



# Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LI, No. 1

January 2023



*On the Twelfth Day of Christmas, My True Love Gave to Me...*

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

### January

- 14—**Group Corvair Social Meeting.** The uptick in Covid-19 cases, along with the new variants, suggest we should postpone our next face-to-face meeting until at least February. Check next month's newsletter!
- 17 – **Group Corvair Zoom Meeting.** This will be our “regular” meeting for the month with a focus on club business, but also to allow people who can't make the dinner meeting a chance to chat with other Group Corvair members from the comfort of their homes. 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 17 January. Look for the Zoom link information on the preceding Sunday in your e-mail.

### February

- 21 -- **Group Corvair Zoom Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. Zoom link details will be sent out the weekend before; check your email.

## TBD – Group Corvair Social Meeting.

### October

14 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. Rockville Civic Center Park, 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. All cars must be on the field by 11 a.m. – no exceptions! Due to the popularity of the show, you **MUST** pre-register to show your car. There will be **NO DAY OF SHOW** registration. (Registration will open on July 1 on the Rockville city website.)

### Continuing Events

Every Sunday – Annapolis Cars & Coffee, Annapolis City Dock, 7:30 a.m. to noon. All makes and models welcome.

Every Sunday – “Church of the Holy Donut” Cars & Coffee, Burtonsville Town Square, 15662 Old Columbia Rd., Burtonsville, MD, 7:30 a.m. until the last car leaves.

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays – Vienna Cars & Coffee, Cedar Park Shopping Center, Vienna, VA, 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

## GROUP CORVAIR 2023 OFFICERS and Points of Contact

### President: Bob Hall

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### Vice President: (Vacant)

### Secretary: Marolyn Simpson

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## Dues!

Yes, it's that time of year again and Group Corvair is collecting dues once more. During the December business meeting, we discussed membership and dues and made two decisions. First, we would collect dues this year although we are reducing them a bit to \$10.00. (We'd suspended dues during the pandemic.) Second, we are going to scrub the membership list. We've been carrying a number of former members for quite some time while never seeing them at any meetings or them having paid dues. The dues are nominal, but they do say that you are interested in the club and its activities.

**So, pay your dues!** Send a check (\$10.00) made out to Group Corvair to: Jim Simpson, 3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035. If we don't hear from you, don't be surprised when you don't receive the newsletter.

## From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

**Happy New Year!** We've got a whole new year ahead of us so let's think about how to get together to celebrate our Corvairs. We now have CORSA's insurance requirements to follow to ensure Group Corvair and event hosts have coverage so let us know what you would like to do—from hosting a tech session to ideas for a social get together.

The new year also means it is dues time so please send in your \$10.00 (we lowered the dues from \$12.00 at our last meeting) if you haven't already done so. There won't be an abrupt cutoff of newsletters as we didn't charge dues in 2022, but we need to transition to catering to active, dues payment members in the coming months.

We are looking for input from club members as we plan a club website. Based on preliminary discussions we want to have as a minimum tabbed access to our newsletters, a club calendar, and frequently updated photos of our

Corvairs. Are there any car club websites that you use that have features that could enhance a Group Corvair website? Any club member with web experience is welcome to head up this project.

Our dinner social meeting in Greenbelt was a great success with our wives and partners and was a nice complement to our well attended December Zoom meeting—see Marolyn’s minutes below. We will try to do more dual meetings this year to keep as many members as possible involved.

“See” all of you at the next Zoom meeting.

## **Minutes of the December Virtual Meeting**

**Marolyn Simpson**

On December 20 Group Corvair held a Zoom meeting beginning at 7:30 pm in which eight members participated. There was general conversation while we were waiting for everyone to get logged on which was mostly about cars – Porsches, VW Karmann-Ghias, as well as Corvairs.

Bob Hall called the meeting to order at 7:50 pm. He would like to set up a web site, probably through Corsa to get information about our club to others. We discussed the issue of maintaining the site.

Since the new year is coming up, there was a discussion on dues. The club does not have a lot of expenses except for some postage, paper, and ink for several newsletters, and for filing the annual chapter report. A proposal for \$10 annual due (instead of \$12) was approved for 2023.

