



# *the fifth wheel*

JULY 2024

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

ESTABLISHED 1976

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***Next Meeting: Sunday Aug. 4 at 3 PM***  
***Corvair Row at Das Awkscht Fescht***  
***(No meeting in July)***

*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.

# ***The Great Race and the Hannibal 8!***

*Editor's Note: There were several Corvair-powered custom vehicles built back in the 1960s. Factory show cars, like the Spyder SS, Monza SS, Monza GT and Astro I come to mind. Then there were the Italian jobs, such as the Bertone Testudo and the Pininfarina Speciale. Not to mention those wild things built by American customizers, like Darryl Starbird's "Forcasta" and Gene Winfield's "Reactor".*

*Here is an article about a very unusual Corvair-powered vehicle. It's about the Hannibal 8, a contraption built for the 1965 movie, The Great Race! And it still exists. It's on display at Stahl's Auto Museum in New Baltimore, Michigan.*

*Thanks go to Scott Oberholzer who brought the existence of the Hannibal 8 to your editor's attention. Full credit for the text of the article goes to Stahl's which, in addition to the Hannibal 8, has a fantastic collection of unusual cars and other auto-related paraphernalia. You can check 'em out at <https://www.stahlsauto.com/>.*

The Great Race is a 1965 American slapstick comedy



Technicolor film starring Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis, and Natalie Wood, directed by Blake Edwards, written by Blake Edwards and Arthur A. Ross. "The Great Race" was a parody of the historically significant 1908 New York to Paris automobile race, which was won by the American manufacturer Thomas Flyer. In the movie, the Leslie Special is driven by Tony Curtis while his archrival Professor Fate, portrayed by Jack Lemmon, competes in the Hannibal 8.

For the shooting of the movie, four Hannibal 8s were built—each being slightly different than the other. The Hannibal 8s were true fantasy cars that were built to do a variety of destructive tasks. Much like the James Bond 007 Aston Martin, the Hannibal 8s could raise and lower themselves, shoot a cannon and provide smoke screens so their competitors could not complete the race.

The Hannibal 8s' fictional persona was that of a rocket propelled car built like an elevator that contained hidden devices of sabotage that would allow its villain driver to beat his heroic competitor. After Warner Brothers decided to let the vehicles go, they became one of the prime attractions at the world famous Movie World Cars of the Stars Museum in Buena Park, California, owned by the father and son team of Jim Brucker Sr. and Jr. and were displayed until the museum closed its doors in the late '70's.

The 1964 Hannibal 8 was custom built by Warner Bros at a cost of \$150,000 (\$150,000 in 1964 is equivalent to over \$1 million today). All hand constructed, it is a true work of movie magic art and is powered by a Corvair 6-cylinder, air-cooled engine with a 3-speed manual transmission and four chain driven rear wheels. While each of the Hannibal 8s looked virtually identical, there were small differences between each version.

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## **MINUTES**

### **Lehigh Valley Corvair Club**

Membership Meeting  
June 15, 2024  
America OnWheels Museum  
Allentown, PA

The meeting was called to order at 10:18 AM by President Al Lacki.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the

*(Continued on page 4)*





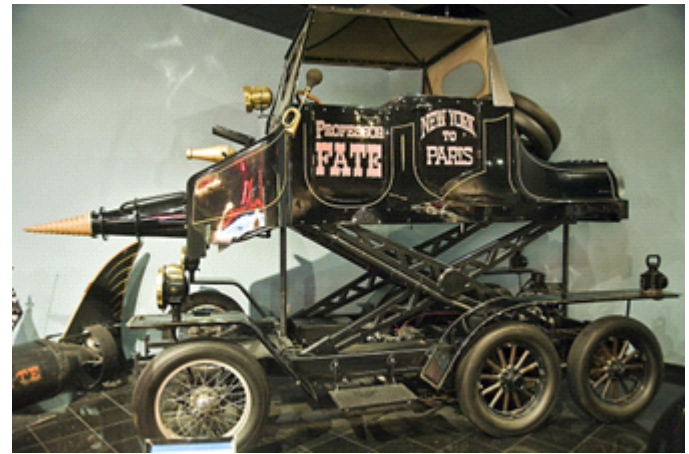
This is one of five Hannibal 8s built for the movie. The curator at Stahl's Museum found this one in Denmark, brought it over to the USA and had it restored.



