

# niagara frontier



## corvair

## club

VOLUME 51, NUMBER 3

March, 2023

Formed By And For Those Who Still Appreciate The CORVAIR Automobile

\*\*\* Celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1973 - 2023 \*\*\*



Bob Larivee's show stopper "STILETTO" — Corvair powered remote controlled "car of tomorrow" was designed by Gene Baker and built by Ron Gerstner

Recently I ran across a mention on the Corvair Center Forum about a mid 60's custom show car I had never heard of before called "The Stiletto". Not only was it Corvair powered, but it was also built in Williamsville, NY by Ron Gerstner. I thought a bit more internet research was in order, what I discovered is included as well as more pictures in this newsletter. Any of you reading this, if you have any more info, please contact me so I can follow up.....Gary

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

**Club Membership - \$10.00 per year for e-mail newsletter. Dues may be paid at monthly meeting or by mailing to:**

Dick Dahmer 53 Melberry Trail, Orchard Park, NY 14127 Membership year runs from July 1 to June 30.

-----Membership APPLICATION-----

### NIAGARA FRONTIER CORVAIR CLUB

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CORSA Member? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NIAGARA FRONTIER CORVAIR CLUB

Niagara Frontier Corvair Club  
C/O Gary Swiatowy  
7838 Chestnut Ridge Road,  
Gasport, NY 14067

-----ESTABLISHED 1973-----

#### A Chartered Chapter of the Corvair Society of America

|                |                               |                    |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| President      | Pat Murphy                    | (716) 861-8749     |
| Vice President | Gary Swiatowy                 | (716) 716-439-5194 |
| Secretary      | John Dawley/volunteer fill in | (716) 832-8551     |
| Treasurer      | Dick Dahmer                   | (716) 480-7713     |
| Membership     | Dick Dahmer                   | (716) 480-7713     |

Club Membership - \$10.00 per year e-mail newsletter, . Dues may be paid at monthly meeting or by mailing: to the Club address above .  
Membership year runs from July 1 to June 30.

### NFCC Events and more!

## NFCC MEETING SCHEDULE

NFCC Meeting Wednesday Mar, 22 at 6:00 PM at the East Aurora Moose Lodge, Please use the second East Aurora exit marked 20A on the 400 Expressway ( Not the Maple Street Exit). Turn right at the bottom of the exit ramp and the Moose Lodge will be on the left within 1000 yards. Please park in the large lot and enter at the rear. I will have someone watching for you and opening the door. If you want to eat please get there by 5:30. (Roast Beef and Fish sandwiches.)

In case you don't know. There are newsletter options. Your membership includes our monthly NFCC newsletter, but you also have the option to receive several other clubs newsletters as well. This could be 10 or more additional Corvair club newsletters from across the country, filled with cars for sale, tech tips and more. Most of you already receive

the additional newsletters, If you are not receiving them, and want them you have to let me know by e-mail, If you are receiving them and do not want them, you have to let me know that as well by e-mail. [gswiatowy@rochester.rr.com](mailto:gswiatowy@rochester.rr.com)

## CLARK'S CORVAIR PARTS OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY -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

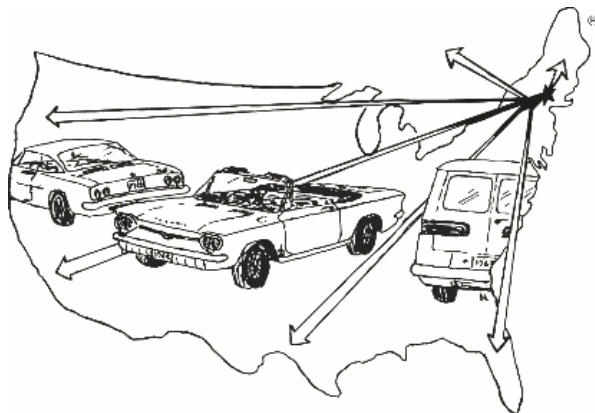
2023 SUPPLEMENT- On our website or as a hard  
copy -many new repros & updates.