There was a suggestion that now that Covid is not as much of an issue, we should get back to more club activities such as dinner meetings, tech sessions, and tours.

By tradition, the club holds its election of officers for the coming year at the December meeting. The result of the election was to keep the same officers (minus a vice president) for 2023.

In keeping with the increased social activities idea, it was suggested that we meet next month for a social meeting on Saturday, January 14 at Beijing of Greenbelt. Several members who live a distance from Greenbelt preferred the weekend for an in-person gathering instead of a weeknight because of rush hour traffic problems.

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm. A general discussion continued with sign-off at 9:00 pm.

## **Holiday In-Person Dinner**

**Marolyn Simpson**

December 17 was the date for the first in-person gathering of Group Corvair members in nearly three years due to the Covid pandemic. And it was for a holiday dinner celebration. This was separate from our business meeting on the third Tuesday of the month; this time it was just for fun. We met at the Beijing of Greenbelt restaurant, which everyone agreed was our favorite meeting place. The nine attendees shared four different entrees which included beef, chicken, and shrimp. Those dishes plus the rice served with them proved to be more than enough food and no one went away hungry.

The restaurant has new operating hours, closing at 8:00 pm. To give us time to catch up on what others have been doing recently, we met at 6:00 pm. There was no lack of conversation, and we even included some Corvair topics. Time passed quickly and all too soon it was closing time. We had been so involved in conversation that we forgot to take a picture of the group! I’m sure it would have been a great picture.

## **Here and There**

**What might have been.** In the December 2022 issue of the Central Virginia Corvair Club *VAIRifiable News*, there’s an update to an article written by Dave Newell that was originally published in his 1979 book *The (in)COMPLETE CORVAIR STORY* on RPO 489. (For those of you who aren’t versed in Chevrolet lingo, “RPO” means “Regular Production Option” and would have been an option you could select when you ordered a new car.)

When the Sebring Spyder Coupe and Sebring Sylder Roadster concept cars were unveiled, they both featured instrument clusters adapted from the ’62 Spyder. They were so popular with the show crowds that Chevrolet planned to make a similar design available as an option for the regular Monza. While based upon the Spyder dash,



it was modified to swap an oil pressure gage for the no longer useful manifold pressure gage. This was to be RPO 489. There was to be a second modification for Monzas with Powerglide transmissions. In those installations, in addition to the Powerglide shifter, they would substitute an electric clock for the tachometer.

The project went so far as to have pages in the '62 Corvair assembly manual, but apparently the marketing types at Chevrolet killed the option in December 1961. Dave speculates that this was probably due to a concern that if they offered a Monza with the Spyder dash, it would cut into the sales of the full-up turbocharged Spyder.

Dave concludes the article with a note that when the Corvair Corsa model was discontinued after the '66 model year, there was a similar plan to offer a modified Corsa instrument panel option for the '67 Monzas. But, once again, it was cancelled.

**Oil Pressure Switch Relocation.** Also, from the *VAIRifiable News*, but in their January 2023 edition, Wade Lanning has a good article on the relocation of the oil pressure switch from the side of the engine block (1960 – late 1961) to the oil filter adapter for all subsequent years. This, conveniently, would have made the original port on the side of the block available for the oil pressure sender for RPO 489! Wade's article has more, including the Technical Service Bulletin (TSB 801) that gives the details on how to make the change.

(Both of these Central Virginia Corvair Club newsletters are available on request. Just send me (Jim Simpson) a note.)

**For the Inner Child:** How about a new Yenka Stinger? Well, perhaps not exactly a full-size one. That perennial toy maker "Hot Wheels" has come out with a new collection based upon Jay Leno's personal car collection. Included is a replica of Jay Leno's Yenka Stinger YS-54. Here's a photo of the package:

And if the photo isn't enough, here's a link to a YouTube video so you can admire it from all 360 degrees!