Before restoration. Lot's of plumbing to make all those wacky features work! Look closely and you can see the Corvair bell-housing and starter!



Yes, it runs under its own power! It has a cannon that emerges and retracts from the car's bonnet and a functional smoke screen.



The lift mechanism actually works. That way, it could ford deep streams and rivers on the way to Paris!



The red stinger was meant to be a heat gun for melting through snow drifts and giving a hot poke to race opponents!



To make sure he won the race, Professor Fate also had a rocket-powered rail car and a torpedo!



May meeting were approved as published in the Fifth Wheel newsletter.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the treasurer's report was approved as published in the Fifth Wheel newsletter.

#### Old Business:

Al Lacki reviewed the list of upcoming car shows as published in the June Fifth Wheel newsletter. Meeting attendees were reminded that Das Awkscht Fescht "club day" is Sunday, August 4, and that the deadline to register is July 1st. The NECC track event at Pocono is July 20. The First State Corvair Club's annual Corvair show is August 24. The Blue Valley Farm Show Youth Advisory All Motor Show is June 22 in Bangor.

#### New Business:

Al Lacki reviewed the results of the recent election for CORSA Directors. Due to the dates for the NECC track event at Pocono and the CORSA convention in Ohio it was decided to cancel LVCC's regular July meeting. It was reported that there is a rough 1965 convertible available for \$650 at ABE Auto Salvage

As per usual, a wide-ranging informal discussion took place.

#### Show & Tell:

Greg Dittrich shared a new-in-the-wrapper model kit of a

Corvair-power dune buggy, found at Ollie's. Bob Marlow passed around his vintage copy of a Chevrolet Dealer "Parts and Accessories Price Schedule and Numerical Index" covering the years 1938-1968, a 1,178-page book.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.

The meeting itself was preceded by and followed by a one-man pop-up swap meet in the parking lot, as Scott Oberholtzer brought his pickup and trailer, loaded with Corvair parts excess to his needs and all priced at \$5 or less.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Marlow, LVCC Secretary

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### ***The Saga of the Only Surviving Fuel Injected Prototype Corvair Engine, by Pete Koehler***

*Source: July 2024 Detroit Area Corvair Club newsletter, The Aircooler.*

Back in the early 1960's Chevrolet was experimenting with ways to improve the performance of the Corvair flat six cylinder engine. Fuel injection was tried. Supercharging and turbocharging were investigated. In the end, turbocharging was the answer and the other ideas were dropped. The prototype fuel injection parts were also dropped, probably in



a dumpster at or near the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan. This was around 1964-5 as some of the injectors had casting dates between 1962 and 1964.

Jumping ahead about ten years these same parts resurfaced in California. They were acquired by club members for a few hundred dollars (\$500?) and sat in boxes for almost another ten years. Larry Claypool of the Chicago club and I had the crazy idea to put together a fuel injected engine with these bits. The plan was to send the completed project to Michigan and the first-ever Corvair-only museum display at the Sloan Museum in Flint. This was in 1986. The engine had complete internals, but the FI parts were just for show.

After the six-month run at the Sloan, the engine went back into storage. I think it may have been part of an early Corvair Preservation Foundation (CPF) Museum attempt in Virginia. That was a short-term arrangement with a local building owner.

The next time the FI engine surfaced, it was to be part of a multi-city tour and displayed with other CPF artifacts in 2010. Before that started, Clark Hartzel and I rebuilt the display making it lighter and easier to move around by gutting the block. It still looked like an engine but had no crank or cam or pistons and the heads were empty as well. Clark added new velocity stacks that were not true to the original design, but they were shiny!

The last time that the prototype Corvair FI engine was under our control was at the 2014 Back to the Bricks event in Flint. Famous drag racer Don Garlits from Ocala, Florida was paid to be a feature at the event. He brought one of his original slingshot dragsters for display. At the end of the event the Corvair FI engine was loaded into his trailer and headed South.

What happened after that is a matter that not everyone is in agreement with. We thought we were loaning the engine to Don for display in his museum since we didn't have a museum of our own at that time. Proper paperwork wasn't completed and without it ownership is being questioned.

At least the engine is on display and the story can be told and seen by the general public. It would be nice to get it back and proudly put it on display in the CPF Museum in Illinois. Unfortunately, that might not happen in my lifetime.

