



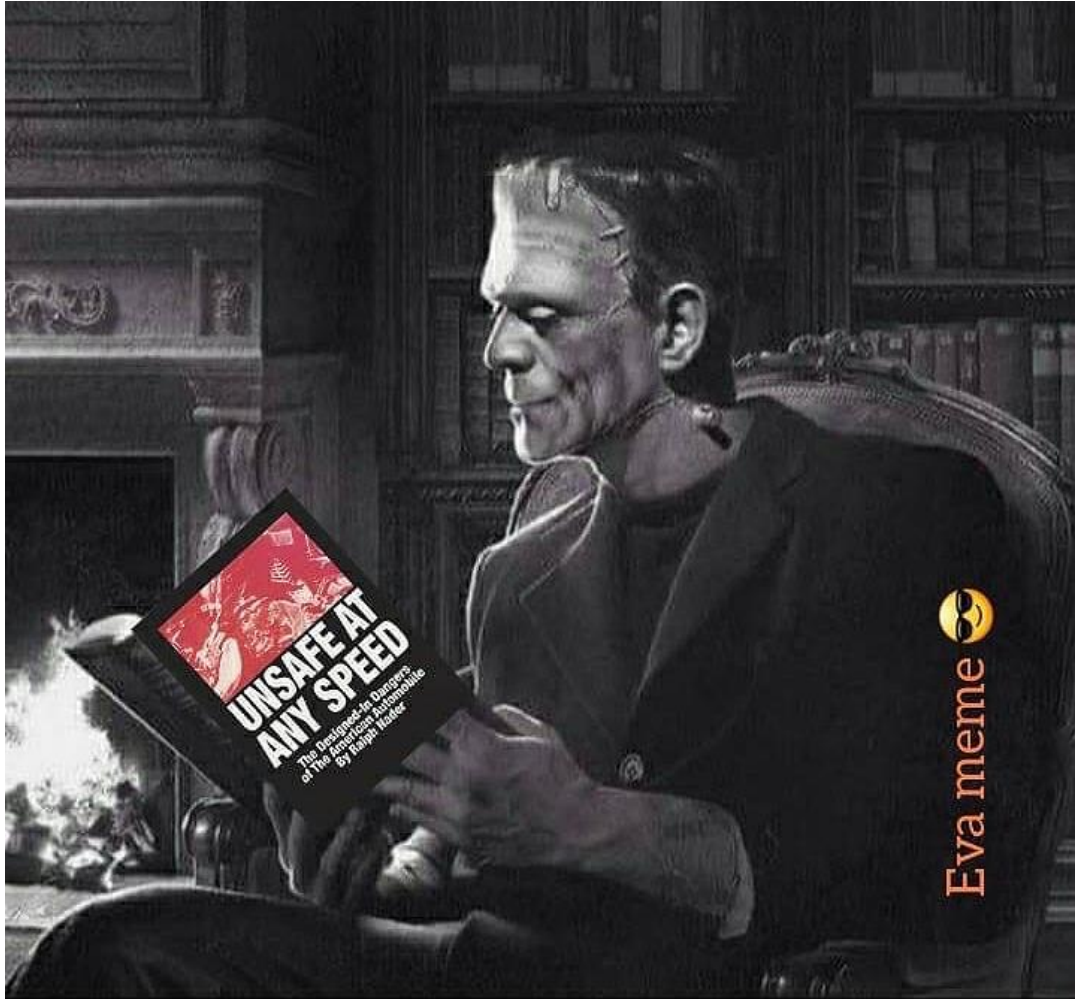
Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LII, No. 10

October 2024



Happy Halloween from Group Corvair

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

October

- 15 – **Group Corvair On-Line Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. Zoom link information will be sent to all GC members.
- 19 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. Glenview Mansion at Rockville Civic Center Park, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville, MD. Cars must arrive between 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.; spectators from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registrations are closed, so unless you've preregistered, plan to be just a spectator.
- 19 – NJACE hosting a sale of a major collection of Corvair parts. 10 – 4, 110 Wildcat Rd., Franklin, NJ.

November

3 -- NJACE hosting a sale of a major collection of Corvair part that weren't sold the previous month. 10 – 4, 110 Wildcat Rd., Franklin, NJ.

19 – Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Nomination of officers for 2025.

December

17 – Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Election of officers for 2025.

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

If you haven't already made plans to attend the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show now is the time to do so. Group Corvair is one of the sponsoring clubs for the even this Saturday, October 19th, 11:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The Simpson's turbo Corsa, the Yates's 140 Yenke clone, the Shiffler's resurrected Corsa and, all the way from the Eastern Shore, Byron LaMotte's Fitch Sprint are registered. A great opportunity to see some of Group Corvairs' finest cars all together.

