



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LII, No. 2

February 2024



Early Styling Exercise for the 1960 Corvair? -- found by Jerry Yates.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

February

- 10 – **Group Corvair Social Meeting.** 6 p.m., Nonna Angela's Italian Restaurant, 2225 Defense Highway, Crofton MD. Bob Hall is making the reservations so if you plan to go, be sure he knows.
- 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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Have You Paid Your Dues?

While most members of Group Corvair are in good standing, there are still a few holdouts on the dues! I've sent notes to everyone that my records state is in arrears. Please don't make me drop you from our membership! So please make out a check (\$10/year and yes, you can pay for extra years) to "Group Corvair" and send it to:

Jim Simpson
3845 Wayson Road
Davidsonville, MD 21035

(If you have any questions about your standing, give me a call or drop me an email. I'll also be at the social meeting and will take cash or checks then.)

From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

As I write we are looking forward to our Group Corvair dinner, as announced via email earlier, at Nonna Angela's in Crofton at 6:00 pm on Saturday February 10th. Good food, good people and good conversation will be our priorities. We hope to see as many of you as possible. We've asked that you RSVP by Thursday the 8th, but if you can't by then let us know later anyway and we'll try to fit you in.

The organizers of the 2026 CORSA convention have named their board and are looking for others to head the various convention activities. Though the convention is a bit more than two years away, the sooner these posts are filled the easier the planning will be. See their announcement below in the newsletter. And speaking of CORSA Conventions—have you signed up for the 2024 one yet?

We are still working on a date in March to visit Lee Hamilton and his son to see the conversion Pete Frailey put together using a Buick aluminum V8. Lee rebuilt the engine and may welcome help reinstalling it. We'll send an email with details when we have them in case others might want to join club officers at Lee's place.

I am still researching Corvair insurance rates compared to other cars in the late 60s and early 70s to find old rate sheets. When I worked for GEICO decades ago my first answer to anyone who said my Corvair was unsafe was to point out that it cost the same or less to insure my car compared to a Nova, Falcon or a Valiant with a six-cylinder engine. If USAA, GEICO and Allstate didn't think my Corvair was unsafe why should anyone else?

I hope all of you are making steady progress with your Corvairs. If you have any special tool needs or need an extra hand or two let us know.

(From Diana Moy on behalf of the 2026 CORSA Convention Planning Committee)

As many of you know, CORSA approved and signed the 2026 Corsa Convention contract with the Wyndham/Courtyard Marriott. With the signing, we have a "green light" to proceed with the planning of the convention. A major part of that planning involves not only putting Convention Board directors in place, but to also assign event team leads to the events we have planned.

Our Convention Board consists of:

- *Grand Chairman - Titus Stewart (govairs@aol.com)*
- *Chairman - Tom Rahochik (66vairman@comcast.net)*
- *Deputy Chairman - Rick Sanford (ricksanford2020@gmail.com) and*
- *Secretary/Technology Coordinator - Dianna Moy (dianna.nicole.moy@comcast.net).*

To complete the Board, we are looking for a Treasurer that has accounting and data entry experience.

We want to give our sponsoring clubs first chance at the areas where we will be needing event team leads, so we will wait before looking for event team leaders locally through April 15, 2024 ("tax day"!!), and then if needed, solicit region-wide or nationally. Again, our preference is to have local club members take the lead. Granted, the event is two years away and making a firm commitment for a position this far out may be difficult, we still need to start getting the infrastructure of the 2026 Convention Committee built. The areas that we need event team leads are:

- *Registration - Position already accepted by Dianna Moy*
- *Concours - work side-by-side w/Ray Morales - CORSA Concours director*
- *Auto Cross - work side-by-side with CORSA Auto Cross director*
- *Economy Run Event*
- *Road Rally - work side-by-side with the CORSA Road Rally director*
- *Car Display Event*
- *Model Car Event*
- *Tour Events*
- *Hospitality Room*
- *Ice Cream/Bingo or Movie Night Events*

The convention board will provide assistance to event team leads if there would be a need. The convention board will also assist the event team lead with approval of monetary items once reviewed by the board and when/if approved, added to our CORSA budget.

