



the fifth wheel

February 2024

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

ESTABLISHED 1976

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Membership Meeting: Feb. 10, 2024

Special Location: Starlite Diner

Special Time: 9 AM

Come for breakfast. Details inside!



Photo from chevymall.com - Home of Officially Licensed Chevrolet Merchandise

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.

LVCC Tech Session

Saturday January 20, 2024. Eight of us got together at Jeff Strausser's workshop to remove the Powerglide transmission and send it out for rebuild.

Jeff has a Harbor Freight 1,000 pound hydraulic table for lowering the powertrain out of the bottom of his Corvair. Although removing the powertrain from a Corvair is a serious job, the hydraulic table made it much easier.

Jeff had already removed the wheels, heater ducts, half shafts and lower strut rods before we arrived. He has all the tools necessary to do the job and then some!

Many thanks to Larry Asheuer who showed several tricks for removing a Powerglide from a Corvair! His confidence made the project pleasurable. It's supposedly easier to remove a Powerglide than a manual transmission in a Corvair, but you still need to know what you're doing!

Jeff's 1966 Monza Sport Sedan is just one of the vehicles in his collection. In addition to the Corvair, he also has a 1976 Corvette, a 1963 Buick Skylark coupe, a 1970 Buick Century and a Model A Ford pickup truck.

And as you can see from the photos, the workshop is quite large. Jeff rents out the extra space to other car buffs who store their cars there.

February Meeting at the Starlite!

Hi Everybody! Our usual meeting place - the America on Wheels Museum - will be closed in January & February. In January, we had our meeting at Jeff Strausser's workshop, right after the tech session. For February, we are going to do something different again.

Date, Place and Time: February 10th. LVCC Meeting at the Starlite Diner at 9 AM. This the second Saturday of the month - one week earlier than usual! This will be our very first breakfast meeting, so bring your appetite - and some cash. Spouses & significant others welcome. See map on Page 10.



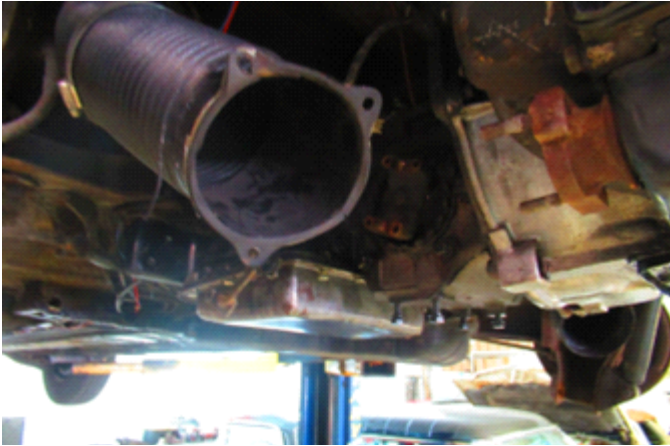
Jeff's 1966 Monza Sport Sedan is up in the air!



Jeff's draining the oil pan in prep for separating the bell housing from the engine.



Jeff's handy new hydraulic table for removing the powertrain.



One of the two lower heat tubes removed from the front of the engine. You can see that the half-shafts (drive shafts) and the suspension lower strut rods have already been removed.



Larry Asheuer demonstrates the technique for disconnecting the shift cable from the transmission. Twist and separate!



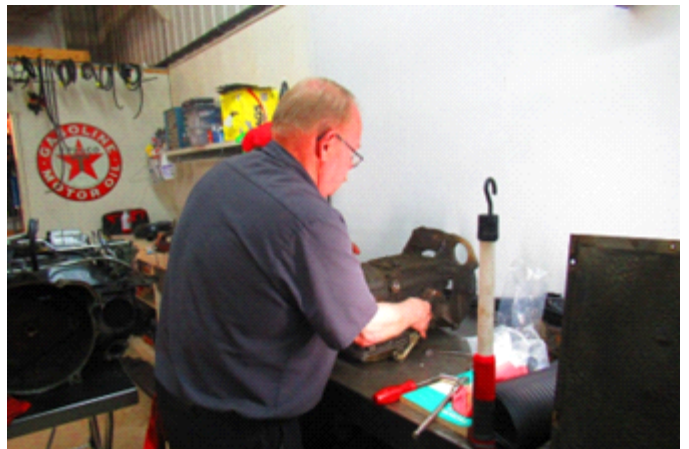
Larry looking over the powertrain sitting on the hydraulic table.