<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Rockville-Antique-and-Classic-Car-Show>

Thanks again to Mark and Dorothy Shiffler for hosting Group Corvair at our September social gathering. It's always good to get together without having to work on our cars.

The 2026 Corsa convention planning continues. Another Zoom meeting is scheduled for the 16th to chart progress and move forward on plans for the events. Tom Rahochik and Dianna Moy of Mid Maryland Corvairs met with hotel staff in early October to continue planning. We had hoped to have Group Corvair attend as well, but there is still plenty of time for another trip—possibly in early November.

Group Corvair coffee mugs with the Yates designed GC logo are available for purchase so if you don't have one let Jim Simpson know. Gus Torbert passed them along recently.

We still plan on tech sessions in the near future for the Grofik's suspension work and Lorenzo's brake work. Both were postponed due to Covid and a family obligation. Let us know if you would like GC to help with any of your projects and we will set a date.

Looking forward to "seeing" everyone at the October Group Corvair Zoom Meeting.

Minutes of the September Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

As the eight Group Corvair members started logging into the September 17 virtual meeting, the general conversation topics included the eastern shore rally, how to tastefully modify cars, and barn finds—a rather eclectic range.

Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order at 7:45 pm. The minutes of the August meeting were approved as they appeared in the last newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. There were no expenses during the last month. He also informed us that our new member, Lorenzo Church, needs some help with his Monza (this was his mother's car and was pictured on the front of last month's newsletter). He wants to do two upgrades to the car – installing a dual master brake cylinder and changing to an electric fuel pump but would like some assistance since he's never worked on a Corvair. We decided to do this in two phases, taking on the brake work first. Lorenzo has the Clark's dual master kit and has bought a set of new brake lines since we're not sure of the age of the ones on the car. Possibly five members said they would be interested in participating in the tech session. *[A tech session was scheduled but due to unforeseen circumstances had to be cancelled. It will be rescheduled later.]*

The tech session with Barry Grofic was canceled because of illness. We are working on rescheduling that event.

The Rockville show will be on October 19 and all those attending need to be pre-registered. At the time of our meeting, there were only 200 slots remaining out of 600. *[Pre-registration is now closed.]*

A group working on the 2026 national convention is going up to the hotel in Gettysburg (possibly October 14) to check out the facilities. It's not clear just how many people will be included in the visit.

Jerry Yates will send Bob the original artwork for our Group Corvair logo. Bob wants to investigate producing some new merchandise. Bob suggested reproducing license plate surrounds, possibly with the words "Corvair—Back to the Future." Jim suggested we not get too carried away yet, we still have several items from past years in storage. Jim will inventory them and put some photos in the newsletter.

There was a discussion on past and present autocrosses in the local area.

We reviewed the list of those planning to attend the cookout at Mark and Dorothy Shiffler's home. Jim plans to bring John Moody's (a former Group Corvair member) projector and home movies of car events from the 1950's.

Bob said he is working on an article about rustproofing the inside of a car.

Dave Edsinger told us the story about what happened to his race car when the engine blew up during the autocross at Summit Point. The short story is that it threw a rod.

Mark is planning to refurbish a Corsa dash. He has one and offered to do one for Jim as well. (Jim will take one to the cookout for Mark to work on.)

After the "formal" meeting, there was a long general discussion on various Corvair projects.

The meeting ended at 8:58 pm.

A Big Thanks to Mark & Dorothy Shiffler

Group Corvair extends a big thanks to the Shiffler's for hosting us for a group dinner! Mark played chef, smoking both pork and chicken as a main course and baking a wonderful layer cake for dessert. The weather was perfect, so we ate out on their deck overlooking Buckingham's Cove. We watched the geese coming in to rest for the night as the sun set.

After the dessert – that was THICK and tasty frosting Mark – we went inside and watched some "home movies". The late John Moody, a long-time Group Corvair member, had taken a bunch of 8 mm movies in the early 1950s as he traveled in the US, Europe, and Japan. He filmed races such as the Mille Miglia, Nürburgring, and Watkins Glen. It was great watching a procession of Mercedes SL-300s and Porsche 356s in the rain. But it wasn't all racing; there was a reel of Charlie Chaplin shorts that we all enjoyed.

All in all, a great evening. Thanks again, Mark and Dorothy.

Pete Frailey and now Lee Hamilton's' V8 Car

A handful of Group Corvair members visited Lee Hamilton recently to take a look at Pete Frailey's V8 conversion. For those of you who don't know about the car, it was one of a handful of V8 conversions done by Art Silva in the late 1960s. Art realized that the aluminum Oldsmobile/Buick 215 cu. in. V8 weighed a bit less than the Corvair

engine and, if converted to reverse rotation, would fit in the Corvair engine bay (with a few “minor” modifications. Pete Frailey loved to customize things and a custom V8 powered Corvair was right up his alley.

