (other than the windshield which I'd installed at the paint shop), and none of the trim was installed. And the CORSA convention was early that year, in June rather than the usual July or August. We put in some long evenings getting the car completed. But we managed. On the Saturday before the Monday that we had to leave for Lake Placid, it was complete except for mounting the turbo engine emblem on the rear deck. And oh yes, we hadn't actually driven the

car any distance yet. So, on that final Saturday afternoon we went out for an hour drive and put 50 miles or so on it. (Keep in mind, this was a brand-new engine that I'd assembled some 15 years earlier.) Well, it turned out fine. Nothing blew up, nothing leaked, the car ran, stopped, and otherwise behaved itself. So, after a quick oil change, we were ready to go.

Of course, there's always a glitch. We had an NOS 1966 turbo emblem saved and were planning to install it just before we hit the road for Lake Placid. But there was a problem. During the restoration we had swapped the rear deck lid for a brand new one that had been removed from one of the original Yenko Stingers. (That's another story, but yes, the deck lid still had the original shipping wax on it when we bought it from Mike Harrison.) Of course, Yenkos came with 140 hp engines and we had a turbocharged engine. Surely the deck lids are the same! Almost, but not quite. The holes for the engine emblem are spaced differently. On the 140 and other lower-powered engines, the two holes for the emblem are spaced 2 3/4" apart. Not so for the turbo emblem. All turbo emblems, going back to the original Spyder, have mounting pins 1 3/4" apart. (The turbo emblems starting with the original '62 Spyderys through to the '65 Corsa turbos were essentially round disks about 2 1/4" in diameter.) This presented a bit of a dilemma.

But there was a solution! Luckily for '66, Chevrolet had redesigned the emblem and it now had a "bar" through the center that was 3 1/4" long. And I had a Clark's reproduction that I didn't mind modifying a bit. Out came the



hacksaw and file, and off came the emblem pins. A couple strips of double-sided tape later and the emblem was attached. With the unique to '66 design, it covers the 140 emblem holes, and no one is any the wiser. Someday I might fix that...

We broke the engine in on the trip to Lake Placid by staying as much as possible off the Interstates and other high-speed highways to run the engine speed up and down. We still were not totally confident in the Corvair so Marolyn drove her Acura Integra with our luggage, tool kit, and some essential spares, and followed me as I drove the Corvair. We maintained contact using CB radios – remember them? The two-day drive to up-state New York was pretty much uneventful with the exception that the odometer on the Corvair quit. (My mistake, I hadn't peened a bushing properly when I rebuilt it and a drive gear popped loose.) And of course, it rained on our newly restored Corsa!

The trip was also an interesting comparison between a 1960's vintage "state-of-the-art" automobile and a modern (1995) car. The Corvair averaged about 20 mpg and because I wasn't entirely confident of the accuracy of the gas gage, I was stopping for gas every 100-150 miles. At our first stop, I asked if Marolyn needed gas for her car and she replied that the gage had just barely dropped off the full mark. Her '95 Acura Integra GSR could crank out as much, or perhaps more, horsepower than the stock turbo Corvair but got a good 70% better highway gas mileage while running the air conditioning plus it was quiet enough to properly enjoy the stereo CD player. Isn't progress wonderful?



Lake Placid was a great show. The town enjoys hosting special events and really welcomed the hordes of Corvair enthusiasts. We toured the area, taking in the various winter Olympics sites including the ski jumps and bobsled runs. The concours and car display was conducted on the winter speed ice-skating oval next to the figure skating and hockey rinks. On the trip up, we had debated if we should put the Corvair in the concours or just display it but finally decided that we might as well have it judged. That way we would get a list of the flaws to fix for the next time. As usual, the results were announced at the closing banquet. In keeping with the Olympic theme, the awards were changed

to bronze, silver, and gold along with going to a point system for each award step. (Up until this convention, concours awards were purely first, second and third places no matter how good the fourth and lower place cars might have been.) They started with announcing the bronze awards. As they worked their way up the points, we kept listening for our name. We thought our car was good enough to deserve at least some recognition. But no, we didn't make a bronze award. But maybe we squeaked into the bottom of the silver awards. But as they worked their way up the points standing, still nothing. Well, there was always next time, and we would have the judging sheets to use as guides to prepare. Then they started the gold awards and there was our name and our car! We'd made gold and the car was promoted to Senior Division on its first time out. To say we were amazed would be a tremendous understatement.



We drove home in something of a daze. We'd started out the restoration with the goal of getting it back to a decent street condition that wouldn't embarrass us when we took it to club events. Now we had a certified Senior Division concours car. We were almost afraid to drive it home again!

To be continued!

Tech Topics

Make your own Throttle Adjuster!

Ken Schiffner

Tired of removing the clip to adjust the carburetors on your Corvair? Fed up with the darn clip cutting your fingers? Or dropping it? Is that what is troubling you, Bunkie?

But wait, there is more! The stock set up requires at least one full turn of the threaded adjustment portion, nothing in between. This new adjuster is like a vernier allowing full adjustment. Fine tuning finally!

You can make your very own throttle adjuster, install it, and leave it in place. The left carburetor is a good choice. With the simple turn of a nut, you can adjust the left carburetor and make balancing the carburetors a "piece of cake". Once the left is set, the right will follow suit.