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

Clark's Corvair Parts  
400 Mohawk Trail  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370  
413-625-9776

[www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com)



More on the Stiletto



#### THE STILLETTO

Here is a radical new concept in custom car design which combines the talents of show producer Bob Larivee, model manufacturer George Toteff, designer Gene Baker, and builder Ron Gerstner. Credit for the concept goes to imaginative Detroit industrial designer Gene Baker, who terms the lines of the car as "organic styling", a marriage of multiple reverse radiuses and compound curves designed as a single unit.

The STILLETTO is owned by the Show Car Division of Promotions Inc. and was built for its President, Bob Larivee, to fulfill his need of a really top-flight feature car for touring the International Championship Auto Shows.

In an initial application to custom cars, development stages were purposely paralleled to techniques of the auto industry and co-ordinated through the facilities of Model Products Corp. A 1/10th scale clay buck was produced from Baker's original sketches. Then, a 1/10th scale cast was made and a fiberglass model pulled. Full size drawings of the car's exterior were laid out prior to actual work on the car, itself.

All decisions pertaining to construction of the body, chassis, and interior components remained the responsibility of Ron Gerstner, who had been chosen to build the STILLETTO in his Buffalo, N. Y., shop. Utilizing Corvair rear suspension and cross member, Ron fabricated frame rails of 3 1/2" x 2" rectangular tubing. Referring to full scale drawings, Ron formed a 20-gauge sheet metal body for the car over a lightweight tubular birdcage framework. Additional bulkheads insure proper body contour.

To conserve both weight and space, a rear-mounted Corvair engine and trans were picked as the most practical and the 100" Corvair wheelbase retained. Maximum height of the car was set at 45" with a target weight of 2,500 lbs. The entire center section of the car, including sculptured bubble, raise 3", then swing back electrohydraulically to allow entry. The unique front suspension is hand-made and rides on 10" Mini Minor rims which are controlled by a Buick steering box.

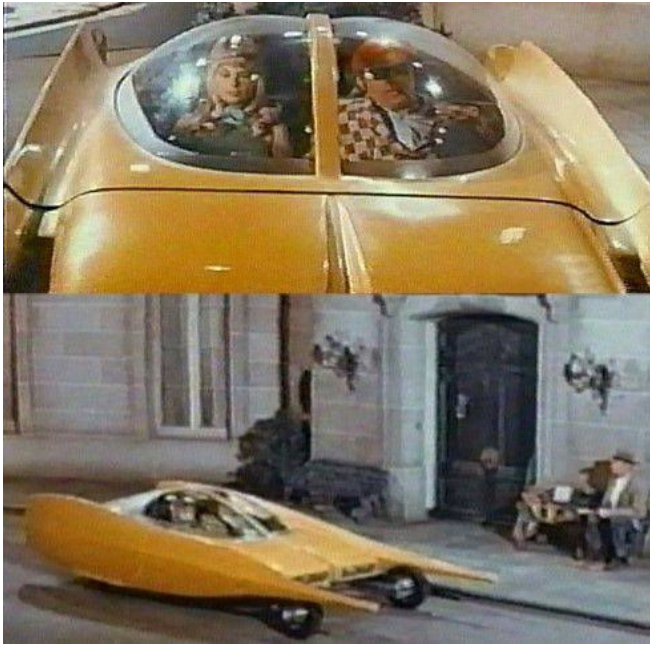
Rich interior theme incorporates black naugahyde, walnut panel, and burnished aluminum. S-W instruments are suspended. Gerstner's final touch includes vivid, multi-coat candy green paint.

Judging from its enthusiastic reception, the STILLETTO is destined to become one of the most famous of all feature cars. Model Products Corp. will produce it in model kit form.