Not long after the car was converted, but before really being finished, it was rear-ended and the engine damaged. One thing led to another and Pete sold the car with it ending up in Lee Hamilton’s possession. Lee repaired most of the damage and built a replacement engine, but then, once again, life intervened and progress has at least temporarily stalled.

Several of us had the opportunity to visit Lee and take some pictures. Hopefully the car will be rebuilt and another of Art Silva’s creations will be back on the road again.



Repaired left rear quarter.



Bare block is just to hold things together.



Custom interior, power windows, A/C.



New Engine, just about ready to install.

Oxford Community Center Road Rally

Jim Simpson

Once again, Corvairs and Group Corvair were well represented in the Oxford Community Center’s annual fund-raising road rally. The organizer – Byron LaMotte – had his two Corvairs, his Fitch Sprint and his custom Super Spyder. Marolyn and I drove our Corsa turbo and Bruce Weeks (unfortunately not a member of Group Corvair) had his Corsa 140. So, 4 out of the 61 cars registered were Corvairs. The rest were the usual cross section of Porsches, Mercedes, and a smattering of other sports cars. While it was a bit more humid than last year, the weather was great.

We all gathered at the Community Center where they served huge platters of breakfast souffle, either meat lovers' or vegetarian. Both were great and filling. As with last year, all the cars left together and did a parade lap of Oxford and then proceeded to head out into the countryside touring Maryland's southern east shore. Besides just the basic route instructions, Byron challenged us with counting a number of items along the way: 25 mph signs to ensure we were paying



attention to the speed limits, water towers, churches, and graveyards. Some of the churches were a bit tricky – does a small, wooden shed with a cross on top count as a church? And there were some unusual design water towers as well.

While we started out as a convoy, along the route we became increasingly separated as traffic lights and stop signs broke us up and some people decided to follow their own interpretation of the route instructions. Toward the

end Marolyn and I were leading a pack of about 10 cars who must have thought we looked like we knew where we were going. (Or possibly it was just easy to follow the bright silver cove on a Corvair Corsa.)

Our destination turned out to be the Red Roost restaurant on the Wicomico River about 15 miles from the Virginia border. We parked our cars there and then headed out to the "Tiki Bar" out on the shore. While the restaurant did provide a shuttle, some hiked the ½ mile. There we were served lunch, and the awards were handed out before we wended our weary ways home.



Tech Topics

Mark Shiffler, '66 Corsa: This is to update you all from my last article on the status of my '66 Corsa. I would like to say everything has been perfect since I got the engine running and the car back on the road. Well...I would like to say that.

After getting it on the road, I have been fighting both the ignition system and the carbs to get both a reliable idle and smooth operation.

Let's start with the primary carbs. Even though I disassembled and soaked them overnight in a gallon bucket of carb cleaner and used a rebuilding kit, I had trouble with the float needle valves leaking through and slowly flooding down the carb throat. It would happen intermittently, and I spent a lot of time removing, checking, and reinstalling them to get the floats to operate correctly. Ultimately, I replaced the inlet needle valves with ball valves and set the float up to 1 1/8" versus the original call out of 1 1/16". The primary carbs seem to be holding at this point.

The second issue I had with the primaries was, I believe, that the throttle shafts leaked from wear. They were the original carbs and had 57,000 miles. (More about that later.) A set of new throttle shafts and O-ring kits from Clarks were installed. No good effort goes unpunished but after installing all the above the throttle shafts would not reliably close all the way and sometimes would hang up with the engine idling at 900 rpm vice the 650 when the throttle shafts seated correctly. I finally decided a second carb return spring in the engine compartment was the solution, which seemed to work. The two springs nest together nicely, and you can hardly tell there is a second spring. (I wonder what the show judges will think????)

Since it still sometimes had problems running, I next opted to replace the point's ignition with a Pertronics electronic system. The first time out the car ran perfect...at last success. Unfortunately, the carb gremlins were not done with me yet. On a second trip the secondary's started flooding and the engine laughed at me. A trip to the Eastern Shore and back was not pleasant and there might have been some grumbling from the driver.

After more conversations in the Group and one with a Clark's tech, it was time to change the secondary's back to a soft needle inlet valve (recommended by Clark's and graciously provided at no cost) and raise the float to 1 5/16" to stop the flooding. I also installed one step larger jets – "48" – so the secondaries are a little richer.