Don Garlits is still active and at just north of 90 I say good for him! If he has a change of heart we might see our engine back in our hands. Whatever happens this story has a better ending than if the prototype parts were scrapped way back in 1964 as GM had intended. ■



## ***An Evening With Jerry Thompson, as transcribed by Mike McGowan***

You may be wondering if a factory-built fuel injected Corvair engine ever ran outside the walls of the GM Tech Center. The answer is "Yes"!

Here is an excerpt from "An Evening with Jerry Thompson", an article that appeared in the March 2001 issue of the CORSA Communique magazine. It's a transcription of a tech session held at the Year 2000 CORSA convention held in Daytona, Florida. Chevrolet engineer and race car driver Jerry Thompson was interviewed there by James Rice and Dave Newell.

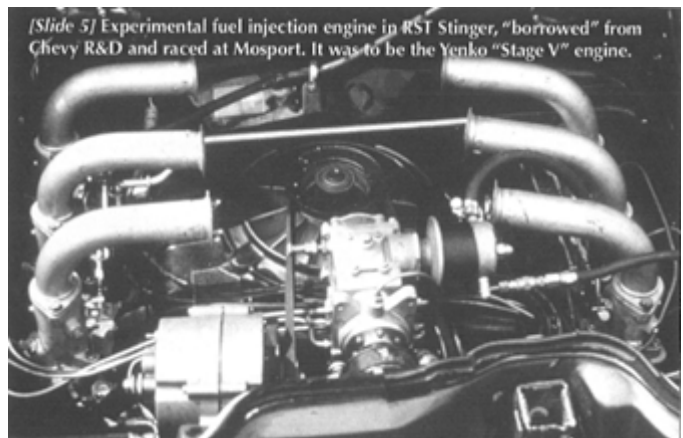
Jerry was involved in the development of several Corvair racing cars and won the SCCA D-Production National Championship in 1967 in a Yenko Stinger Corvair. And in 1966, the factory "lent" Yenko and Jerry a fuel injected engine to race at Mosport.

The excerpt below is only in regard to the fuel injected engine. The full article covers much more about Yenko Stingers in particular and Corvair racing in general. If you are a member of CORSA and if you'd like to read the article in its entirety, log onto [www.corvalr.org](http://www.corvalr.org) and download the March 2001 issue of the Communique.

Here is what Jerry Thompson said about one of the picture slides he displayed during the interview.

*This was a skunkworks project that I mentioned to you. This was a Rochester timed fuel injection that Knudsen [Bunkie Knudsen, the then-president of the Chevrolet Motor Division, ed.] wanted to come out with as a special Corvair package.*

*We got sort of special permission that drifted down through Ed Cole to steal all this stuff for a weekend and bring it back. Sorta like, just steal it and if you get caught, we'll bail you out somehow.*



*We took it home and put it on our engine and went to Canada. They had a class up there that they called Improved Production. So we showed up at Mosport with a Stinger, and of course they hadn't seen a Stinger and they didn't even know a Corvair. It was ferocious.*

*So when the tech inspector opened it up, he's looking at all the plumbing and stuff, and he says, "what is that?" I said, "Well, that's 'improved production.'" He said, "I guess so."*

*He put a sticker on it, and we were running. We were running third behind a couple of Lotus Cortinas which were the champions the previous year in whatever they called it, that British Touring Car series. And we were giving them fits, and then we burned a piston. Shame on us.*

Unfortunately, that was the only time the fuel injected engine was entered in competition. The SCCA had no equivalent to the Canadian Improved Production class so this special engine never appeared again. And as noted, it was "borrowed" from GM, so it had to go back to the factory.

The previous article mentions that the engine on display in the Garlits museum was built-up from parts retrieved from a dumpster in 1964. But the engine raced at Mosport was installed in a Yenke Stinger, which means it appeared in either 1966 or 1967. Perhaps there were more than one factory-built fuel injected Corvair engine.

Another possibility is that GM discarded the parts a few years later, after the Mosport engine failed. If that's the case, then the engine on display at the Garlits museum may be equipped with the same fuel injection parts as the engine run at Mosport.