Photo by Ron Freeman

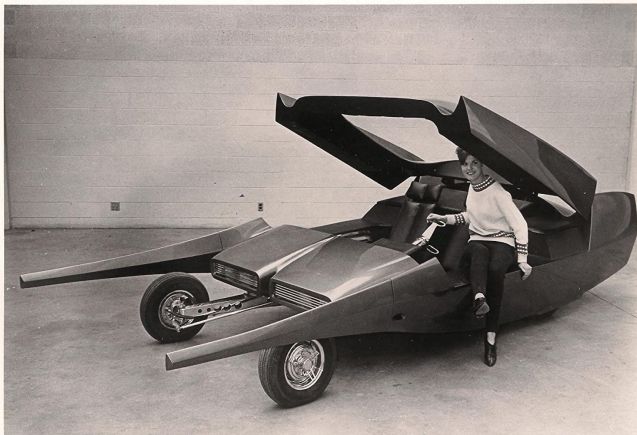
Promotions, Inc.  
19717 E. Nine Mile  
St. Clair Shores, Mich.





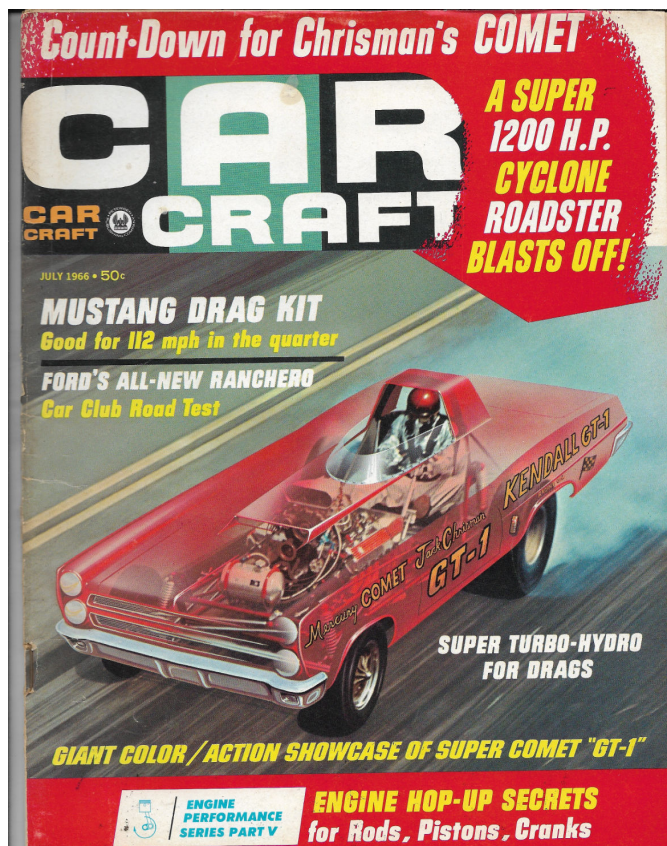
Would you believe the Stiletto was actually used in an episode of “The Beverly Hillbillies?” The episode starts with the Stiletto entering the scene driven by Jethro, who had swapped the truck for it. Of course Jethro needs another \$18,000 from Jed to cover the difference. Jed tells him to “Swap it back”. You can watch the episode here:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3la1nx>



In the Beverly Hillbillies episode the Stiletto “may” have entered the scene under its own power. A Lot of the radical show cars of this era were “push-mobiles” meaning they were not drivable, and certainly not streetable. Judging from the way the front wheels are situated, I can’t imagine it being stable at any speed. My thought is the front wheels would spread.





The Stiletto made the July 1966 issue of Car Craft Magazine (which I now have). But only 2 pages including one page featuring the picture I used on the front page of this newsletter. Also is some text and 5 black and white pictures, but no motor shot. One thing I learned from this article is that the stiletto extensions on the front of the car are removable for shipping. But also in this issue is a 4 page article with pictures of the "Just 4 Chevy Lovers" Corvair funny car with a cut-away drawing and several pictures.

The Corvair was used in many different Show Cars" over the years. Ed "Big Daddy" Roth's Road Agent below is one.