You will need:

1. A piece of 3/16 unthreaded rod about 1" longer than existing link.
2. Five (5) washers for 10-32 rod and throttle link.
3. One (1) thick washer (at least 1/8" thick) for 10-32 rod. Teflon or nylon washers work best.
4. Square shoulder Rod end (McMaster-Carr* 3796K28, stainless steel, about \$10.00).
5. Spring (McMaster-Carr 1986K3, stainless steel, about \$1.00) or a compression spring that will fit over a 3/16 rod).
6. One (1) or Two (2) Nyloc nuts, 10-32.
7. One (1) optional knurled thumb nut (McMaster-Carr 95150A160, about \$4.00).
8. One (1) die to cut 10-32 threads.
- 9.

*McMaster-Carr, 609-689-3000, nj.sales@mcmaster.com

The photo shows the adjuster.



Basically, the lower clip is used but instead of using a threaded swivel and clip at the top, a smooth bore rod end is used that slides up and down as you adjust. To allow the movements yet hold position once adjusted, a compression spring is used to restrain the rod end. To make it "deluxe", you can even use a knurled adjusting nut (as shown in the photo). To allow movement at the pivot points, washers are used and are adjusted to not bind.

You start with a threaded 3/16 rod (available at hardware stores). The existing link is measured, and the rod is cut about 1" longer than the existing rod. The new actuator rod is then bent to approximate the offset of the existing rod (that offset allows clearance for the tang on the carburetor throttle arm). The lower rod end is bent 90 degrees so that the end will fit into the hole in the lower throttle shaft arm at the carburetor like the original. A little emery cloth rubbing may be needed to allow the rod to fit loosely (see "sloppy" below) into the carburetor throttle shaft arm since the rod and link dimensions may be slightly different.

Using a 10-32 die, the rod is threaded so that the rest of the assembly can be installed. The lower end of the threaded portion is landed by double 10-32 nuts. The length of threading depends upon what spring you use. These nuts allow an adjustment (preload) of the spring so that enough pressure is applied to the rod end so that the rod end can be adjusted but also be able to push down on the carburetor pivot.

A washer above the double nuts allows the spring to be seated. At the top of the spring, a thicker washer is used (so that the rod end slides rather than "racks" and get caught on the threads. (I used a Teflon washer that I happen to have had). Above the thick washer is the rod end. Above that is either another washer and the knurled nut or a washer and Nyloc type nut.

The threaded portion of the rod end gets a washer, the throttle actuator arm, another washer and another Nyloc nut. You leave that connection "sloppy" so that everything moves smoothly.

To adjust, just turn the knurled nut (or Nyloc nut) in or out. If you use the knurled nut, after adjustment the nut is secured with the additional Nyloc nut.

No more upper clip. Fine tuning of balance. Full throttle is maintained even if the right carburetor "lands" full open before the left carburetor does (since the spring compensates).

Borrowed from the May edition of the Rocky Mountain Corvair *The Denvair News*.

If we have a tech session on balancing and synchronizing carburetors as Bob Hall proposes, we could try making and installing one of these links. Let me know if you are interested and I'll try to acquire the necessary parts – Jim Simpson, Editor.

A Report from Our Southern Member

Rick Sanford, our reporter from Myrtle Beach, SC, attended the Corvair Springfest in Helen, GA. Two things affected the show – forecast bad weather for Saturday forced them to push all the outdoor and moving events into Friday and attendance that was about one half of normal. That forced the Rally to overlap with the Car Show, which in turn overlapped with the People's Choice Car Show. They did manage to get an autocross in as well; the excitement there was a Corv-8 whose driver got a bit over-enthusiastic and managed to spin into the fence. No injuries and the car's owner agreed to pay for the damage to the fence.

Rick and his wife Brenda chose to forgo the official rally (apparently there had been 37 people signed up but only 5 teams ran) and show their car in the People's Choice event. They did run the rally course in the rain on Saturday and thought it covered some great roads with fantastic views.

Indoor events on Saturday included a great Tech Session during which three speakers covered turbochargers, superchargers and other enhanced performance upgrades including electronic fuel injection (EFI). Rick found it highly informative.

Apparently, there were some very well-turned-out cars there because Rick's excellent Corsa turbo took third in class; that speaks volumes about how good the competition was.

Overall, Rick and Brenda thought it was great to be back with Corvair people again. They noted that relatively few people were masked; Georgia doesn't have a mask mandate.



Best of Show

‘Vair Vendor

For Sale: Miscellaneous Parts: EM bumper brackets (8 of 10, not bent or otherwise damaged, some surface rust, 11 bumper bolts included, \$10); **LM brake shoes** (Clark's, full set front and rear, used for less than 50 miles, \$38); **'66 single brake master cylinder** (Clark's, used for 4 years w/o any problems, \$30); **'62-'63 single master brake cylinder for metallic brakes** (Delco part #5464275, nearly new, needs secondary seal, \$35); **Widened LM wheel** (one wheel, 13", widened to 7", stock 5-bolt pattern, \$18); **LM rear brake hose** (Clark's, new, 2 @ \$10 ea.); **'65 – '69 110 Hp heads** (pair, complete with valve, springs, etc., cast #3878566, not used since last refurbishment, \$250/pr); **EM dipstick boots** (2 @ \$3 ea.). Shipping is extra. Contact Bob Walker, bobrstn@gmail.com.

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.