



the fifth wheel

January 2024

[HTTP://WWW.CORVAIR.ORG/CHAPTERS/LVCC](http://www.corvair.org/chapters/lvcc)

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The Fifth Wheel is published monthly by Lehigh Valley Corvair Club Inc. (LVCC), a chapter of the Corvair Society of America. We accept articles of interest to Corvair owners for publication. Classified advertising of interest to Corvair owners is available free of charge to all persons. Commercial advertising is also available on a fee basis. For details, email our newsletter editor, Allan Lacki, redbat01@verizon.net.

Tech Session: January 20, 2024
RSVP! redbat01@verizon.net

Membership Meeting: Feb. 10, 2024
Special Location: Starlite Diner

Read all about 'em inside!

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Hi Everybody! Our usual meeting place - the America on Wheels Museum - will be closed in January & February, so we're going to do something different for those two months!

1. January 20, 2024. Tech Session at Jeff's workshop in Easton. See map on Page 9.
2. February 10th. LVCC Meeting at the Starlite Diner at 9 AM. This the second Saturday of the month, so this is one week earlier than usual! This will be our very first breakfast meeting, so bring your appetite - and some cash! See map on Page 10.

Tech Session at Jeff's Workshop!

Location: 635 Morvale Road, Easton, Pa 18042. Use the upper driveway to enter. Entrance around the back. Time: 10 AM to approximately 2 PM.

We will be removing the powertrain in Jeff's '66 Monza so that he can send the transmission out for a rebuild. Yes, Jeff's workshop is heated!

Jeff has everything to do the job including a floor transmission jack, under-car transmission jack, a lift and a hydraulic table. This is dirty business! Wear work clothes!

Coffee, donuts, and hoagies will be served but we need a head count. Also, we need to know who's coming in case we need to postpone due to snow.

So please call or email Allan Lacki to let him know if you will be there. Here is Al's contact information: Email: redbat01@verizon.net. Phone (610) 927-1583 (no later than 6 PM please. Feel free to leave a message if nobody picks up).

Meeting Minutes

Our last meeting was in November and the minutes for that meeting were posted in the December issue of "The Fifth Wheel". This month, we have nothing to say!



LVCC Treasury Report by Joan Lacki

Beginning Balance: November 30, 2023		\$ 1,983.48
Receipts:		
Membership	\$ 35.00	
Total Receipts		\$ 35.00
Expenses:		
Newsletter Expense (Allan Lacki)	\$ (8.06)	
Total Expenses		\$ (8.06)
Ending Balance: (December 31)		\$ 2,010.42
Membership Renewals:		
Chuck Mason	\$ 35.00	2 years
	\$ 35.00	

In January, we also had two additional membership renewals, namely Peter Kowalenko and Bob King.

Fanbelt Selection! by Tom Murray

*Source: January 2024 issue of THE Aircooler, the official newsletter of the Detroit Area Corvair Club. From the Rear Deck of the DACC VP, Tom Murray
guitar_mechanic@yahoo.com*

Hi campers! Another month has passed and it's time to look at what discerning Corvair owners would have in their emergency road kits. Last month we covered spark plugs so if you missed it, go back, and give it a read. I learned something myself just writing it.

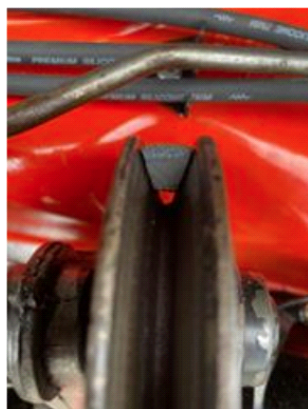
This month we are going to cover fan belts. Yay!! We all have it written down somewhere that the right belt for our car is a 3V560. Great.... What does that actually mean?

Let's look. V belts are broken down into classes. The first or "classical" V belt is generally too big and not the right geometry for a Corvair. These belts are more modern replacements for old leather belts in industrial applications. They have a high tolerance to poor working environments, but let's stop there. In this discussion it's enough to simply know they exist.

The next class is the "narrow" class. These belts are capable of transmitting more power than the classical belt. In this class there are many, many sizes. The one we are going to concentrate on is the "3V". These are the belts that Corvair owners use.