Once the event team leads are in place, we will begin to solicit for volunteers. Volunteers can select the event(s) that they would like, and the times they are available for those events. Once the list of volunteers has been developed for an event, then that list will be sent to the event team leader.

Again, we know that there are some of you that would really want to help in a particular event, but don't want "the headaches" that may go with being the team lead. So, if you would like to help us to get things started and then "pass the baton" to someone else and just be a volunteer for the event, that could be worked out as well. Note that at least three event team leaders will work with someone from CORSA.

Please contact Titus, Tom, Rick or Dianna if you are interested in any of the above positions. Again, the 2026 CORSA Gettysburg convention is over two years out, but to be a success, we need to start planning and organizing NOW to make sure this is the best CORSA East Coast convention ever!

Sincerely,

Titus, Tom, Rick & Dianna

Minutes of the January Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

At 7:30 pm eight Group Corvair members gathered around their glowing computer screens and started logging into the January 16 Zoom meeting. Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order at 7:35. The minutes were approved as they appeared in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. Expenses were for the Christmas dinner at Jerry and Diana Yates's home. Income for the last month was from dues.

There was a discussion on an article in the last newsletter about Pete Frailey's (a former Group Corvair member) V8 car. Jerry Yates had given Pete a Corsa turbo body, but there's a possibility that Pete used another body for the V8 car and parted out the Corsa. Lee Hamilton now owns the car; he's a former Corvair mechanic at Rogers (now Ourisman) Chevrolet in Bowie. The club may plan an outing to go see Lee and the V8 car in Riva, MD.

The next topic for discussion turned to electric vehicles (EVs) and various chargers for them. Then attention turned to the electro Vair. As usual, there was a range of opinions about EVs and both their current and long-term practicality.

Bob suggested a social dinner in February at Nonna Angela's Italian restaurant in Crofton. [Note: The dinner will be at 6:00 pm on Saturday February 10 at 2225 Defense Highway, Crofton, MD.]

Byron LaMotte has begun working on the 2024 vintage car rally that supports the Oxford, MD community center. (Five Corvairs, including three belonging to Group Corvair members, participated last fall.) The 2024 rally is scheduled for September 14. There will be more details as the time gets closer.

After the conclusion of the business meeting, there was a general tech discussion. One topic was that for brighter taillights, spray the inside of the lights a bright white as opposed to any of the "aluminum" paints or the metal. Gloss white paint reflects light very well. A discussion on bushings followed.

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Byron seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Last month, I said that I'd explore ways to install diodes on a late model Corvair to enable the parking light portion of LED bulbs to be powered at the same time as the brighter stop or turn portions.

As usual with these things, it turned out to be a little more complicated than it seemed. Installing diodes in the bases of the rear stop/turn/parking lights was fairly straightforward. It takes a small soldering iron and a steady hand to solder them in place, but once installed, the modification is essentially invisible since the socket base is

pointed down and can't be seen from above. The diodes connect the brake light elements to the parking light element just as described in last month's tech topic discussion.

But – and there's always a but – there's a problem with the car's wiring. No, Chevrolet didn't make a mistake; they made a sound decision. They wired the parking lights in parallel. This is the wire highlighted in brown to the right. Note how it goes from the left rear parking light (bottom) to the right rear parking light (top). So if there's power applied to one parking light it also goes to the other so both light up. This is exactly what you want – normally.

And here's the but. With the addition of the diodes to power the parking light elements of LED bulbs when the bright brake or turn signal elements are powered, there's now a circuit to light up the parking elements on both sides at the same time. Power now goes from the bright stop/turn signal elements to the parking light element and also through the parallel brown wire connection to the opposite parking light element.