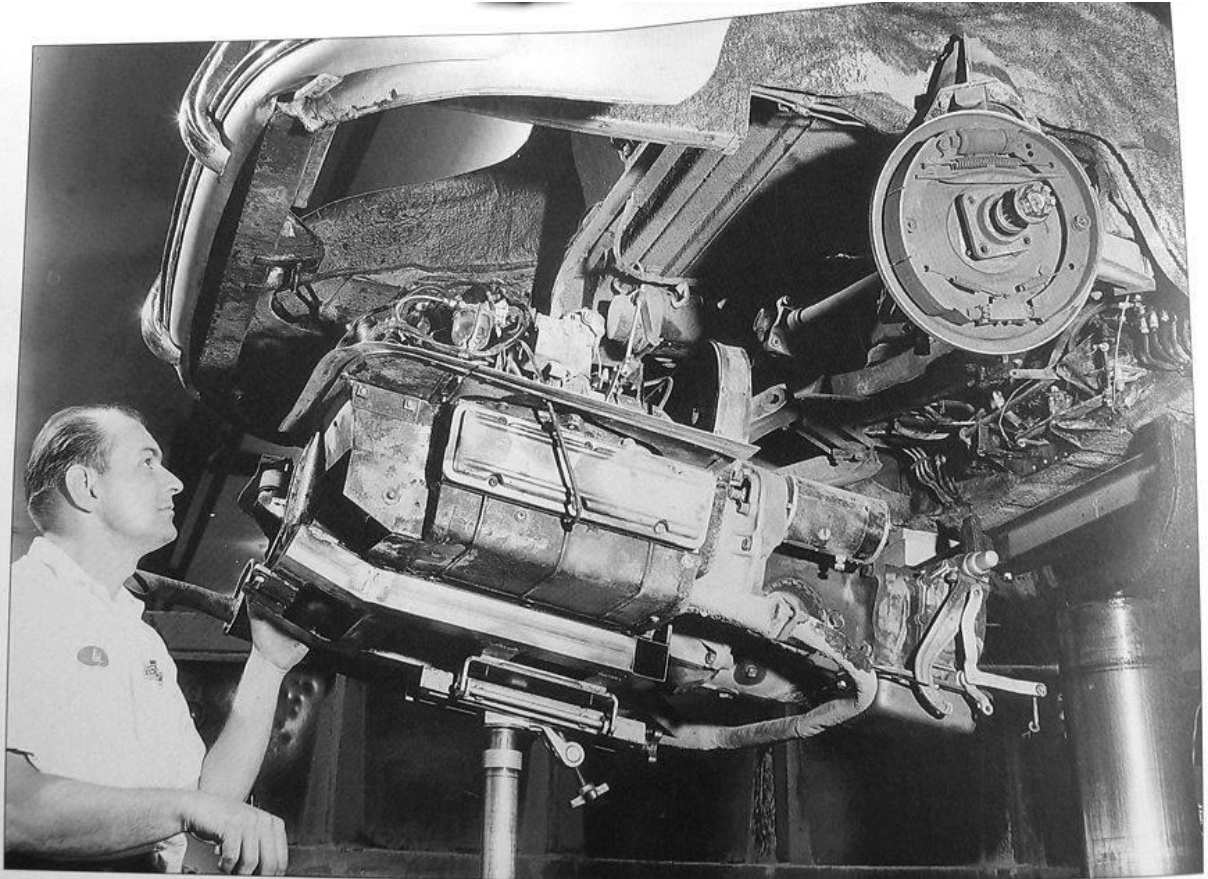
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aoLz6NF7Ho>

**Now for Something a Little Different.** Bob Lewis sent me these two pictures. It is amazing what people with some time (and money) on their hands can do:





**Corvair Porsche Mule.** I've read in many places about the early development of the Corvair. Most references say something about using a Porsche 356 for the early engine and rear suspension testing but then quickly move to the Holden-badged test car(s). Jerry Yates turned up this photo of the Porsche mule:



Ed, a Chevrolet technician, gently lowered this prototype Corvair flat-six from the engine bay of the Porsche 356 in which it made its first trips on the road (as mentioned by Ed Cole). Also installed in the Porsche was an early version of the Corvair's trailing-arm rear suspension, sprung by coils instead of the torsion bars used in the Porsche. This installation made use of a manual transmission.