There are standard sizes for the belts and the pulleys, just like there are standard sizes for nuts and bolts. A 1/4-20 nut fits a 1/4-20 bolt no matter when or where it's made. So, a 3V belt fits a 3V pulley no matter when or where it was made. A 3V belt's standard dimensions are 3/8" (.375) wide and roughly 5/16" tall (.32).

The way it fits the pulley is flush with the outside diameter of the pulley and interestingly does not reach the inside bottom of the pulley. By design, the belt is giving the pulley a constant wedgie! This wedgie is what keeps the belt in contact with the slanted walls of the pulley and gives it the grip to transfer power.



Constant wedgie and belt doesn't reach bottom of the pulley

The length of the narrow format belts is measured along the outside of the belt. If we ran a string through all of the pulleys and measured it, we would end up with a belt that is too short.

I wish I would have known that when I was a kid trying to build a go cart. I wasted a lot of money buying the wrong size belts. So, after all of that, a Corvair belt is a 3V that is 56" long around its outside. I've read that the extra zero is the length in inches X 10. So, a 3V560 is the right one.

Whew!! I know what you're thinking, "okay mister smarty pants, where do I get these mythical belts?" The good news is that they are pretty common. Yes, you can order them from Clark's, it's hard to go wrong there. They have done the leg work to find or make the product they sell.

Our Corvair emergency kit, however, could use a belt that's more pedestrian, as we're just using it to get us home. They can be ordered from McMaster Carr, Grainger, or any number of industrial power transfer companies online. Additionally, they can be sourced locally from a good hard-

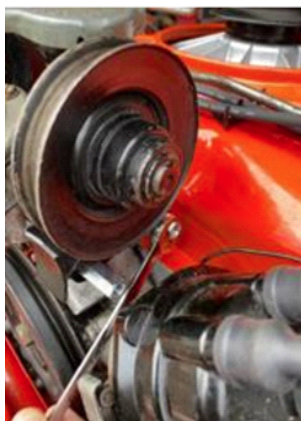
ware store like "Frentz and Son" in Royal Oak (Michigan) or from a riding mower repair shop. They might even be available as a replacement garage door part. I checked Tractor Supply and apparently farm equipment doesn't use 3V belts. You get the picture.

A word on usage, a Corvair belt should be adjusted when the engine is cold and should just allow the generator or alternator fan to be slipped with pressure from your thumb. That's all good, but on the side of the road, I tend to be a little less technical.

Let's say your belt flies off for some reason, don't be tempted to put it back on, even if it looks okay. For the belt to have stretched out far enough to come off, the internal cord structure of the belt will have been damaged. It will need to be replaced.



This is how the belt and pulley are designed to fit

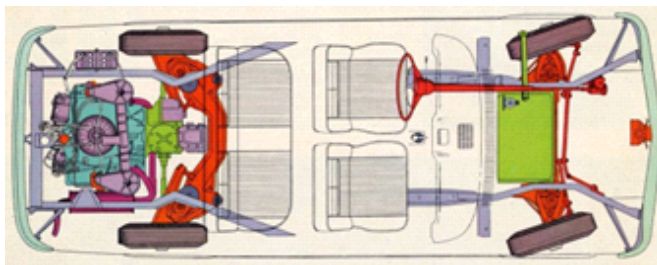


This is the mod using the threaded coupler for all-thread rod using a 1/2" wrench.

The companion to your emergency belt will be your trusty 9/16" wrench. If you have swapped out your idler pulley nuts with the couplers for all-thread rod, you would use a 1/2" wrench. This is a mod that I would suggest because it puts the hex out farther for easier engagement with the wrench.



That's all for now. Happy motoring!! Tom Murray



Fan Belt Maintenance

Source: CORSA Tech Guide Supplement – 1996. Copy provided by Mike Dawson.

The Corvair boasted a specially designed belt that GM used only after rejecting at least four different designs. Since GM discontinued the original design years ago, no other company had duplicated it. Anybody can have good luck with a \$3 belt, but if you want one close to the original, use a 3V50 wrapped industrial belt. The original belt was 55 3/4" c 3/8". The 3V560 belt are sold by most Corvair vendors as "super belts."

Installation Checks

The drive pulley or balancer should be checked for wobble or separation and the timing notch checked for a sharp edge that can wear the belt. The idler pulley should be checked for wobble and dents caused by pry bars. The big washer on the slide end of the bracket must be between the nut and the slide.