## **Treasury Report**

### **By Joan Lacki**

<b>Beginning Balance: (May 31)</b>		<b>\$ 1,817.97</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>		
None	\$ -	
		\$ -
<b>Expenses:</b>		
June Newsletter	\$ (10.60)	
		\$ (10.60)
<b>Ending Balance: (June 30)</b>		<b>\$ 1,807.37</b>

## **Membership Renewal Time**

### **by Bob Marlow, LVCC Secretary**

*Editor's Note: The content of Bob's article, first published a year ago, remains fresh, so here it is again! Read on....*

While the LVCC bylaws state that dues for membership are on a year-to-year basis running from August 1st through the following July 31st, from a practical standpoint all membership are considered to be due for renewal during the annual Das Awkscht Fescht car show.

Why? Because Das Awkscht Fescht, which occurs during the first weekend in August each year, is our club's largest annual gathering, and so it is convenient for many members to renew during the show. I'll be doing so myself.

This year, instead of simply collecting your dues money and saying thanks, we will ask you to fill out a membership form with basic information – name, address, phone, email – so that we can do a better job of keeping track of membership status and a better job of communicating with everyone.

If you are going to be at Das Awkscht Fescht – and why wouldn't you be? – please look for either myself, Joan Lacki or Al Lacki among the Corvair display on Sunday and re-up. A one-year renewal is \$20, and a two-year renewal is \$35.

If you are not going to be at Das Awkscht Fescht, you can download the membership form that's posted on our website and mail it in with your dues payment, or you can renew at our next meeting at the America On Wheels museum.

And thank you for being a part of LVCC! Bob Marlow.

## **Hey! I Signed-Up for Two Years!**

Over the past twelve months, a bunch of people signed up for our new two-year membership option. Of course, we don't expect you to pay again until your two-year period expires.

Here's how we'll make sure your two-year membership will be honored: At Das Awkscht Fescht, we'll have a list of all our members and it will show the "paid through" date for each person. If you're paid through July 2024, then we'll ask you to renew then and there. If you're paid through July 2025, your membership will continue until then. You'll owe us nothing at Das Awkscht Fescht this year.

### New Members.

Some of our new members joined LVCC just a few months ago. We'll assume your first year will begin, not on the date

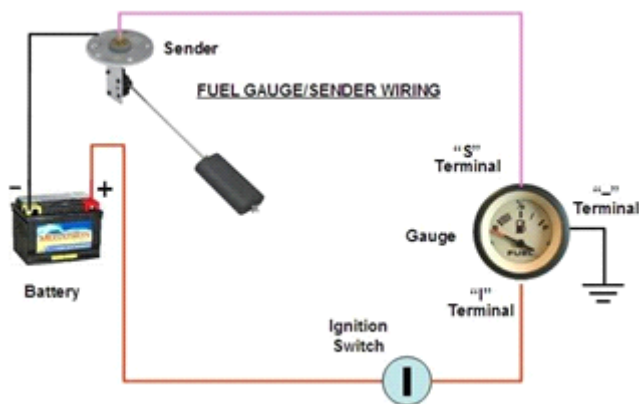
when you joined us, but instead on August 1st instead. That means you got a few months of membership free. And that way, you'll be on the same August 1st to July 31st schedule just like everybody else.

#### Existing Members.

We realize that not everybody pays their dues at Das Awkscht Fescht. Some folks pay during our regular monthly meetings. Others mail us a check. That's fine. And of course, we keep you on the LVCC membership roster for a reasonable number of months until you do pay up.

## ***Gas Gauge Diagnosis Revisited*** **by Mike Dawson**

Gas gauges for early models, late models and FC vehicles all operate essentially the same; they vary only in the resistances involved. A 12-volt power supply is provided to one side of the dashboard meter and a variable resistance to ground is provided by the in tank rheostat to the other side of the meter. This varies the magnetism that locates the gauge needle.



Use of a quality ohm meter would be a very useful tool. A cheap unit will not read accurately in the range you need, which is 0-100 ohms.

The early model and FC units are a 0-30 ohm resistance and the late model units are 0-90 ohms. There can be a variance of a few ohms when checking sending units, including new ones.

**Quick Check:** With the key on, you can check your dashboard meter movement by removing the output wire at the tank; your meter should read over full. (On FC models you would have to cut the wire coming from the tank since you cannot reach the connector). Ground that wire and your meter should read empty. Keep in mind that late model dashboards can lose their ground either at the screw attachment or

at any of the ground strap connections behind the dash. The dashboard meter will read overfull if you lose the dash ground.