This isn't a problem when you use the brakes; after all, you want both sides to light up as bright as possible. But when you use a turn signal, that "extra" circuit provides "cross talk" and lights up the (dimmer) parking light on the opposite side of the car. That might be just a bit confusing to someone behind you trying to figure out which way you are turning.

Not all is lost though. There is a way around this, but (another but!) it requires a relatively minor modification to the wiring and the addition of two more diodes.

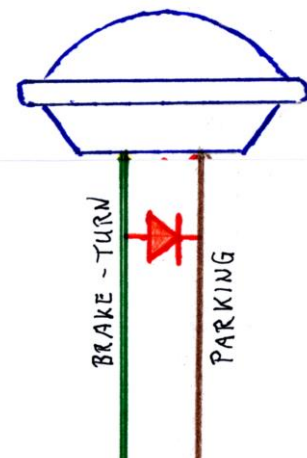
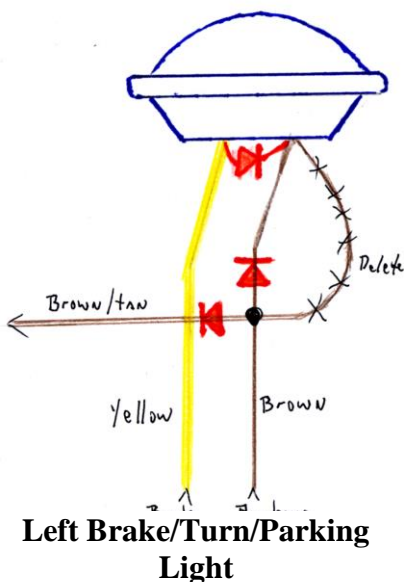
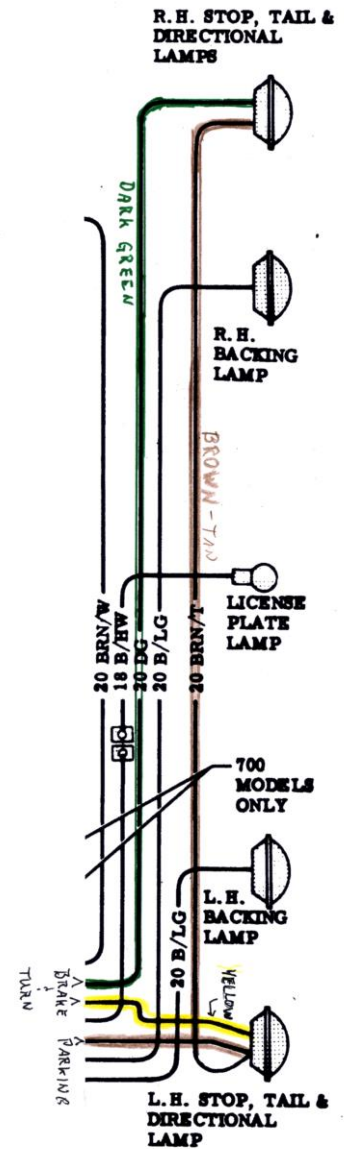
You need to clip the two wires going into the parking light element on the left rear parking light and install diodes as show in the drawing. My sketch to the lower right shows three diodes. The one next to the tail light is the one connecting the brake elements to the parking elements. The other two are the extra ones that prevent "cross talk" between the left and right lights.

The '66 shop manual says that one of the wires connecting to the parking light is brown and the other is brown with a tan stripe, but my reproduction harness just uses two brown wires. In wiring harnesses that don't have that tan stripe, you'll need to figure out which of the brown wires goes to the right side light. The

simplest way to determine which is which is to just cut one of the brown wires and then turn on the parking lights. If just the left light comes on and the right one is off, then you've found the wire that goes to the right side. If both are off, then it's the wire that goes forward to the main harness.

Note that you can clip one of the two brown wires at the lamp socket, just be sure it's the correct one. Also note that the two diodes connect to the brown wire coming from the main harness. One diode then goes to the parking light on the left turn signal – the remaining wire from the lamp socket – and the other diode goes off to the right-hand parking light.

