



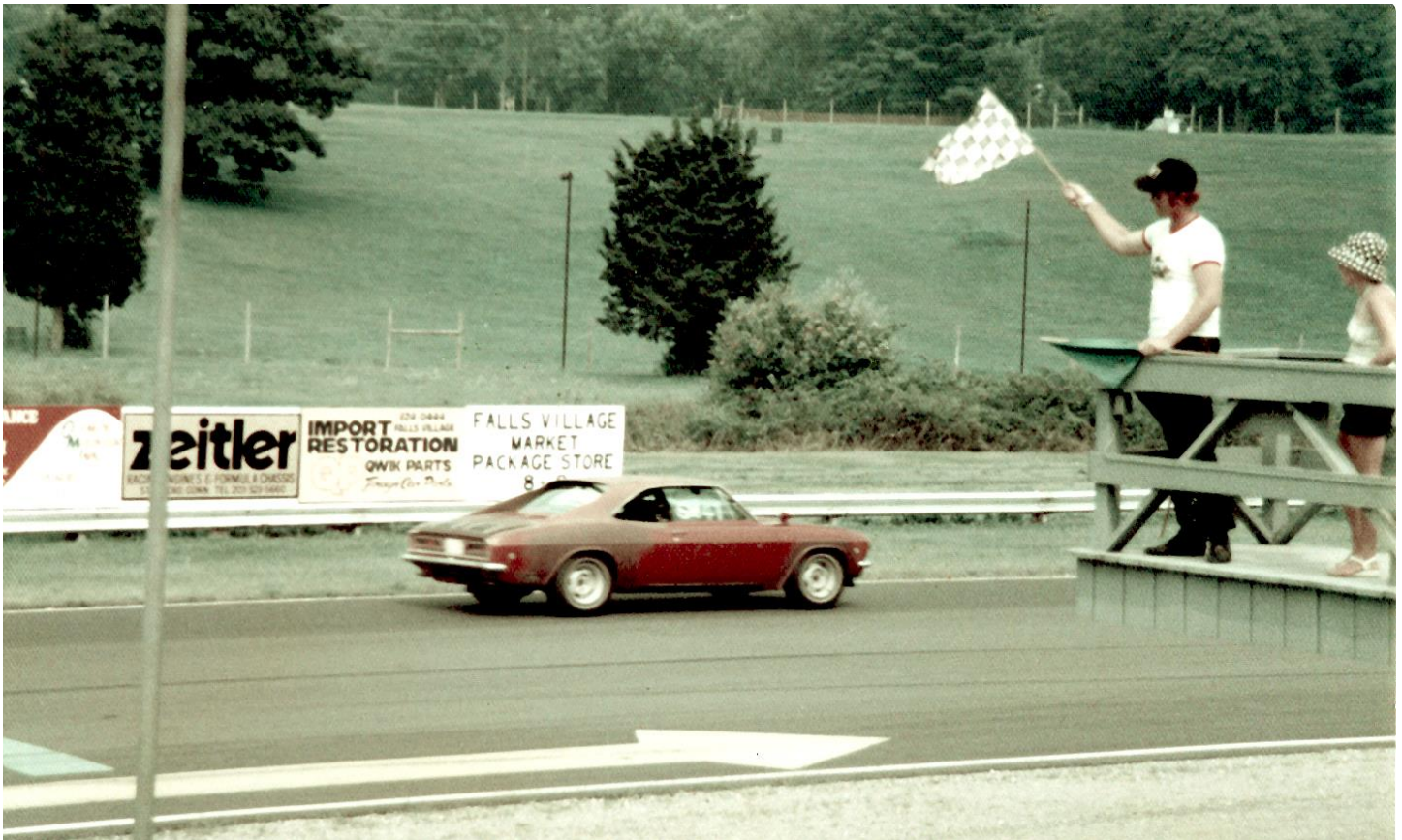
Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LII, No. 1

January 2024



Lime Rock Track Event 1983 – Pete Frailey's Rear V8 Conversion being Tested.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

January 2024

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

February

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

March

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

April

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

May

4 – Corvair Track Classic, Motorsports Park, Hastings, NE. www.Corvairmuseum.org, or www.Corvairtrackclassic.com for info.

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

June

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

July

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

21 – 26 – Corvair International Convention, Dayton, OH. The 21st and 26th are not officially part of the convention, but the host club includes them in their schedule. <https://www.daytoncorvairclub.com/gallery>

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DUES ARE DUE!