Check fan pulley for wobble and dents and, most important, for proper height. On-the-car reference: lay a straight edge across the top of the pulley, measure down to the shroud next to the choke rod (intake flange) on the left side. It should measure exactly 6" for '62-69 and 6 5/32" on '60-61. This dimension will be wrong if your fan bearing was installed incorrectly, or if it has moved in the top cover where its interference fit has become loose.

Alternator/generator pulley must be exactly 3" O.D. Rebuilders change them and even a 1/4" sized difference will change belt alignment. Look for a loose generator mount on the left end, check for the proper alternator/generator adapter. As with other pulleys, check for dents, wobble and wear.

Belt Tension

There should be a 3/8" deflection with a 15-pound load between the idler and the fan. The book calls for 55 pounds if you have a strand tension gauge. You can barely turn the alternator fan with your thumb when correctly tensioned. Tension should be checked after a break-in period.

Belt Guides

The rear guide can be installed on any year with ease; the top guide should be on any that have the mount holes in the top shroud. Clearance between belt and guide is 1/16".

If the GEN FAN light comes on, stop immediately. Determine if the belt is working or not. If it is, you can drive the car but have the charging system checked as soon as possible. If it is off, replace it before driving. Once a belt comes off,

the cords are bent and it will continue to flip.

If you must drive, follow the owner's guide instructions for operation without a belt. Remember, if you ruin an engine by overheating, it usually cannot be rebuilt. Never drive a Corvair with the TEMP PRESS light on (4/96)

Some Thoughts on Ed Cole by Allan Lacki

On one of the internet message boards, a GM critic faulted Ed Cole for not only fathering the Corvair, but also forcing Chevrolet to accept the Vega engine as designed by GM's engineering staff's design. Chevrolet had the talent to do the engineering by itself. And it's true that Ed Cole was also a proponent of GM's Wankel engine project, which also bombed.



But overall, Chevrolet and GM were highly successful overall under Ed Cole's leadership. And it's especially true that the only leaders who never do anything wrong are those who don't do anything at all.

Just a few months after introducing the Corvair to the market, Chevrolet embarked on a crash course effort to design and market another compact car for the same market. I'm speaking of the Chevy II. I wonder what Ed Cole thought about that.

Of course, like any good executive, he'd play up the decision to do the Chevy II. But it seems to me the higher ups at GM quickly figured out that the Corvair was a mistake, not in terms of safety, but in terms of production cost. It was much more logical to manufacture a simpler car, and the Chevy II fit that bill.

Compared to its competitors - witness the air-cooled engine and four-wheel independent suspension - the Corvair must have been a seriously expensive car to manufacture, but there was no way Chevrolet could boost the sales price high enough to make a decent profit margin. If they boosted prices, sales would drop like a stone.

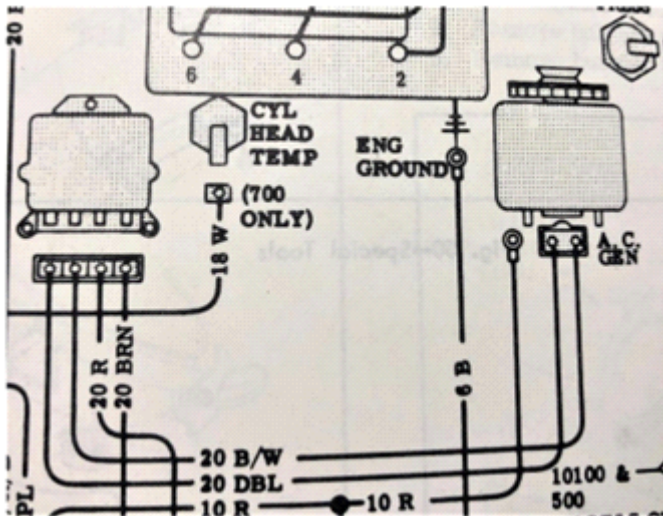
They compensated somewhat by introducing the Monza option for which they could make a few extra shekels on sales by simply adding bucket seats, carpeting and wheel covers. And so, the Corvair model run lasted ten years despite the Chevy II.

GROUNDING the GENerator, by Fran Schmit

Source: January 2024 issue of “Leaky Seal” the official newsletter of Corvair Minnesota.