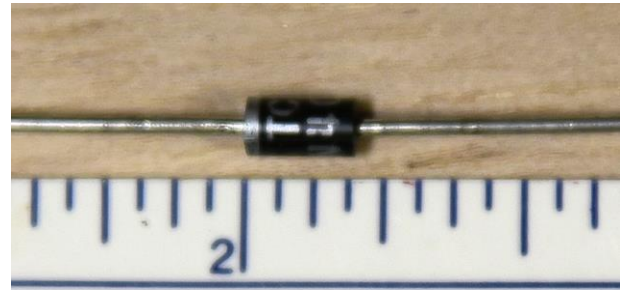
On the right side, all you have to do is install the diode that connects the brake to the parking light as shown in the diagram to the right.



Right Brake/Turn/Parking Light

There are some differences between the original and reproduction wiring harnesses. Originals have a black with yellow stripe wire going to the stop lights, reproductions seem to use solid yellow.

Here are some notes and pictures for those of you who don't routinely work with electronics. The diodes I'm using are common 1N4001 rectifier diodes. You can get them on ebay for as little as about \$0.13 each if you buy in moderate quantities – just watch out for shipping. (The 1N4001 is one of a family of diodes – 1N4002, 1N4003, etc. Any of them will work, the higher numbered one are just designed to withstand higher voltages (not needed) and are marginally more expensive.)

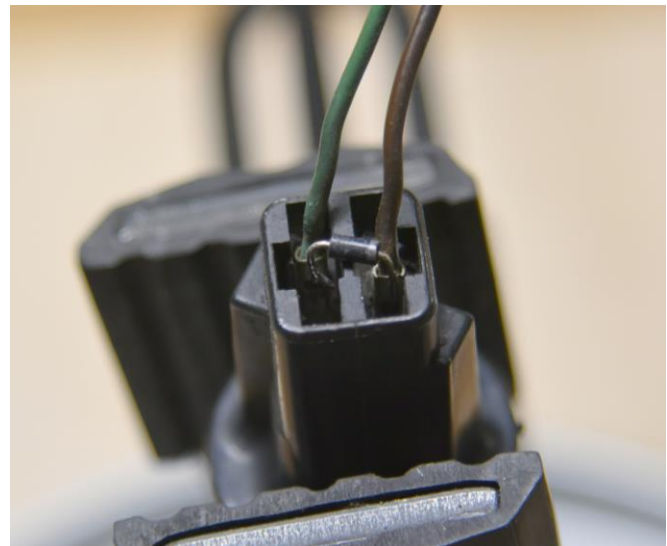


1N4001 Diode. Note the silver stripe on the left end and overall small size ~ 3/16" long.

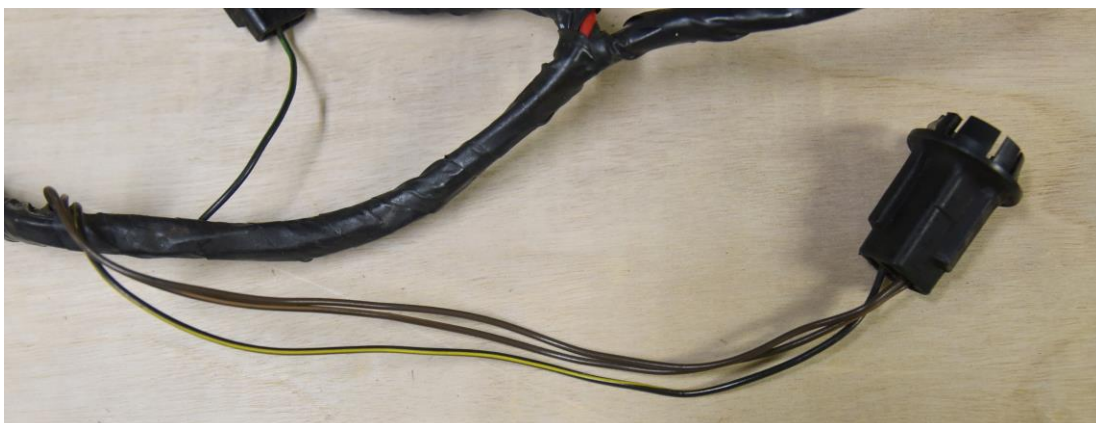
These diodes have a silver band around one end; that's the end that the arrow point toward in the sketches and must be connected to the parking light element for it to work correctly. Getting them backwards won't break anything, but it won't work right.