After performing the quick check test which confirms that your dashboard meter works properly, the following information may be useful. The majority of the problems will come from one of the following: (i) a missing ground between the tank's sending unit and the body, (ii) a float that has sunk, or (iii) a bad rheostat or wire on the tank sending unit.

There are several tests that can help you determine where the problem is before you start replacing parts. If your dashboard meter reads overfull, the dashboard ground is good and the dashboard meter passed the quick check; then there is an open circuit between the dashboard meter and the sending unit, an open in the sending unit itself, or between the sending unit and a good ground.

To check the sending unit, you would disconnect the wire on the tank sending unit's (on FCs, this requires cutting the wire unless you pull the tank) and check the resistance between the stud on the sending unit and the sending unit flange. Your ohm meter should indicate some resistance on the 0-100 scale depending on early or late. If not, then the open circuit is in the sending unit rheostat or the in-tank connection. You might be able to repair the problem but replacing the sending unit, float, pickup filter and seal would be the permanent solution. Stainless steel units are now available.

If you register the correct resistance at the tank, then next check the ground for the tank. The ground wire must have a good connection where it is attached to the body. If the ground and the wire are good, then you must have an open in the wire from the tank's sending unit to the dashboard meter. The quick check above would have shown this when you grounded the wire at the tank -- the gauge unit would not have moved.

If you have another sending unit available, hook it up by using a long jumper wire connected to the sending unit wire you have pulled off. With the key on, ground the unit and move the float to observe your meter movement. If (a) the dashboard meter reads empty all the time without the jumper but (b) works fine with the jumper, and (c) the meter passed the quick check, then proceed to the following possibilities:

1. The float has a hole in it and has sunk to the bottom. Attach your ohm meter to the output stud at the sending unit and to ground. You would read either 0 or only a few ohms, confirming the float is on the bottom.
2. The wire from the sending unit to the dashboard meter is grounded. It could have a screw grounding it or the insulation scraped off around the tunnel pan area or if it is an FC the wire may be pinched between the tank and the body.
3. The insulation on the sending unit strap that connects the



rheostat to the output stud has rotted away and is grounding at one end or the other where the strap can touch.

Other possible causes of erroneous meter readings; I have experienced all of these:

- The wrong year sending unit has been installed,
- The bottom of the tank has been attacked by a floor jack,
- A rusty tank has had a liquid liner applied inside without proper cleaning. The liner came off and is under the float like a wadded up newspaper.

It is not uncommon to find that those before you have altered wiring for some modification or repaired wiring with non-soldered connections that corroded.

One final note: Before installing a replacement sending unit, use a long jumper and a ground to remotely move the float up and down while observing the dashboard meter. You can adjust the arm movement slightly to get closer to the full or empty mark if necessary.

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## ***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: ✓

#### Sunday July 14, 2024. New Holland Classic Car, Gas Engine & Tractor Show

Location: New Holland Community Memorial Park, 400 E. Jackson Street, New Holland, PA. Time: 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Price: \$20 per show car. You MUST pre-register no later than 12 Noon, Saturday July 13 to be a show participant! Make checks payable to N.H. Car Show and mail to New Holland Car Show, 331 E. Main Street, New Holland PA 17557. Food & beverages available on-site beginning 9 AM. Live music begins 11 AM. German band, Dixieland Band, Swing Band. *This is a judged show. To determine your vehicle's class, visit [www.NewHollandBand.org](http://www.NewHollandBand.org).* Please do NOT arrive early. It will not affect show field parking. For show information and pre-registration, call Steve Loewen at (717) 413-6229 before 8 PM or email him at [loewen58@yahoo.com](mailto:loewen58@yahoo.com).