Ken Cush, Mark Miller and Bob Weideman. Mark had never seen the underside of a Corvair before.



Rich Greene admiring the fine lines of Corvair styling while Jeff operates the car lift.



Jeff getting ready to send the Powerglide to a shop that specializes in antique car transmissions.

Meeting Minutes

Lehigh Valley Corvair Club
January 20, 2024
Jeff Strausser Workshop
Easton, PA

President Allan Lacki called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM. In attendance were Larry Asheuer, Kevin Cush, Rich Greene, Al Lacki, Mark Miller (guest), Jeff Strausser, and Bob Weideman.

Per motion made and seconded, the minutes of the prior meeting were approved as published in the Fifth Wheel newsletter.

Per motion made and seconded, the treasurer's report was approved as published in the Fifth Wheel newsletter. A balance of \$2,055.35 as of January 31 was confirmed.

Old Business:

Allan reminded everybody that our next membership meeting will be held February 10th at the Starlite Diner.

New Business:

Guest Mark Miller talked about his 1965 Corvair convertible. He bought it on Craig's List a few months ago. It's equipped with a 140 horsepower engine and 4-speed transmission. The transmission has a minor leak which is probably caused by worn input shaft seal – not difficult to replace.

Mark's Corvair is equipped with an electric fuel pump controlled by a Revolution Electronics module. When the key is first turned on, the fuel pump is allowed to operate for three seconds, priming the fuel system. After these first three seconds, the pump is only allowed to run when the engine is running; if the engine stops, so does the fuel pump. This prevents the pump from spraying gasoline - a real fire hazard - during and after a serious accident.



Our tech session was Jeff Strausser's first experience in removing the lower strut rods in a late-series Corvair. So naturally, the group discussed techniques for removing and installing rear suspension strut rods. All agreed, it ain't easy!

While the car is up in the air, the coil spring will push the rear suspension full-stop down, making it impossible to align the strut rod bolts with the threaded holes in the bottom of the differential case. (The strut rod twists on its rubber bushings as the suspension rises and falls).

To compensate, it's necessary to jack-up the rear wheel to normal ride height so that the holes will align. Care is required not to jack up the wheel too far. Otherwise, the car may fall off the jack stands or lift upon which the car is perched. Using a simple monkey wrench will not twist the strut rod sufficiently to make a difference.

Next up was a discussion on fire prevention. Larry Asheuer pointed out that it's not easy to spot an engine fire in a Corvair because the engine is behind the driver. A quick show of hands indicated that almost everybody keeps their fire extinguisher in the trunk – not the best thing. It takes precious time to open the trunk, grab the extinguisher and run back to the engine compartment while its burning. Jeff said he keeps a fire blanket in his car; an alternative to using a fire extinguisher.

Bob Weideman continues to upgrade his Corvan. He installed a front suspension lowering kit and new shock absorbers. The kit is designed and offered for sale by Ken Hand. Bob said the modifications made his Corvan much more enjoyable to drive. Here are before & after photos.



At 12:45 PM, Jeff Strausser made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Rich Greene and approved by acclamation.

LVCC Treasury Report by Joan Lacki

Beginning Balance: Dec 31, 2023				\$2,010.42
Receipts:				
Membership Dues				\$ 90.00
Total Receipts				\$ 90.00
Expenses:				
Newsletter Expense (Allan Lacki)				\$(10.07)
CORSAs Annual Chapter Fee				\$(35.00)
Total Expenses				\$ (45.07)
Ending Balance: Jan 31, 2024				\$2,055.35
Membership Dues Breakout:				
Peter Kowalenko				\$ 35.00 2-years
Bob King				\$ 35.00 2-years
Kyle Regan				\$ 20.00 1-year
				\$ 90.00 Total

Driving a Corvair Without the Keys by Mike Dawson

Another great tip from Mike Dawson! Source: The February 2024 issue of "The Flat Six", the official newsletter of the Prairie Capital Corvair Association. Originally published in the Heart of America Corvair Association's website.