Left Brake/Turn/Parking Light. This is a reproduction harness; Note the pair of brown wires and the single solid yellow wire.



Diode Installed on Right Light. Note the silver band is toward the brown (parking) wire.



An Original Wiring Harness. Note the yellow stripe on the black wire. I'd clip the brown wires about 3" from where they enter the main bundle and install the "cross talk" prevention diodes there.

Now in all of this, you might have noticed that I haven't mentioned the front parking lights. That was deliberate. In my experiments, I installed amber LEDs in the front and was very disappointed. The standard 1157 incandescent bulbs produced a much more pleasing and apparently brighter light. I suspect that the color spectrum of the incandescent lights, combined with the amber colored parking light lenses, just work better. So I'm not going to change the front lights. You might want to experiment; perhaps there's a better amber LED bulb than the Sylvania-brand ones I've tried. To paraphrase, "your lumens may vary".

Respect for Beaters

Bob Hall

I've owned at least eight Corvairs (things are a little hazy). I bought one new, two respectable used ones, one very nice A/C sport sedan that had had an engine fire, and one very beaten, beater. Each one of them taught me something new about Corvair repair and maintenance, but a much-abused 1966 Cameo Beige 3-speed Monza Convertible was the most challenging and, in a way, the most rewarding of all the cars. I bought it from an Ethiopian graduate student at the University of Maryland where I worked at the time. There was revolution in his Ethiopia homeland, and he needed to go back immediately to "kill the bad people" so I got it for \$200.00. He seemed like a really nice, smart guy so I hope he got them before they got him.

The Monza had good sized dents on both front fenders and the left rear quarter, a big one on the driver's door and one on the left rear cove corner. There was duct tape all over the fabric top and it was rusty. I had tuned it up as a favor to the prior owner a few months before I bought it, so I knew the engine was pretty strong. I actually felt sorry for the car.

But now it was mine. I lived in an apartment, had two Corvairs and was about to get married. Thankfully my mother had a concrete driveway, so I started sorting out my new purchase. Over the next weeks I did the following work:

Replaced the clutch, pressure plate, engine crankshaft seals and throw-out bearing.

Removed the engine sheet metal, thoroughly cleaned it, and de-flashed the cylinder heads.

Resealed the engine and replaced all gaskets except for the top cover.

Replaced the lower heater hoses and the top fresh air hose.

Lubed the front suspension and replaced the idler arm and Pittman arm bushing.

Replaced the rear drive shafts universal joints.

Replaced the front wheel bearings and lubed the speedo cable.

Replaced the brake shoes and hardware and flushed the brake fluid.

Pulled out all the cardboard and newspaper that had been stuffed in the A pillars to fill the rusty gaps and sprayed some Rustoleum rusty metal primer in the area to at least slow down the rust.

Put on new tires.

I carefully washed and waxed all the paint where there weren't rust holes.

And then I drove and enjoyed that car for the next two plus years. I used it to carpool to work. When a massive snowstorm shut down the DC area and my boss couldn't get to his home, I drove him to his brother's place through unplowed streets; during the drive, he marveled that we were the only car not spinning its tires and how great the heater was. After I got a complete, used, convertible top installed we took it to Tennessee, across the Smoky Mountains, to Cape Hatteras and back to Maryland. It went all over the DC area and to Rehoboth Beach, Lewes and Dewey Beach (where finally I had to replace the top cover seal) many times. I taught my wife how to drive a stick shift in it. When we bought our own home, it helped move our things.