Not a BIG worry but this is something I often see but rarely comment on. Note the diagram below from the LM ('65) shop manual . We see no mention of a ground connection on either the GEN or the REG .

Of course, nobody worries about grounding the GEN because you unknowingly ground it when you tighten the bolts . You don't have to say that!



But that also means the new guy has never heard about it . The “plus” terminal on the GEN goes to the BATT but it can’t charge the BATT unless there is a “neg” connection . When you don’t show it, the new guy doesn’t get the message.

Take the REG, that sits right next to the GEN on this chart, its ground wire is a critical component that is needed to Regulate (Control) the Voltage from the GEN, but again is not shown .

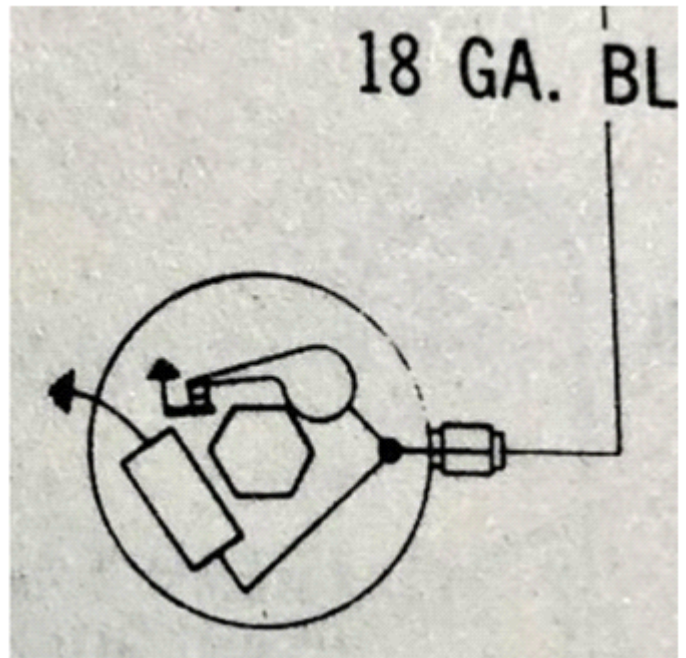
The GEN-FAN light (on the Dash) supplies current, from the Key, to the BRN wire (shown as 20 BRN) that goes through the REG and continues on through the GEN - - - to GROUND .

The Dash light (called a tell-tale light by the factory) tests the system's wiring connections every time you turn on the key . When the Tell-Tale lights, that means all systems are "go".

It's interesting that this drawing in the '65 manual does show the engine being grounded, but nothing else.

In the 50's when they drew all the pictures in a shop manual, they included the ground wires even where there were two of them right next to each other .

See this Old Distributor drawing where the points are grounded and the capacitor is too!



Let's have fun, and stay grounded, while we Keep-OnCORVAIRing! Fran

Tech Topics Jim Simpson - LED Brake Lights and Turn Signals by Jim Simpson

*Source: January 2024 issue of “Group Corvair Comments”,
Group Corvair’s Newsletter for The National Capital Area*

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, includ-

ing 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!



Be sure to replace your flasher unit with one that is truly LED-compatible!

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!



Three LEDs versus two are definitely brighter!

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"?



LVCC Calendar of Events

Cruise Nights

Interested in doing a cruise night? Go to <https://carmacruisefinder.com/> It's easy to use and lists more cruise events than we could possibly fit in this newsletter!

Corvair Events, Car Shows, Etc:

LVCC-Sanctioned Events denoted with a check mark like this: ✓

Saturday January 20, 2024 - LVCC Tech Session at Jeff Strausser's Workshop ✓

Location: 635 Morvale Road, Easton, Pa 18042. Use the upper driveway to enter. Entrance around the back. Time: 10 AM to 1 PM. We will be removing the powertrain in Jeff's '66 Monza so that he can send the transmission out for a rebuild. He has everything to do the job including a floor transmission jack, under-car transmission jack, a lift and a hydraulic table. Wear work clothes! Coffee, donuts, and hoagies will be served but we need a head count. So please call or email Allan Lacki to let him know if you will be there. Here is Al's contact information: Email: redbat01@verizon.net. Phone (610) 927-1583 (no later than 6 PM please. Feel free to leave a message if nobody picks up). And if you get lost, Jeff can be reached at 610-533-0170.