Yes, it's that time again and you need to send in your dues to Group Corvair. For the princely sum of \$10, you can maintain your membership in Group Corvair for another year. We take cash and checks although we're willing to discuss other payment systems. Please make checks out to "Group Corvair" and send them to:

Jim Simpson
3845 Wayson Road
Davidsonville, MD 21035

Several of you have paid for years in advance; if you have forgotten, please contact me (Jim Simpson) and I'll check the books.

Welcome Mark Shiffler, Our New Vice President

Please welcome Mark Schiffler as our new Vice President. While relatively new to Group Corvair, he's a long-time Corvair enthusiast. After a long hiatus in Corvair ownership, he acquired a garage-find Corsa and as you've seen in the recent newsletters, he's doing a major restoration. Welcome again, Mark!

From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

We hope everyone had a happy and satisfying Holiday Season and is looking forward to a new year of good health, successful projects and Corvair activities. How many of you are planning to attend the Dayton Convention? Have you signed up for a room yet? Karl and Arlette Kelson, Group Corvair and CORSA members in Melbourne, Australia, have confirmed (99%) that they will be there. Karl plans to give a talk on Chevrolets as sold in Australia including how they were marketed—not as GM's budget vehicles, but as higher end vehicles with luxury interiors sold just below the Cadillac.

Carol and I really enjoyed the Group Corvair dinner hosted by Jerry and Diana Yates at their lovely home. We had great food provided by the Yates, great conversations, and an all-around good time. During our dinner Mark Shiffler agreed to fill our vacant club vice presidency (with wife Dorothy's backing) so Group Corvair is "fully staffed" again. Thanks again Jerry and Diana for hosting our event!

John Lanning, President of the Corvair V8 Registry, called me this past fall looking for information on Pete Frailey's LM Corvair Buick (Rover?) V8 conversion; where it went and who now has it. Jerry Yates provided information and a photo of the rear of a Corsa body he had donated to Pete (with different taillights—Ford Cortina or Capri?). Mike Stillwell remembered the car as a red LM 500 and provided a photo of the car partially hidden by Yenko YS-081. We also discussed Pete's V8 car at our Christmas get-together and I was surprised by how many people remembered the car differently. Had the taillights been swapped out for Camaro ones? Had Pete made them



Jerry Yate's Donor Car's Taillights



Pete Frailey and his V8 Car at Lime Rock Starting Line

sequential? How badly was the car damaged when it was rear ended? I called John on January 5th, and he brought me up to date. Long time Corvair owner and expert Corvair mechanic Lee Hamilton bought the car from Pete and still has it. John Lanning and Pete's widow, Barbara Frailey, helped me get in touch so I've now talked with Lee. He has rebuilt the engine but hasn't been able to install it because of his age. He is willing to let us visit him and the car and is open to discussing possible assistance for getting the car back together. Lee doesn't have an email account, but we have his address and phone number now so we will send our newsletters and keep in touch.



Pete Frailey Explaining the V8 Installation

Finally, I need to apologize for missing our December Zoom meeting. A decades long friend called just before our meeting to talk about a serious medical diagnosis he had just received and just need someone he trusted to listen to his situation—and I did.

Minutes of the December Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Group Corvair members started logging into the December 19 Zoom meeting at 7:30 pm. Since several members had other commitments, there were only five participants, which was not enough to conduct much regular business. As a result, most of the time was spent discussing various car-related topics. One exception was that Mark Shiffler accepted the nomination to become Vice President of Group Corvair.

Mark gave us an update on the progress he has made on his car. Most of the exterior trim is back on the car. Mark's getting ready to put new interior door panels on the car; this led to a discussion on attaching the stainless steel trim on the panels. (The reproduced panels from Clark's do not have them.)

The 2026 national convention will be "local," that is, in the Gettysburg area. As a club we have volunteered to help with registration as well as various other activities as needed.

We received an update from Curt Shimp, a Group Corvair member in New Mexico. He has been working on a new engine for his car. (He had built a 3.2 liter engine, but found some still unlocated problem, hence a new engine.)