When the rust got to be too extensive, I sold it to someone who said he wanted it for parts, but who then sold it to a retired sailor at the Soldiers' Home. It ended up at Jack Dempsey's shop where it got parted out after having given us many miles of dependable service and great memories—without any car payments.

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: 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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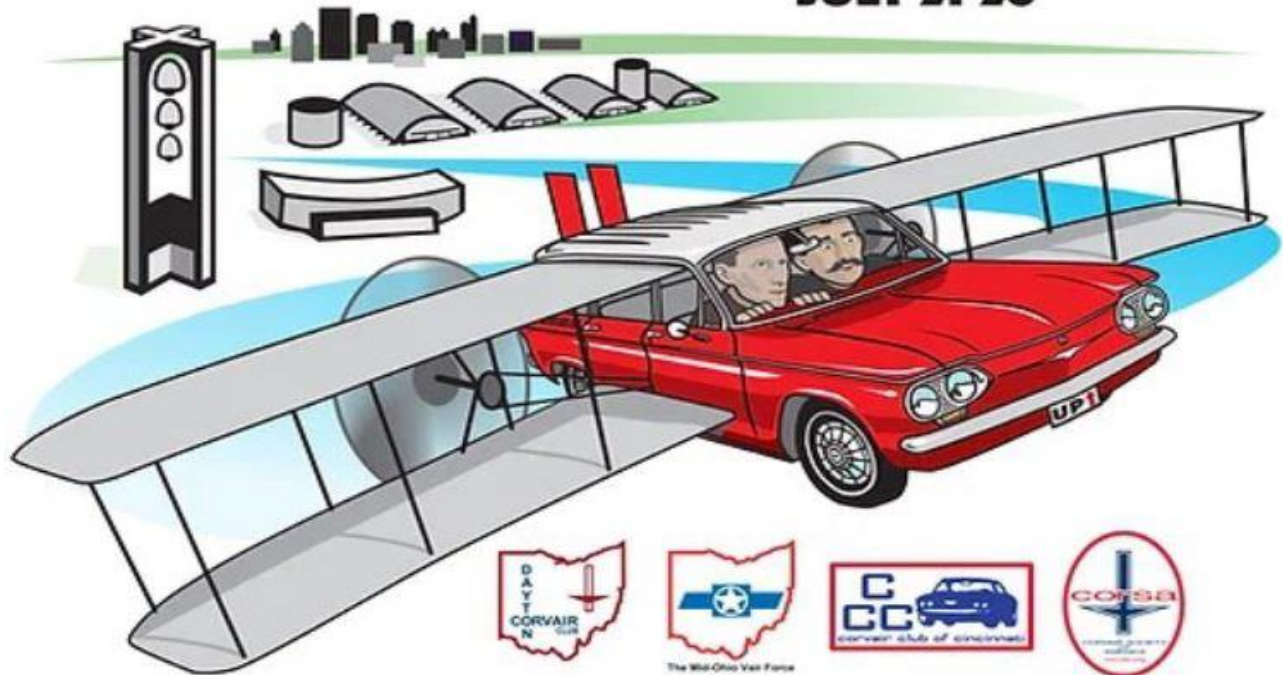
400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

www.corvair.com.

Check out their “What’s New” page for Clark’s newest offerings. There is some interesting stuff there including a modern replacement for the “guts” of the Spyder and Corsa tachometers.

CORVAIRBORNE!

**2024 INTERNATIONAL
CORVAIR CONVENTION
JULY 21-26**



**MARRIOTT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
1414 S PATTERSON BLVD - DAYTON, OH 45409**

**MORE INFORMATION ON
WWW.DAYTONCORVAIRCLUB.COM**



A Concept for a Next-Generation Corvair. *(Found on the Internet by Jerry Yates)*