14

From: *CORVAIR by CHEVROLET, Experimental & Production Cars 1957 – 1969*,  
Ludvigsen Library Series, copyright 2001.

**Chevrolet's First Corvair.** Our beloved rear, air-cooled engine beauties were not, in fact the first cars that Chevrolet applied the name "Corvair" to. The first use was for this 1954 Corvette Corvair concept car. None of the originals still exist, but one enthusiast has recreated it. (Contributed by Bob Winokur.)

**And for What It's Worth.** Here's a link to an interesting summary of the Corvair: You may not agree with all of it.  
<https://www.hotcars.com/chevrolet-corvair-facts/>



(My apologies to whoever sent this to me. Unfortunately, I lost your email.)



## Tech Tip

Jim Simpson

**Fuel Pump Rebuilding:** Once upon a time, you could buy a rebuild kit for the Corvair mechanical fuel pump. Those days have long gone. And of course, AC has quit building new ones and the after-market ones have proven to be rather unreliable. So, what are the alternatives?

Many people have gone to electric fuel pumps. If nothing else, they are pretty reliable. But they do require a moderate amount of work to install

There is another alternative. One of our fellow Corvair owners, Ralph Polachek down in Leesburg, used Arthur Gould Rebuilders in Holden, MA to rebuild his fuel pump. According to the website, they use only “modern U.S. made materials” and are fully compatible with 10% ethanol gasoline. Here’s the website:

<http://www.arthurgouldrebuilders.com/index.html> .

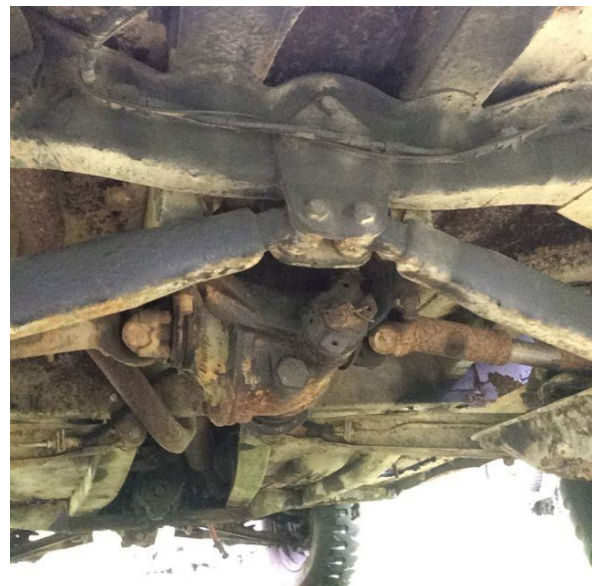
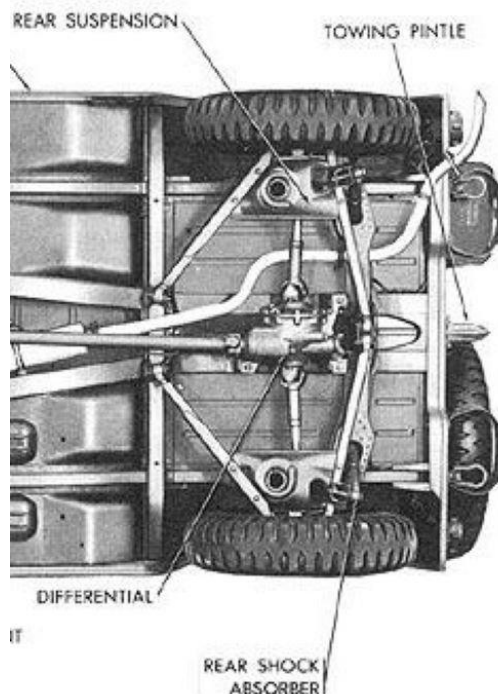
The price is not cheap; Mr. Polachek said his rebuild cost \$148 with shipping. But that may well be worth it to have a “new” reliable fuel pump with all the correct AC markings.