1. A useful little device than can be carried in your billfold (or purse) for gaining entry into any Corvair is the little spring clip that holds the air baffles up against the cylinders in all Corvair engines: about 3 ½ inches long with an eye on either end.



To open a wing window, gently push one end past the rubber under the vent handle with the eye to the rear of the car. Push in on the vent window and rotate the clip counter clockwise. The vent handle will unlock and you can reach in to open the side window or door. This method is quick and will not damage anything.

2. The wiring for the Corvair starter operation begins at the battery, travels twenty plus feet through several connectors and switches (depending on transmission) to end up only two feet from the battery where it started.

To bypass all of that, run a jumper wire of sufficient length to reach from the positive battery terminal to the purple wire in the two-wire connector found at the left front of the engine compartment.

Unplug the connector and touch the jumper wire to the purple wire that leads through the rubber grommet in the sheet metal to the starter. Then, touch the other end of the wire to the positive battery terminal.

Anytime you make the connection, the starter will engage. The engine will only start if the key is on, so you can use this for compression checks, setting dwell, mechanical fuel pump testing etc. (A commercial remote starter is also a good tool to have). To actually run the engine, you need the next step.

3. During normal running, the coil receives less than six volts to the + terminal because of resistance in the wiring (1.8 ohms). Full battery voltage is supplied only during the cranking to help starting under extreme conditions. If you apply 12 volts during running, the points will quickly burn and the engine dies.

4. To run an engine without using the ignition switch, make up a jumper as follows: cut a length of standard wire (any gage from 12 to 20 will work) that reaches from the positive battery connection to the positive coil terminal. Attach a clamp or large clip for the battery end and a smaller clip for the coil + terminal end.

Purchase a coil resistor from a parts store (1.8 ohms is a standard listing) and attach it in series anywhere in the middle of the wire. Wrap it with tape because it gets hot to the touch.



You also could use the original resistance wire from another harness. Anytime this jumper is hooked up, the engine will run until you unhook it. You cannot run other accessories with this jumper, only the ignition part of the engine. Also be sure you don't lay the wire against anything that moves when the engine starts.

When I need to drive a locked car without keys, I use all three of the above.

Theft Protection, by Mike Dawson

Source: The February 2024 issue of "The Flat Six", the official newsletter of the Prairie Capital Corvair Association. Originally published in the Heart of America Corvair Association's website.

The previous article covered how to provide access to a locked Corvair and how to operate it without a key. This month covers one way to prevent that.

Most attempted thefts occur by accessing the back of the ignition switch, cutting into the wiring harness behind the dash or using a puller to remove the lock tumblers. And, of course someone could use all of the tips from last month to drive off with your baby.

There are several choices to deter theft, including steering wheel locks (The Club) and alarm systems. The following is one method of adding some protection with little cost and is a quick on/off as you leave and return to your car.

My feeling is that if a thief cannot get a car on the road in the first couple of minutes the odds are that he will make a hasty retreat. A cranking car that will not start attracts far too much attention, thus my suggestion:

Install a hidden switch under the dash, grounded on one side and connected on the other side to the negative side of the coil. You are simply grounding the coil when you close the switch. Use a wire that looks original, combining it with the regular harness, and it will look identical to a tachometer wire.

If you have a tachometer in your car, wire the switch into that wire in your dash harness. It will take a technically inclined person with some time on their hands to determine what you have done. This works for points systems as well as Pertronix and will not harm the system.

Every Corvair that I have worked on in my career after they were stolen and recovered had been started and run by jumping the wires under the dash. Getting access to Corvair wiring is easy but you are still safe with a grounded coil.

If you do have an attempted theft, repairing dash wiring is better than waiting in vain for your car to return in one piece.

