



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLIX, No. 9

September 2021



## The Picture Says It All

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

### September

18 – 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Corvair Day, hosted by the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club. Eastern Museum of Motor Racing, 100 Baltimore Rd., York Springs, PA. (It's on the Latimore Valley Fairgrounds, 314 Latimore Valley Rd, York Springs, PA.) Registration 9 – 12 a.m. Contact Dave Steigauf, 717-898-7927.

18 – 45<sup>th</sup> Edgar Rohr Memorial meet; Bull Run AACA, Manassas Museum, 9101 Prince William St., Manassas, VA. 11 AM to 3 PM. For information and flyer: <http://bullrunaaca.org/>

21 – **Group Corvair Zoom Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. Details will be sent the weekend before.

## October

10 – Memorial for Barbara Torbert. 2 – 5 p.m. American Legion Greenbelt Post 136, Greenbelt, MD. Please let Jim Simpson ([simpsonj@verizon.net](mailto:simpsonj@verizon.net), 240-232-2820) know if you are planning to come. Gus Torbert needs know how many guests to plan for.

16 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. For now, this is a “go”. So, get your registration in while there’s time for you and your car to be listed in the show program. Group Corvair is a sponsoring club, so we get a special spot for Corvairs along with a banner to identify the marque. Check the Rockville City website to either register on-line or to download a registration form: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Antique-Classic-Car-Show>

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

23 – Potomac Day Classic Car Show; 9 – 3, awards at 2:30, 10220 River Road, Potomac, MD. \$20 registration. Contact: [Jennifer@potomacpizza.com](mailto:Jennifer@potomacpizza.com).

## November

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

## July 2022

12 – 16 – CORSA International Convention, Peachtree City, GA. Host hotel is the Crowne Plaza Atlanta SW Peachtree City Hotel and Conference Center. Convention rates are \$119 + taxes; the hotel is taking reservations via IHG reservations at 877-227-6963. Use the Group Name: CORSA and the Group Code: TUS for these rates.

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## From the Oval Garage

**Bob Hall**

Now that Labor Day is behind us, we can look forward to better shade tree mechanic weather, though I am never happy to see another summer fade away. I hope your summer was everything you wanted it to be.

My wife and I drove to Maine at the end of August to visit my late, oldest sister’s family members and to see her memorial on an island outside Tenant’s Harbor. We ate lobster, had some great meals (some without lobster) and had Dorman’s ice cream outside Rockland. We also visited the Farnsworth Museum in Rockland which features American contemporary art, and which also has a large collection of paintings by N.C. Andrew and Jamie Wyeth.

There was a very nice white 1962 Monza convertible by the harbor that we admired with another couple we met who had once owned and loved an early Monza coupe and a 1966 Turbo Corsa coupe that they now wished they had not sold. We spent so much time talking about Corvairs that I completely forgot to take a photo of the 1962 Monza. Does anyone know who owns a 1962 Monza convertible that is licensed in Maine?

Registration continues for the Rockville auto show in October. Please plan to attend even if you won’t be showing a car. It’s been two years since the last one and I’m looking forward to seeing a big group of car people again—even if we’re wearing masks during this continuing time of Covid. Take good care of yourselves.

# Minutes of the August Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

On August 17 three Group Corvair members logged into the Zoom meeting at 7:30. While waiting for other members to join, Bob Walker and Jim Simpson talked about work being done on their cars. Jim gave an update on the paint rehab of his car – still a work in progress. Bob's car doesn't start when the engine is cold and there is a squeak that he suspects might be due to a valve rocker arm. Jim and Bob discussed what could be causes.

As of now, the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show is on for October 16, the third Saturday in October. Several Corvairs have already registered. Our club will need to provide at least two people to work on the field—providing help with registration or helping to park cars. There will be no special display this year.

Jim Simpson provided an update on the reinstatement of the club's corporate status which is moving forward but is still not there. The state couldn't find one of documents we'd already filed so Jim sent them another copy.