## M151 Update

Bob Hall

Allan Lacki responded to my M151 article (December 2022 Group Corvair Newsletter) to point out (correctly) that the drawing (supposedly) of an M151A2 Final Design rear suspension (I took from a M151 web site) was similar to those of other, pricier, semi-trailing arm suspensions from BMW, Mercedes etc. I resubmerged myself in M151 info and found this actual photo of the improved A2 suspension showing the semi-trailing arms and the 2 slip joint half shafts (which had a universal joint at each end).

I wrote the article after reading a couple of comments in an M151 forum online that said the ORIGINAL M151 suspension was like the (early) Corvair—which it wasn’t as the two photos to the right show.



# Vair Vendor

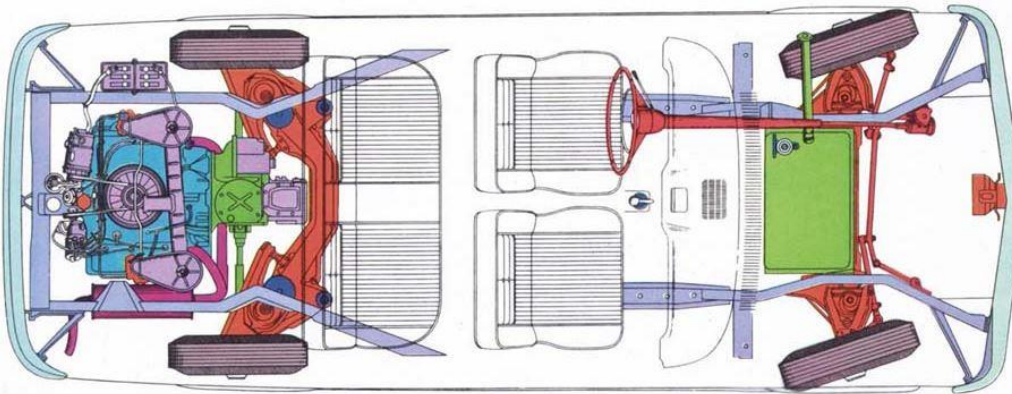
**Wanted:** Complete 140 hp Powerglide transmission. Usually, the governor is marked with orange paint or a pink stripe. Contact: Mike Coale, (443) 994-2559

**For Sale:** Group Corvair has just acquired a bunch of NOS Group Corvair paraphernalia – sweatshirts, tee-shirts, some mugs and more. These all date back to the last century but are in great condition. I still need to make a full inventory but give me a call (240-232-2820) or email (simpsonj@verizon.net) if you think you need to add to your club collection.

**For Sale:** Multi-speed drill press, Rockwell/Delta heavy duty bench-top drill press, S/N: BR 3650, belt drive, moveable head and table, heavy duty, no play in shaft. Comes with 3 phase motor that needs replacement. Make Offer.

Porta-power type hydraulic frame-body jack, complete, pump needs seals. Make Offer.  
Local pickup only. Contact Bob Walker at [bobrstn@gmail.com](mailto:bobrstn@gmail.com).

## MECHANICAL AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION



**CORVAIR—** Check these basic facts about Corvair. **Handling and traction.** Rear engine design puts more of Corvair's weight over the rear wheels, offers superior traction on all surfaces. **Ride and stability.** Unsurpassed 4-wheel fully independent suspension teams big coil spring and double-acting shock absorber at each wheel for a sure, steady ride. **Air-cooled aluminum rear engine economy** from Corvair's proved 145-cubic-inch valve-in-head opposed 6-cylinder engine. No antifreeze costs or seasonal cooling system maintenance. Quick warm-ups. Positive-shift starter gives fast starts. **Transaxle unit** combines transmission and final drive gears in compact unit with differential between engine and transmission; like suspension members, it's fully insulated by rubber from the body to screen out tiring noise and vibration. **Dimensions—Corvair Sedan, Club Coupe and Convertible:** Wheelbase, 108"; front and rear tread, 54.5"; length, 180.0"; width, 67.0"; height (loaded), 51.5". **Greenbrier:** Wheelbase, 95"; front and rear tread, 58"; length, 179.7"; width, 70.0"; height (loaded), 68.5".