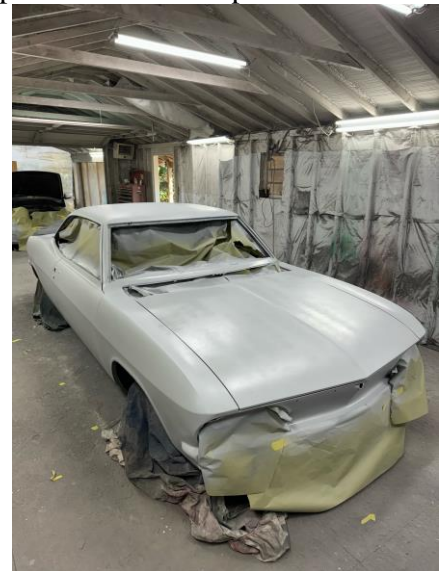
The meeting ended at 8:15 pm.

Mark Shiffler's Corsa Restoration, The Fifth Installment

When I last posted information the Corsa was headed off to the paint shop for a respray in Aztec Bronze with the interior painted in Medium Bronze to match. During the work at the body shop the metal piece across the base of the windshield was replaced (beyond my skill set) and a large hole in the quarter panel under the battery was repaired professionally. Here are some pictures of the car in primer.

While the car was there, I found a set of 14x7 Oldsmobile Rally Wheels and dropped them off to be painted to match the car when it was sprayed.

Just back from the paint shop and ready for the re-assembly process - Lots to do!



Through the miracle of time and many man-hours working on the car, the outside is almost done, and it is time to order parts from Clark's to do the inside. Headliner, door cards, seat covers, carpet – a long list but my goal is a stock car, with the exception of wheels and tires. New 225/60-14 tires look sharp on the wheels and match the outside diameter of the original stock tires.



The wood-rim steering wheel is from Ron Fedorczak and is a nice addition to the interior. I have the original black one if someone needs one. As you can see on the interior photo the radio is back in, with a new speaker designed by Jim Simpson and published a couple months back. One of my good friends is an RF Engineer and he worked on the radio to get it working. It works but there are not many AM stations around anymore. Someone needs to make a blue tooth adapter for the antenna lead so that music from a phone can be piped into the car. That's all for now. Time to get on the phone with Clark's to order some interior trim.



Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

LED Brake Lights and Turn Signals. One would think that by now, there wouldn't be much new to say about changing from the original incandescent brake and turn signal lights to their LED equivalents. But there's always a new twist or two when playing with new technology.

I changed all of my Corvair's rear lights (brake and backup) to LEDs some time ago. There were several reasons, including reliability, less current, and long-life. Over the years, I've had many filaments on the old incandescent bulbs fail. Most of the time it did not appear to be due to age, but rather it seemed to be due to vibration or poor manufacturing quality – brand new bulbs would fail in just a few hundred miles of driving. And I wanted to reduce the amount of current being switched by the brake and backup light switches. While the bulbs only need a total of 3 or 4 amps – not a significant load on the alternator – but switching that current does slowly erode the switch contacts.

But when I installed LED front turn signal/parking lights, I found that the turn signal flasher no longer worked. This is a long-known issue; the original flasher design depends upon the higher current that incandescent lights draw and LEDs don't draw enough current to cause the flasher to operate. (You can buy LEDs with internal load resistors to simulate the current draw of an incandescent bulb, but that defeats one of my reasons for switching to LEDs.) I did try a different flasher supposedly designed for LEDs, but that didn't work, so I put the front LEDs on the shelf for some future date. (I finally took a look at the internals of the "LED flasher" – I was cheated. It's the old design and requires higher currents to operate.)

I've finally gotten back to the project. I bought a new flasher after checking that it really was designed for LEDs. There are numerous ones out there, the ones I bought came with a ground wire. There are some that don't require that ground so shop around if you don't want to make that extra connection.

I started by bench testing the system – a couple of spare brake light sockets and matching LED bulbs along with a 12 volt power supply. The flasher and bulbs worked perfectly. Success! But while playing with them, I noticed that the LED bulbs had three rows of lights. This is to simulate the original 1157 incandescent bulbs which have two filaments – one low current for the parking light, the other a higher current, brighter filament for the brake or turn signal. The LED bulbs energize one row of lights for the less bright parking lights and two different rows for the brake/turn signals. So during the day, when you step on the brakes or use the turn signals, two of the three rows of LEDs are energized. (Most LED replacements for the original 1157 bulbs seem to be made this way.)