January 20 to January 21, 2024 - Automania

Location: Allentown Agri-Plex, 302 N 17th Street, Allentown, PA. Time: 12 PM to 9 PM daily. Buy, sell and trade all things automotive. For more than two decades, Auto Mania has been Pennsylvania's biggest indoor heated automotive flea market and the tradition continues this year with support from Carlisle Events. Website: <https://carlisleevents.com/events/events-detail/index?id=auto+mania> Phone: 717-243-7855.

Saturday, February 10, 2024 - LVCC Membership Meeting ✓

Location: Starlite Diner, 233 N Route 100, Allentown, PA 18106-9367 Complete details in this issue of the *Fifth Wheel*!

Saturday, February 17, 2024 - NJACE Annual Corvair Parts Auction ✓

Location: Pompton Lakes Elks Lodge, 15 Perrin Avenue, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442. Time: Set-up begins 9 AM, bidding begins 10:30 AM, event ends approx 3 PM. Rain, shine or snow! Price: Free admission with 10% commission on sales going to the club treasury. The Annual NJACE Corvair Parts Auction is an indoor wintertime event that provides ample opportunity for Corvair enthusiasts to buy and sell Corvair parts, and enjoy a lot of laughs! At the auction our member-auctioneers offer Corvair parts and Corvair-related items to the highest bidder. You may bring parts to sell, you may buy, you may do both, or you may just come to enjoy the fun. Breakfast and lunch available on premises!

March 23 & 24, 2024 – Mid Atlantic Indoor Nationals

Location: Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. Time: Saturday, 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Sunday, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Mid Atlantic Indoor Nationals, is a custom car truck and bike show that takes place on the outskirts of Philadelphia, inside The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, PA The event showcases nearly 300 vehicles, includes around 60 vendors, great entertainment and eateries.. Website: <https://motoramaproductions.com/main-vehicle-reg-1> Phone: 717 307-5466.

Saturday April 13, 2024 - LVCC's All-Corvair Swap Meet ✓

Location: Egerton's Farm, 2510 Community Drive, Bath, PA 18014. Time: 9 AM to 3 PM. Rain or shine. Price: Free for sellers, free for buyers, free admission, free parking. Buy & sell Corvairs, Corvair parts and Corvair-related items only. Sellers - bring your own tables or tarps or canopies. Buyers - bring cash! This event will be held rain or shine! Refreshments available. Contact John Egerton, (610) 217-0514, jegerton@ptd.net

July 22 to July 25, 2024 12:00 AM 2024 CORSA International Convention – Dayton

Location: Marriott at the University of Dayton, 1414 South Patterson Boulevard, Dayton, Ohio 45409. The Dayton Corvair Club, the Corvair Club of Cincinnati, and the Columbus Mid-Ohio Vair Force had have worked together to host this event and they are eagerly awaiting to welcome you. Schedule includes all-Corvair car show, concours, rally, economy run, tech sessions and more. Hotel reservations can be made now! Call 1 937-223-1000 to reach the hotel. Registration for convention events will open in late February. Remember – You need to be a CORSA member to sign up!

To Grease or Not to Grease?

On the Facebook Corvair Owners Group, Steven Dietrick asked the following question:

Late model ('65+) Rear bearing question. Has anyone ever installed a grease fitting into the hub as described in the book 'How to Keep Your Corvair Alive' and CORSA's book 'Corvair Basics'? What kind of success did you have or did not have? Is it effective (provide grease to the bearing)? Is it worth the effort? How much grease does it take to fill the hub? Or should I just bite the bullet and purchase the rebuilt units at \$500+. Does anyone have the CORSA 'Corvair Technical Guide' on this subject.....could you please post a copy.

Here are the replies from the group's top contributors:

Dave Watson wrote, It was found that adding a grease zerk fitting to the rear hubs was a bad idea, you would need to fill the entire hub cavity with grease and it would not actually get to the bearing but would cause the seal to blow out and get grease everywhere inside the brake drums and destroy your brakes. Your best bet is to rebuild the hub assembly as per the shop manual.

Ralph Gubser: I agree with Dave. Bite the bullet and do it the right way.

Allen Greer: The first time I did hub bearings and saw that huge cavity I realized that couldn't work.