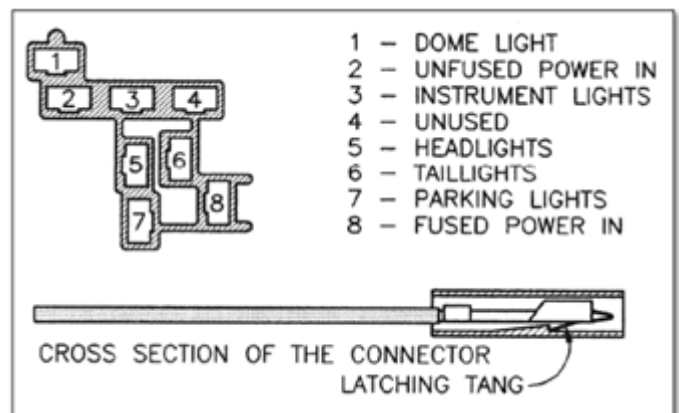


Switch On Parking Lights by Lloyd P. (Bud) Short

Source: Covair Tech Guide published by Corvair Society of America.

Modify your 1964-67 Corvair to have the parking lights on when the headlights are on. This is a cheap and easy task which will improve the safety of your car.

Refer to the drawing of the headlight switch connector (the side the wires go in) and you will find a purple wire going to position number seven; this is the front parking light wire.



Push the wire into the connector and at the same time insert a small screwdriver, paper clip, or other suitable device into the connector from the switch side along the little notch to depress the latching tang. Depressing this tang will release and allow the wire to be removed.

This wire can then be inserted into position number four where it will share a terminal with the tail lights. The latching tang may need to be lifted a little to get the wire to snap into the connector.

Editor's Note: Beware! The text of the article says this: "This wire can then be inserted into position number four where it will share a terminal with the tail lights." But according to the schematic, position number four is unused. Position number 6 is the one for the tail lights. So, before you button up the job, be sure to check that the front parking lights actually DO come on with the headlights.

Before the modification, the front parking light circuit gets its power from the headlight circuit which is not a fused circuit. If you have a short in the parking light, it will just cook until something burns up. As modified, the parking lights will share a fuse with the tail lights and be less prone to damage if the circuit shorts out.

The neat thing about this operation is that it is reversible if you decide to put it back the way it was. (2/99)

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!

Car Shows and Other Events: LVCC-Sanctioned Events denoted with a check mark like this: ✓

Saturday, February 10, 2024 - LVCC Membership Meeting ✓

Location: Starlite Diner, 233 N Route 100, Allentown, PA 18106-9367. Time: 9 AM. Come for breakfast!

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

Sunday May 19, 2024 Corvair Ranch Open House

Location: Corvair Ranch, 1079 Bon-Ox Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325. Time: 9 AM 'til whenever. This is a Corvair owner meet-up. Come enjoy our hospitality, good food, games, raffles, prizes (plus a \$100 gift certificate grand prize), and most importantly, the company and friendship of many other Corvair enthusiasts. All this, while finding that NOS, Remanufactured and used parts to keep your Corvair looking great and running smooth. Take a tour of our complete grounds including our "field of dreams" (around 600 Corvairs) . Hope to see you there in your Vair! Hosted by the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club. Contact Tom Rahochik. Phone: 717-624-2805. E-mail: findit@theranch.today

Sunday June 2, 2024 - General Motors on Display Car Show

Location: Macungie Memorial Park (home of Das Awkscht Fescht), Rt. 100, center of Macungie, Pa. Time: 9 AM to 5 PM. Day of Show Price: \$15 per vehicle. No judging or trophies. High quality dash plaques for the first 100 registered vehicles excluding cars for sale. Door prizes will be awarded by drawing. Flea market spaces 20'x20' \$15.00 pre-registered, \$20.00 day of show. Vendors must furnish tables. For Sale signs are not permitted on the show field. Car corral available. Contact: Rosemary & Don Haley, 9 Beryl Rd.; Paoli, PA 19301. Phone: (610) 608-7904 Email: gmondisplay@gmail.com

July 22 to July 25, 2024 - 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!