That started me thinking. Corvair owners have always been trying to get brighter stop and turn signals. So why am I wasting that other row of lights in the LED? It would be very easy to activate all three rows of lights at the same time and boost the brightness by 50%. All I had to do was attach a diode between the two supply wires. When the parking lights are turned on, the diode would keep power from going to the brake/turn signal LEDs, but when the brake pedal or turn signal flasher was on, power would go to all three rows of lights. I tried it and it works!

And yes, I did check with a photometer – three rows is 50% brighter than two. (At night, when the headlight are on, the single row of LEDs is powered, so brake and turn signals would just light up the other two rows. That's not as much of a contrast, but it's less important in the nighttime darkness.)

Why didn't GM do this with incandescent lights? First up would be just plain inertia. That's the way things were done from the beginning of electric lights on cars. Second, solid state diodes really didn't become available until the '60s, and even then, they weren't all that cheap. So why bother the existing system that was "good enough"?

In my next installment, I'll explore ways to install diodes on a late model Corvair.



Vairs in the News

This is from Bob Winokur – thanks Bob! It's too long to include in the newsletter, but if you click on the link below, you can read it on-line.

<https://www.theautopian.com/heres-why-the-chevrolet-corvair-is-the-best-cheap-classic-car-right-now/>

The title in the link says it all. In my review of the article, it seems to hit on all the high points and properly addresses the myths. Good read.

Vair Vendor

Wanted: Late Model Coupe, 110/PG. Rick Sanford, in Myrtle Beach, has a friend who wants a nice Corvair ready to drive and show. Not interested in a restoration project. Contact Rick Sanford, 843-231-225, ricksanford2020@gmail.com

For Sale: Late Model Trim. '66 – '69 passenger-side rear wheel trim (10 pieces). New, never installed. Clark's price is \$55 each. \$20 each, pick up in Arnold MD. Get them while they last. Late model rear end trim – long pieces that go on the top and bottom of the rear cover. Clark's part C301P priced at \$100 for the pair. Make me an offer; I have four pieces. I also have a set of NOS upper and lower mounting clips. Mark Shiffler, 443-770-4719, mshiphty@gmail.com.

For Sale: Early and Late Parts:

'64 3.27 differential, \$40; '64 3.27 4-speed transaxle, \$100; '64 Sypder engine lid, \$120;
'64 Convertible top frame, \$65; '64 4-door NOS left quarter panel (GM # 6279405), \$200
'64 2 each front cross members, complete with brakes, shocks, springs. Very good condition: one from a Sypder, \$175, other \$150; '62 – '64 Convertible rear quarter window glass, left and right, \$30
'65 – '69 underbody plastic heater duct, \$30; '65 – '69 Convertible corner weight, \$15
? year – Engine cover with fan bearing, \$20; 3 standard transmission bell housings, \$30 each.

Original GM Luggage Rack, 4-post as used on '65 – '69 Corvairs and C2 Corvettes. Good condition, chrome is fair and adequate for a daily driver but for a show car, needs to be rechromed. It has black plastic bullets filling the ends of the tubes. Asking \$170.

Prices are negotiable. Contact Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278, rtl1936@gmail.com.

(5/23)

Wanted: Right Front (passenger side) FC wheel arch and rocker panel. Prefer NOS but a very clean used one would be acceptable. Michael Coale, 443-994-2559 or mikecoale@verizon.net

(8/23)

For Sale: Mike Coale is thinning his collection: 1965 Corsa coupe body, no drive train, gold interior (with '66 front seats), Corsa dash. Fair condition, but highly restorable. \$1,500 or best offer.

1965 Corsa convertible body, power top, Corsa dash, steering wheel, no seats, but has correct door panels. It does have a '64 engine/positrac differential, and empty 4-speed case in it to allow it to roll around. Fair condition, but highly restorable. \$1,500 or best offer.

1965 Monza convertible, complete, 110 hp, powerglide. Silver with red interior, older restoration, decent condition. Asking \$3,000.

1965 Monza Four-Door, 4-speed. White, fair condition, but highly restorable. \$1,500 or best offer.

1967 Monza convertible, 110, Powerglide. Relatively rare – only 2,109 convertibles were produced in 1967. Complete, including the "Protecta Plate." Asking \$3,500. All have titles. Contact Mike Coale, mikecoale@verizon.net or 443-994-2559.

(5/23)

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