### KEY ENGINEERING VIRTUES IN THE '63 CORVAIR

**Monostrut Body by Fisher.** For all Corvair Sedans, Coupes and Convertible. Single-unit body-frame structure that's fully sealed and insulated. Extra-heavy pillars and roof rails, reinforced floor and double-walled front structure incorporating high-level ventilation. Magic-Mirror finish in 15 solid colors, 11 two-tones (except Monza). **Quadri-Flex 4-Wheel Independent Suspension.** Features steering knuckle spherical joints for easy steering and long life. Rear control arms are rubber-pivoted and locate swing axles. Rear wheel bearings are permanently lubricated. **14-gallon front-mounted fuel tank.** (Greenbrier: 18.5 gals.) Protected by massive front suspension structure. Large capacity extends cruising range. **Front luggage compartment.** In all Corvair Sedans, Coupes and Convertible. Spacious 12.6 cubic feet stows most every family item. **Passenger roominess.** Rear engine design allows a virtually flat floor for generous foot room for middle passengers. Front seats are foam cushioned (as are all seats in Greenbrier) and front bucket seats in Monzas allow individual adjustment. **Instrument panel.** With speedometer, odometer, fuel gauge, "temp-press" and "gen-fan" warning lights, headlight and interior light switches, wiper switch and ignition-starter key lock. Selector lever and indicator with Corvair Powerglide\*. **Heater and Defroster.** Standard equipment on all models except Greenbrier. Forced-air design has six outlets for even air distribution. (Models can be ordered without heater.)

\*Optional at extra cost.

### CORVAIR POWER TEAMS FOR 1963

All engines have 3.438" bore x 2.66" stroke for 145-cu.-in. displacement.	Comp. Ratio	Trans- mission	Standard Axle Ratio	Optional Ratios*
80-hp Turbo-Air 145	8.0:1	3-Speed 4-Speed* Powerglide*	3.27:1 3.27:1 3.27:1	3.55:1, 3.89:1 3.55:1, 3.89:1 3.55:1, 3.89:1
84-hp Turbo-Air 145 (Monza models with Powerglide)	9.0:1	Powerglide*	3.27:1	3.55:1, 3.89:1
102-hp Turbo-Air 145*	9.0:1	3-Speed 4-Speed* Powerglide*	3.27:1 3.08:1 3.55:1	3.55:1, 3.89:1 3.27:1, 3.55:1, 3.89:1
150-hp Turbocharged 145 (Spyder-equipped* Monza Convertible and Coupe only)	8.0:1	3-Speed 4-Speed*	3.55:1 3.55:1	—

## Corvair Ranch

1079 Bon-Ox Road  
Gettysburg, PA 17325  
717-625-2805



# OUR 50TH ANNIV -2023

Thanks to the support of 1,000's of Corvair owners over the last 50 years we continue to grow and reproduce more parts every year. We respect your trust and always put our customers first. We would also like to thank our 24 employees, 10 have been with us over 20 years and some as long as 46! Have a great year and enjoy our monthly sales and specials all year-Joan & Cal Clark

**SPECIAL SALES EVERY MONTH-**each month we'll send an email (if you have signed up) and also list in a special sale section on our Home page [www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com)

**FREE 50th MEMENTO gifts with your first order in 2023**

**FREE CATALOG WITH AN ORDER - if you have not received a free 2019-2025 catalog yet, just ask for one.**

**LIST YOUR CORVAIR FOR SALE- NO CHARGE-** sell your Corvair or a spare you just don't have time for! For all of 2023 we will list it on our website at **NO CHARGE-** check the website for details (Corvairs For Sale)

**CLARK CAR SHOW & PARTS SALES-** See our 2023 supplement or website for more details. We expect around 130 cars, and will offer tours of our buildings including the Upholstery Dept. Cal will be giving an old fashion "slide show" showing the building of our complex and history. Parts on sale! **SEPT 16, 2023 -rain or shine**

**2023 SUPPLEMENT- On our website or as a hard copy -many new repros & updates.**

**INTERNATIONAL CORSA CONVENTION-Wisconsin-** We will be there Tues, Wed & Thurs with lots of recent repros on display. Stop by and say hello. Convention dates June 19- June 24

**CATALOG- over 450 pages, free with an order, \$8 postpaid in USA**

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