#### Saturday, July 20, 2024 - Lehigh Valley Zoo Car Show

Location: 5150 Game Preserve Road, Schnecksville, PA. Time: 10 AM to 4 PM. Rain or Shine. Price: \$0 per show vehicle. Yes, \$0 and in addition, you get two complimentary admission tickets to the Zoo. RSVP required! The show cars will be parked at covered locations around the zoo property and the organizers need to know how many cars need to be accommodated. The plan is to have club cars parked together. Interested? Call Julia Wilhide at (610) 799-4171 Extension 241 or email [jwilhide@lvzoo.org](mailto:jwilhide@lvzoo.org)

#### Saturday July 20, 2024. High Performance Driving with NECC

Location: Pocono Raceway. 1234 Long Pond Rd, Long Pond, PA 18334-8019. Time: 7 AM to 5 PM. How would you like to test your car and your driving skills on a "Real Racetrack"? We do not mean 5 or 6 laps. We mean a full day of driving experience on a sports car racing circuit. Normal Price = \$375 per driver. Register before May 24 and receive a \$50 early bird discount. We are Northeast Corvair Council, Inc. doing business as NECC Motorsports. Full details: [www.neccmotorsports.com](http://www.neccmotorsports.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

(Continued on page 9)



## LVCC Calendar of Events



(Continued from page 8)

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!

### ✓Sunday August 4, 2024 - Das Awkscht Fescht Car Club Day

Location: Macungie Memorial Park, 50 North Poplar Street, Macungie, PA 18062. Time: 8 AM to 3 PM. Price: \$20 per show car. Pre-registration required and due July 1st! Rain or shine. Sunday is Car Club Day and LVCC has reserved a section just for Corvairs! Phone: 610-967-2317. Email: [info@awkscht.com](mailto:info@awkscht.com) <https://awkscht.com/registration/>

### Sunday August 11, 2024 - 24th Annual Perry Township Auto Show

Location: Perry Township Recreation Area, 702 Onyx Cave Road, Hamburg, PA 19526. Rain Date: August 18. Time: 9 AM to 3 PM. Day of Show Price: \$20 per show car. (Pre-registration available for \$15). Door prizes. Food and music.

### Saturday, August 24, 2024. First State (Delaware) Corvair Car Show

Location: Limestone Presbyterian Church, 3201 Limestone Rd, Wilmington, DE 19808. Time: 9 AM to 2 PM. This is an all-Corvair show sponsored by the First State Corvair Club, a chapter of the Corvair Society of America. The entry fee covers coffee, cookies, beverages, a variety of great sandwiches for lunch, plenty of door prizes and nice trophies. It was well worth the price of registration. For more info, contact Mike Slotwinski at 302-377-5268 or e-mail him at [slinkyslot@verizon.net](mailto:slinkyslot@verizon.net)

### Saturday August 31, 2024 - 58th Annual Duryea Day Car & Truck Show

Location: Boyertown Community Park, 419 South Madison Street, Boyertown, PA. Time: 9 AM to 3 PM. Day of Show Price: \$20 per show car. Price includes admittance to the Boyertown Antique Car Museum. Flea market spaces available. Hundreds of vehicles will be on display throughout the park. Shuttle service will also be available between the Park and Museum throughout the event.

### Saturday, September 21, 2024 - Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club Corvair Day

Location: Eastern Museum of Motor Racing (EMMR), 100 Baltimore Road, York Springs, PA 17372. Time: 9 AM to 3 PM. Day of Show Price: \$15 per show car. Free flea market spaces. Join us for our Annual Corvair Day event being held at Eastern Museum of Motor Racing (EMMR). <https://www.centralpacorvairclub.org>

## LVCC Classified Ads



**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: [a-lcorvair@msn.com](mailto:a-lcorvair@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](mailto:kcorvair@ptd.net) or text/call to 610-442-2873.

**Jeff Marvill's Suspension Services:** I have over 45 years of suspension experience and I'm extremely experienced with the Corvair suspension systems as well as all other makes of vintage cars. I also have a computerized alignment system here so all repairs can remain in house. Now that I'm retired, I have more available time to repair these great cars. I can be reached at 267-424-4911 .Jeff Marvill, Perkasio, PA.

## August Meeting Location Map!

No meeting in July! Instead, we'll meet on Sunday, August 4 during Das Awkscht Fescht. Time: Approximately 3 PM. Location: Macungie Memorial Park, Veterans Way, Macungie, PA. Go to the LVCC EZ-Up at Corvair Row. Walk-ins are welcome at Das Awkscht Fescht, so if you aren't showing your car, it's OK. There is a nominal charge for walk-ins at the entrances to the show field.



**Clark's**  
Corvair Parts®

**Clark's Corvair Parts®**  
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