Jim receives several newsletters from other clubs. He will make them available electronically to other members who would like to see them. Bob W. asked to be included on the list of recipients.

Byron LaMotte joined the meeting in progress. Jim brought him up to date on the earlier discussions. Byron has been working on his upcoming road rally which will cover a 70-mile route. He said the rally was fully subscribed with 65 cars signed up so far and three or four of them are Corvairs.

There was a discussion on the changing values of older cars. It seems that cars from the 80's are now gaining in value while older cars from the 50's and 60's are losing value.

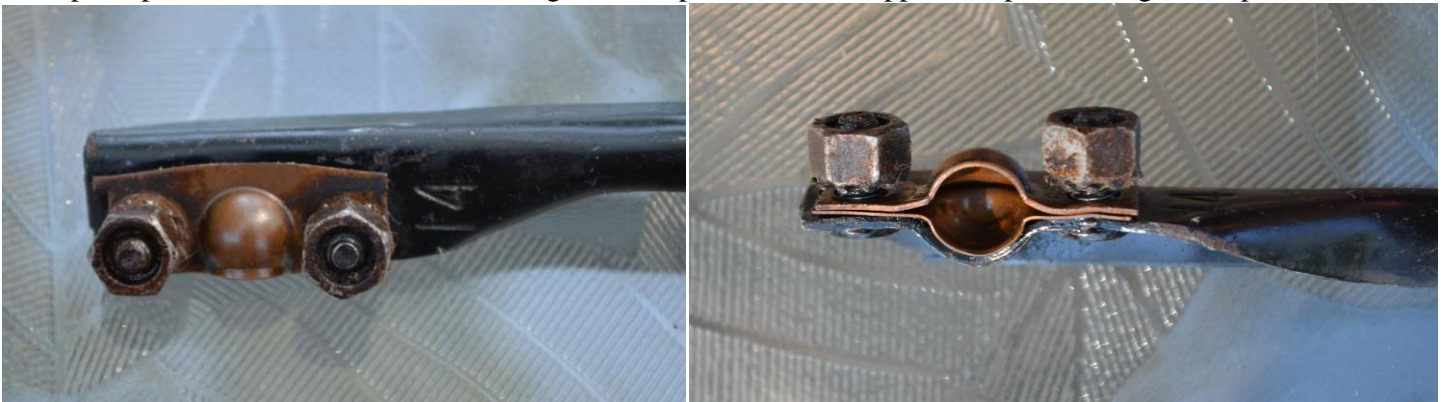
We signed off the Zoom meeting at 8:34.

## Tech Topics

**Windshield Wiper Linkage Lubrication (Bob Hall)** In my experience windshield wiper problems—slow action, sloppy arm movements—have all been caused by the linkage and not the wiper motor. That isn't to say that a motor won't fail as its brushes and bearings will wear out but drag caused by a worn or binding linkage will shorten a wiper motor's life. Anytime you have wiper problems I'd recommend cleaning and lubing the linkage wear points before you opt to replace the motor. You'll find the wipers move more smoothly and quickly.

Early models, forward control vehicles, and late model cars all used a similar design of a motor driven short link connected to a longer link connecting the two wiper posts but using different parts. The accompanying photos are from a LM.

After checking the manual for access to your car's particular linkage, disconnect the motor drive arm from the linkage (NOT FROM THE WIPER MOTOR) and then remove the linkage and wiper drive posts from the car. Each pivot point consists of a steel ball riding in a two-piece brass or copper stamped bushing. The pivot attached



to the wiper motor is clamped by two nuts while the wiper pivots are secured by rivets. Clean them to remove dirt and old grease. Then add new water-resistant lubricant (I use wheel bearing grease).

Most of the drag in the linkage comes from the wiper posts (swivels). Check each one to be sure it turns smoothly without binding. To lubricate the posts, I hang them upside down (the grooved wiper arm mounting post facing

down) and apply a light oil such as 3 in 1 to the other end of the post nearest the mounting plate. Then I let gravity pull the oil where it needs to go for 15 minutes or so and check that the posts rotate easily and smoothly.