LVCC Classified Ads



For Sale: 1962 Chevrolet Corvair Monza convertible. Black exterior with a red interior and white top. The exterior condition is good. The interior is good to very good. Some surface rust underneath. The car runs and drives great. Not sure of the horsepower. Powerglide automatic transmission. 57,000 original miles. The title is available. Asking \$10,000. Contact: Peter Baumbach. Harleysville, PA. Email: pgblab@verizon.net Phone: (610) 844-4415



A&L Corvair Parts: New Parts: Brakes hoses, air filters, oil filters, tune-up parts, brake shoes, shocks, tail light lenses, gaskets, plugs, cables, choke pull offs, electrical switches, gas filters, caps, backup switches, suspension parts, engine bearings, valves, emblems, exhaust, turbo parts, patch panels, early bezels, head studs, 140 exhaust extractors, Y pipes, mufflers, fuzzies, clutch cables, lower bracket, heim joints, models, magazines, CORSA magazines, Hot Wheels, Racing Champions cars and much, much more. Contact Larry for pricing. Used Parts: Too many to list. Larry Asheuer Call 267-994-1569 or email: alcorvair@msn.com

Sky King Automotive Services: Now offering Corvair head work. Valve-seat grinding, Pro Flow grinding/ polishing, cleaning-cutting head gasket surfaces, de-flashing, thread repair. (I have measurement equip to confirm correct gasket surface depths). HV carb rebuilding. Top engine cover modifications for one gasket, no more leaks! Sound proofing interiors, gas tank replacements, as well as rear and front axle bearing units. Late rears in stock! Bob King kcorvair@ptd.net or text/call to 610-442-2873.

Astro I Myths Busted **by Pete Koehler**

Source: This article is from the February 2024 issue of "The Aircooler", the official newsletter of the Detroit Area Corvair Club. Thank you goes to author Pete Koehler and editor Adam Morenski.

How many times have you heard or read about the Astro I show car and the super cool experimental 3.0 liter overhead cam engine that it had? Well, I'm about to bust that myth!

When the Detroit Area Corvair Club hosted the CORSA National Convention in Sterling Heights, Michigan in 2007, the guest speaker was Jim Musser, retired GM engineer. At the time that Chevrolet was developing the 2nd series Corvair suspension, Jim was head of Chevy R&D.

He and his team were testing several ideas. One of them became the underpinnings for the Monza GT. The second experimental chassis found its way under the Monza SS roadster. The third design was a monocoque unit with the aforementioned 3.0 OHC Corvair engine. It was run at Jim Hall's (Chaparral race cars) test track in Midland, Texas and other places - possibly Waterford in Michigan.

Once the design of the 2nd series Corvair suspension was complete, the third test chassis was sent over to GM Styling. In an article in Hemmings Classic Car magazine (Dec 2005) author Don Keefe relates the same story along with Dave Newell and Larry Claypool's agreement that this was the basis for the Astro I. This was probably sometime around 1965 or '66.

The finished product was completed and revealed to the public at the 1967 New York Auto Show. The engine in the car at time was not the "cammer" engine, but rather a stock 140 HP 4-carb engine. It was not designed to run and the car was not designed to be drivable. It was, in the vernacular of the show car folks, a "Push Mobile"! The automatic up and

down seat feature worked, but that was about all.

After the 1967 Show Circuit, the Astro I was no longer the Big Newz. I don't know what happened to it between 1967 and 1985. At one point it was repainted 1973 Corvette yellow and was displayed outside at the reflecting pond inside of the GM Tech Center property in Warren, MI.

Somehow the car was assigned to the Chevrolet Fleet Department and was being stored in a warehouse off of Livernois Avenue in Detroit. Our Stu Shuster caught wind that the car was scheduled to be scrapped by the Fleet guys. He knew that if we could "save" the car he could talk Chuck Jordan (Head of GM Design Staff at the time) into fixing it up.

So the day after my 33rd birthday, I "borrowed" a GM Proving Ground truck and driver and rescued the Astro I. The next week it went back to Warren and months later it reappeared with a shiny new face to the world. Still no "cammer" engine and still a "Push Mobile", but at least it got saved.