Rick Norris Sr. I did it years ago and would not recommend it. What Mr. Watson said.

Adam McCulloch: Easy to over-grease. I bought the sealed units from Clark's.

Chris Langley: Have Steve Goodman in Denver at Rear Engine Specialists rebuild them for you. Pull yours off and ship them to him. He normally turns them around in a week or so. They will be done right and with new American bearings and seals. Steve is the rear hub whisperer.

Judy Day Brizendine: If the bearings were replaced some-time in the past and properly greased, adding grease now should not be needed. If it's never been apart and you are certain the bearings are still good, add a zerk on one side of the hub, but also drill a relief hole on the opposite side. Add grease slowly with a hand grease gun until it pumps out the relief, then plug the hole. That will prevent blowing out the seals.

Guy Desjardins: Leave well enough alone.

Mark Guider: I had a similar experience as Steve & also read later about what Dave said. I would not even think about it. Dave is one of if not the best most knowledgeable in this country !

Otis Stewart: NOT a good idea, originals last 50 years or more.....

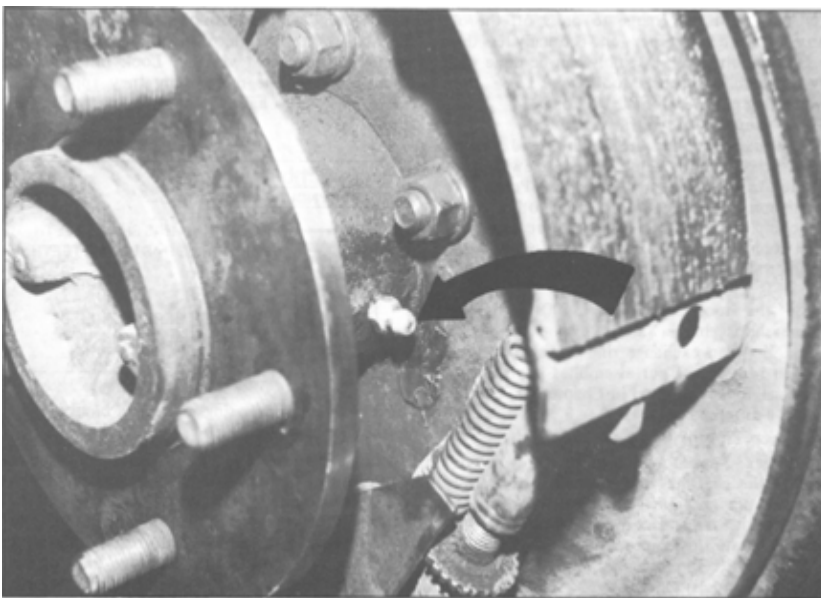
Larry Claypool: I'll take the opposite stand here. I have installed grease fittings on dozens of cars without problems over the last 40 years. I use a synthetic wheel bearing grease (Amsoil). The amount of grease used is equivalent to the size of a golf ball. You need to practice with your particular grease gun to see how many pumps it takes to get that amount. You *don't* want to fill the entire cavity, that

WILL cause the grease to purge to purge past the seals and get on the brake shoes. Only bearings that are still quiet and don't have any notable play are candidates for this procedure.

Steve Bell: My 66 had them when I bought it. PO must have installed them about mid 80's. I greased them and will never do it again. Contaminated the shoes and the drums. Cleaned them up and it did it again. New drums and shoes.

John Schlier: I did it over 40 years ago, used synthetic grease. Never had a problem since. I don't remember the amount of grease needed.

Andrew Golt: I believe the \$500 was before you returned your old assemblies as a core. And beware: '65 have smaller yoke bolts than '66-'69.



Bottom view of 1966 Corvair rear axle housing grease fitting.

January Tech Session at Jeff's Workshop

Our usual meeting place - the America on Wheels Museum - will be closed in January & February. In January, we'll be having a tech session at Jeff Strausser's work shop at 635 Morvale Road in Easton.

Please be aware that this is NOT home address and NOT his business address on Penn Highway. See diagram below!