Once everything is cleaned and lubed reassemble and check for proper action.



**Riveted Pivots at Wiper End**



**Wiper Post**

**Another Toy for Your Tool Collection (Jim Simpson)** I'm sure that as a Corvair owner, you are very attentive to tire pressures, not just for your Corvair, but for all your wheeled vehicles. If you own an air compressor, you also know how much more convenient that is than trying to find a service station with "free air" anymore. But it's still something of a chore to fill the tires. Check the tire with a pressure gage (and accidentally bleed off a bit of air), top off with a leaky tire chuck, recheck the tire pressure with the gage, fill some more, recheck the pressure, bleed off a little... Just as the shampoo instructions say, "lather, rinse, repeat". Well, here's a neat invention that makes this so much quicker and easier.

This is an "AstroAi" brand tire inflator gage system. I'm sure there are others on the market, but this is the one I have. You just plug it into your compressor's hose with the standard quick release fitting and clip the other end over the tire's fill stem. If you have the digital version, as I do, it automatically turns on and displays the tire pressure. Squeeze the silver handle to fill the tire, stop and read the gage, then either fill some more or if you overshoot, bleed a little off using the brass bleed button on the side.

This all takes just a few seconds. No more swapping back and forth with gages, filler chucks, leaking air, etc.

This brand comes in at least two versions on Amazon; a digital display as shown in the picture (about \$25) and one with an analog gage (about \$15). The digital gage is advertised as having 1% accuracy with 0.1 psi resolution. It lights up when it turns on and one nice feature is that it uses standard AAA batteries that are easily replaceable. (I had another digital gage that was nearly impossible to replace the batteries.) The analog gage has a "glow dial" and is advertised as being 2-3% accurate with +/- 1 psi resolution.

The company's web site <https://www.astroai.com/promotion> shows several variations available – different ranges (100 psi, 250 psi), different style handles, rotatable dials, and accessory kits (valve caps, nozzles, motorcycle right angle adapters, bicycle Presta valve adapters, etc.). So, shop around and pick the one you need. I really do like the one I bought!



# YS-121 Moves On

Dave Edsinger

The cat may be out of the bag by now but thought I should make it official. I recently sold YS -121. I purchased the car shortly after graduating High School in 1974, and that was what got me interested in Corvairs as a competition car. Restored it, autocrossed it, took my SCCA drivers' school in it back in 1976, sold it, bought it back, autocrossed it again, and finally stored it for 35 yrs. The car has race history back to 1966 and is one of two Corvairs remaining that ran in the SCCA trans am series back in 1966.

I had mixed emotions with letting it go, but how many Corvair race cars should one person have? That being said, I can say that I couldn't be happier with its new home. I am confident that Jeff Moore of Automobile Archeologists will be the right fit for the car, not only with the restoration, but bringing it back to the racetrack where it should be.

## Bob Walker Has Been Busy

I have been finishing the second major refurb of the Corsa, the car having been on jack stands for over a year. I finished overhauling the brake lines and added a dual master cylinder (Clark's kit), did a complete overhaul of the front suspension including powder coating, replaced the main fuel line, worked on a slightly bent shifter, and removed the drivetrain for major work on all components.