A final note; Larry Claypool and I discussed the possibility of making the Astro I a running and driving project. Fortunately Stu got Chuck Jordan's ear and arranged for the car to return to GM before anything adversely affected my career with the General. *P.S. Astro I remains a "push mobile", but it's on display at the GM Heritage Museum..*



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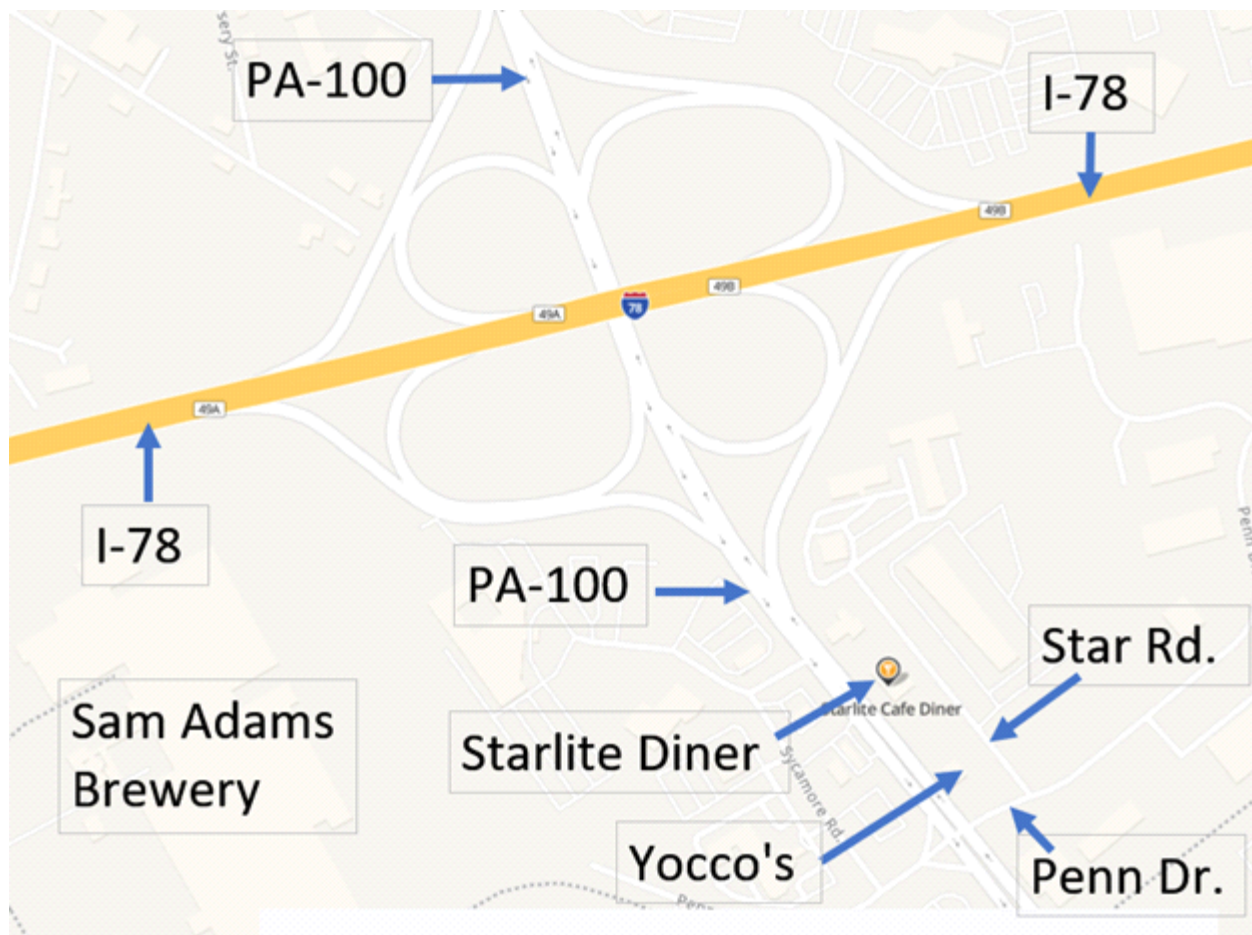
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February Meeting Location

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 at 9 AM. That's the second Saturday of the month..

The official address is 233 N Route 100, Allentown, PA 18106-9367, but to get 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.



LVCC Officers

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