The Reactor is another Corvair based show car. Built by Gene Winfield. This made an appearance in the TV shows "Bewitched", "Star Trek", and would you believe "Batman" where it grew a tail and cat ears to become Catwoman's Kitty Car.



### CONJURING UP 'THE CAR OF TOMORROW'

**M**AKING A "dream car" come true is easy for the witches on ABC's "Bewitched" Thursday night. Here, Dick York and Elizabeth Montgomery find a rare gift from his mother-in-law, Endora (Agnes Moorehead).

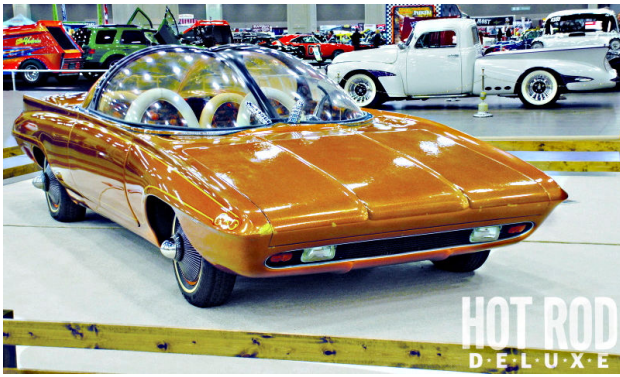
She conjures up a car York has been admiring in a newspaper photo. But you can't televise witchcraft without using real props. So this car

is a one-of-a-kind, costing \$20,000, made by custom auto stylist and builder Gene Winfield. It really runs, has a radar screen, flip-top roof, retractable fins and a 425-horsepower engine. It also has a hydraulic liquid-on-air suspension system, allowing the height to be changed from a ground clearance of 4 inches up to 9½ inches. It was painted with subtle shades of green over lime-gold metallflake.



I actually have a diecast of this version!





Daryl Starbird's "Forcasta" is another Corvair based show car. Built out of a 60 model. (current design)



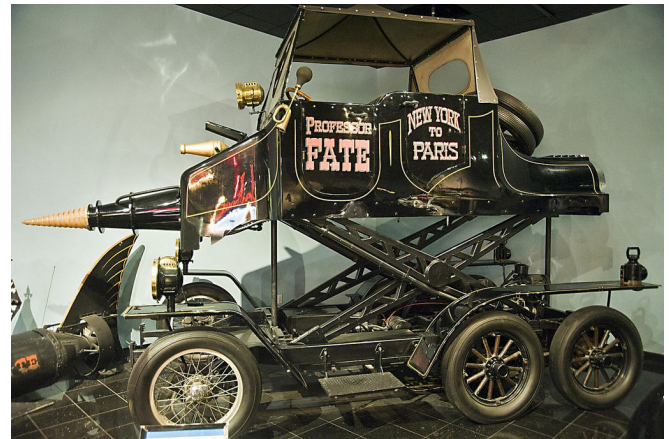
Nose of the Forcasta has changed a few times.



Above is 2<sup>nd</sup> version, below 1st.



Does anyone remember "The Great Race" movie starring Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon? Professor Fate's race car was Corvair powered.



The vehicles I covered here was not intended to be an "all inclusive list. There are so many more I could have mentioned, it would take quite awhile to cover them all.

## NFCC MARCH MEETING

I have made arrangements at the East Aurora Moose lodge for 6:00 pm on Wednesday March 22. There will be food available, Roast beef and Fish sandwiches with fries if anyone is interested. I have put together the following instructions.

Please use the second East Aurora exit marked 20A on the 400 Expressway ( Not the Maple Street Exit). Turn right at the bottom of the exit ramp and the Moose Lodge will be on the left within 1000 yards. Please park in the large lot and enter at the rear. I will have someone watching for you and opening the door. If you want to eat please get there by 5:30. (Roast Beef and Fish sandwiches.)

Thanks, Chuck