**Dual Brake Master Cylinder**



**Old Engine on Dave Watson Cradle**

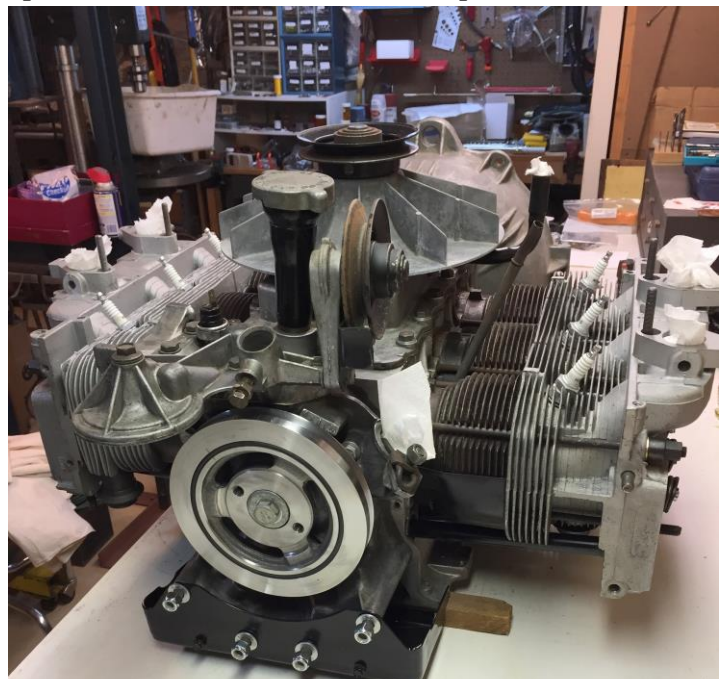
The engine has been replaced by newly rebuilt 140 engine and the differential and transmission rebuilt.

The rebuilt engine replaces a used and mostly original Chevy OEM engine out of a 1966 Monza that has maybe 50 – 60k miles on it and has been in the car since the late 1970's.

The rebuilt engine started with an engine "kit" purchased from a friend who had just sold his Corsa 140. The "kit" included the bottom end parts collected and the machine shop work done on the crank and

cylinders and the cylinder heads refurbished by a local machine shop. I just needed a few parts to complete the package like cam, cam gear, lifters, rings, bearings, and gaskets. I purchased a 270-degree camshaft with failsafe gear (Clark's), used a set of new, high performance GM lifters I bought in the 70's, rings were cast iron from Clark's and had most of the rest 'in stock'.

The heads were another matter entirely. They were supposed to be fully re-furbished by a local machine shop that "had experience with Corvair heads". I found the head was not milled correctly so the head gaskets would not be fully compressed – potential blown head gaskets! So, I had the heads overhauled again. Deep valve seats were installed, numerous other problems were found and corrected. Now I have a set of heads I can use (always double check the machine shop work where practical).



**New Engine**

The engine was assembled in my basement shop, and with the help of several NVCC members, it was moved to the garage and prepared for installation.

The clutch was refreshed with the old, bolted flywheel which had the inertia plate removed, and an NOS HD Turbo pressure plate and a Clark's standard clutch disk. I was going to use a Clark's bolted flywheel I just purchased, but the flywheel appears to be slightly out of balance and I didn't have time to get it rebalanced.

While the drivetrain was out to install the newly rebuilt engine (140+), the transmission and differential were rebuilt to fix a leak in the differential and get a needed overhaul after 150k miles. Drivetrain removal and re-installation was greatly assisted by a Dave Watson engine cradle and two different Harbor Freight transmission jacks (due to multiple jack failures).

The front suspension overhaul went well. The cross-member and the other major components were removed more easily than expected. The suspension parts (and engine shrouds) went to Right-A-Way Powder Coating of Middleton, MD to be nicely powder-coated. The control arms were swapped for Clark's rebuilt parts to reduce my labor.

With the front suspension removed, the gas tank was removed, cleaned, painted, and reinstalled with new hoses. The tank looks good for being the original tank in the car.



I just have to align the suspension and we're ready to put some miles on the car to break in the engine. (Of course, I still have to do about a dozen last minute jobs that usually delay "completion".)



**Ready to put some "break-in" miles on it.**

More to follow!

## From Other Newsletters

(Mid Continent Corvair Association, *The Flat Six Journal*, Sep 2021) Bob Welch wrote about decoding the date codes on Corvair alternators. So, if you are going for that absolutely “numbers-matching” car, here it is in edited form:

Each alternator has the part number and amperage stamped on the first line. Below that is a date code, followed by the note “12v NEG”. (That last is warning just in case you were thinking of trying to install it on a 6-volt, positive ground car.)