Clark's Corvair Parts® Our 50th Anniversary - 2023



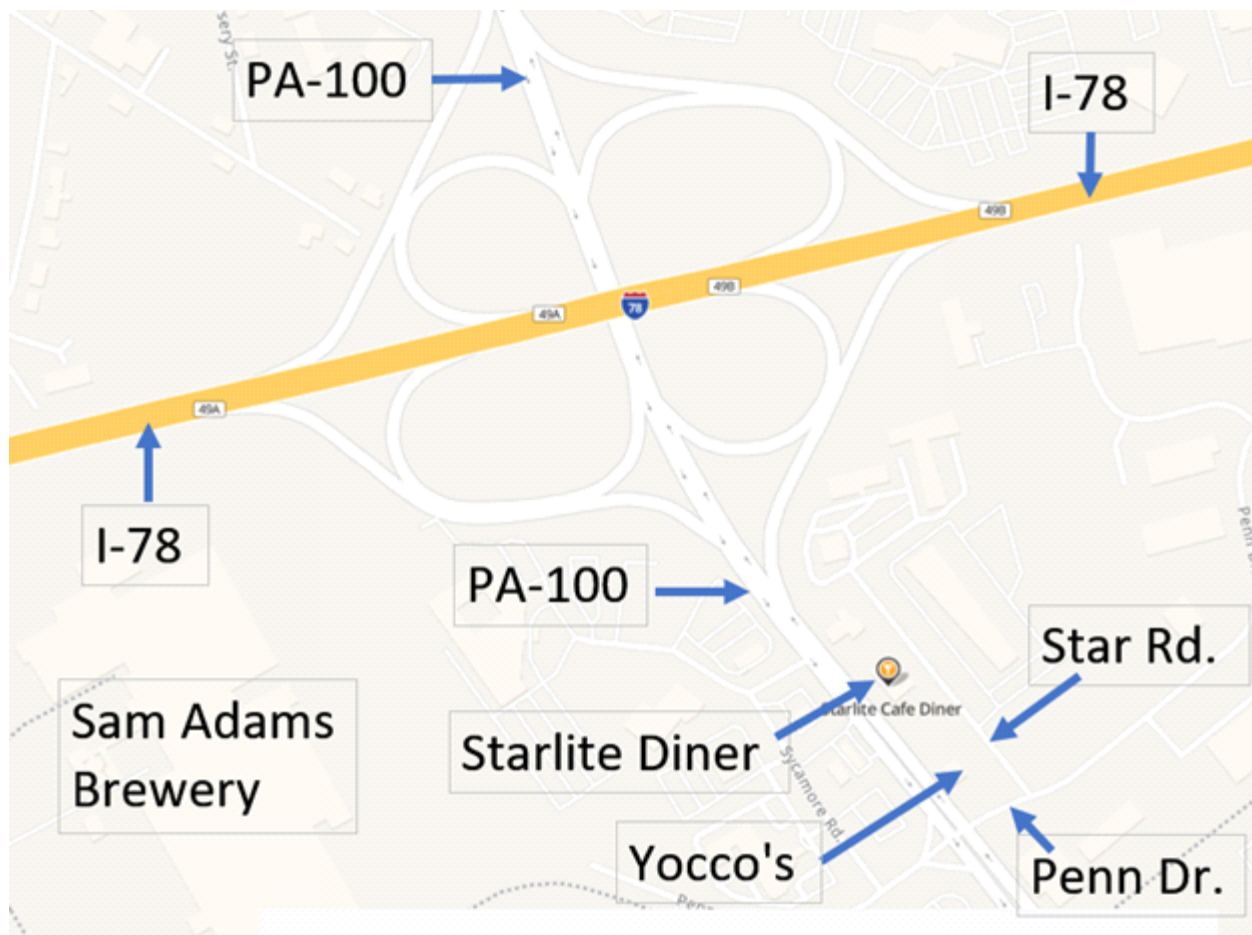
SPECIAL SALES EVERY MONTH- each month we'll send an email (if you have signed up) and list in a sale section on our Home page www.corvair.com **FREE 50th MEMENTO gifts with your first order in 2023**

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February Meeting Location

Our usual meeting place - the America on Wheels Museum - will be closed in January & February. In February, we'll be meeting at the Starlight Café Diner on February 10th. That's the second Saturday of the month..

The official address is 233 N Route 100, Allentown, PA 18106-9367, but to there, take Route 100 to Penn Drive eastbound and then Star Road northbound. It's right next door to Yocco's. Lost? Call the diner at (610) 395 4031.



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