A typical date code looks like this: 4 J21. To interpret it, the first number is the year which can range from 1964 to 1969. The letter is the month code, starting with “A” for January, “B” for February, etc. Then the last two numbers are the day of the month. So, 4 J21 translates to 1964, September 21<sup>st</sup>.

(Detroit Area Corvair Club, *The Aircooler*, Sep 2021) Kenton Vellner reported on rebuilding the rear suspension on his late-model car. A previous owner had installed nylon bushings in both ends of the lower control struts. As many others have found, they are too stiff and cracked one of the brackets at the differential end.

His solution was to use PMT Fabrication’s replacement struts. They use a “Poly/Graphite” bushing at one end and a spherical Heim joint at the other. The Poly/Graphite bushing gives noise isolation and give and coupled with a Heim joint they very precisely locate the rear wheels. They are adjustable in length so fine-tuning rear alignment is easy. Plus, they are much easier to install than the original strut rods. Check the web site <https://pmtfabrication.com/product/65-69-corvair-yenko-stinger-corsa-rear-strut-rods> and you’ll see they have two styles, one with the offset end as the original struts use, the other straight. I would assume you would use the straight ones if you also installed a Crown differential bracket. They are pricey, but not much more than Clark’s rebuilt stock struts.

(Prairie Capital Corvair Association, *The Flat Six*, Sep 2021) Eva “Corvair Lady” McGuire has a two-page article on the significant dates in the timeline of the Corvair. It’s too long to reproduce here, but you can access their newsletter at: <http://www.corvair.org/chapters/chapter627/newsltr/Sep21PCC.pdf>

(San Francisco Bay Area, *Spyder Web*, April 2021) If you have been tracking the prices on Corvair Greenbriers, Rampsides, and Loadsides, you’ll know why you should have it securely stored. J. C. Salazar out in S.F. reported that his white with red stripe ’65 Greenbrier was stolen from his driveway.

Also in that issue, Josh Deitcher gave a testimonial to Lucas Octane Booster. He found it made a real difference in his 110 hp engine. After noticing some ping on steeper hills and checking all the usual suspects – ignition timing and dwell, vacuum advance, plugs and wires, and various hoses – a friend recommended trying Lucas Octane Booster. He says he can’t believe it’s the same car after using it. (About \$8/bottle at your favorite parts store.)

(Mid-Continent Corvair Association, *The Flat Six Journal*, Feb 2021) Mike Dawson wrote about a tech session they had on fuel pumps. He reported on the currently available mechanical and electrical pumps and then gave some suggestions on installing electric pumps. Regarding the mechanical pumps, he said **NOT** to buy the USMotorWorks pumps – no mounting bolt hole, too high pressure. If you want to read the article, let me know and I’ll forward a copy of their newsletter. I believe they have a site on Facebook; you might find it there as well.

(Lehigh Valley Corvair Club, *the fifth wheel*, Aug 2021) Bob King reported on the same problem with USMotorWorks fuel pumps, (USMP09970) – no locating hole. Apparently the casting has enough “meat” for one to be drilled, but the manufacture apparently didn’t know that it was necessary.

(Heart of America Corvair Owners Association, *VairCor*, Aug 2021) In another article by Mike Dawson, he writes about the value of making some guide pins to help in assembling Corvair engines and drive trains. The two sizes he recommends use 1/4-20, 5/16-18, and 3/8-16 threaded rod or long shank bolts. (If using bolts, cut off the hex head.) Cut several pieces to lengths of your choosing – 2 or 3 inches seem most useful – and then cut screwdriver slots in one end. Use them wherever you need to locate a gasket or align two parts.

(Central Virginia Corvair Club, *VAIRifiable News*, Mar 2021) There was a reprint of an article from the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America’s magazine *Generator & Distributor* Dec 2014 issue by Cal Clark (Clark’s Corvair Parts) that described the early history of Corvair parts and service and how he got into the parts business. It’s a good read but too long to include here. Let me know if you’d like me to send you a copy via email.



**Brian Whitehead's Greenbrier. He plans to show it at the upcoming Central PA Corvair Day, September 18**