Last, but not least, I discovered, and believe, that the passenger-side secondary carb was not original. The other three carbs had the original metal ID tags and that one did not. This carb would leak air through the closed throttle plate at idle and cause the right bank to run lean. I would put my hand over the carb throat at the top when the car was at idle, and it would pull my palm down due to the throttle valve leaking. By comparison, the one on the driver's side showed no sign of noticeable air leakage. After taking the carb apart many times, I finally discovered the throttle disk has been sanded square on the edge and not at an angle as it should be. California Corvair had a replacement and once installed it has seemed to do the trick. Time will tell. Both secondary carbs also got the Clark's O-ring kit for the shafts.

I would like to say a test run was successful but that was not to be. There was still a mid-range misfire. The only last trick I had was to put size 52 jets in the primary carbs. After doing that, it seemed to run just fine in the garage so off for a test drive. I went about 20 miles, and everything seemed to be fixed, and the car ran just great.

But Murphy had other plans. About 3 miles from home the car quit. The electric fuel pump was no longer running. I checked the in-line fuse and bypassed the inertia switch without success. Thankfully I have Hagerty insurance and towing. Great service and the car was finally back at home.

Further checking and I discovered that the fuse for the heater, the circuit I tapped to run the fuel pump, was open. This was an original 10-amp fuse dating back to the car's 1966 manufacturing and I do not have any idea why it blew but it is replaced now, and I carry spares. The in-line fuse for the fuel pump, downstream of the heater fuse, is 7 1/2 amps so I don't think it was the fuel pump that blew the fuse, and the heater fan was not on.

Hopefully the car continues to run right. My next outing will be to the Rockville Car show. Fingers crossed I make it there and back with the Corsa still running like a top.

Pressure Plate Checking: From "The Preventive Maintenance Series" by Mike Dawson, in the August 2024 issue of *Prairie Capital Corvair Association* newsletter:

If you are contemplating installing a used pressure plate, the following may be useful in determining if there are any potential issues. It is always helpful if you personally know the past performance of a pressure plate or if you acquire one from another source, that the previous owner can share the history. Also, you should be familiar with the matched set of clutch parts that must be kept together. Failure to address that can lead to a no engagement or a no release condition. In addition, keep in mind that all original flywheels will fail so be sure and replace yours if it appears original.



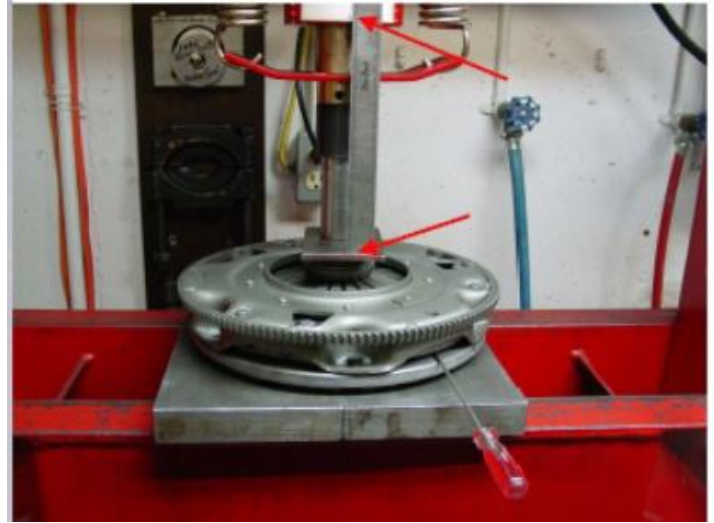
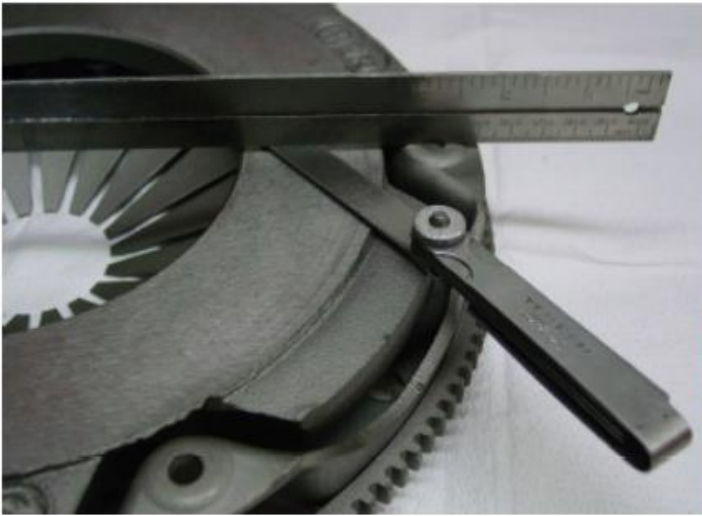
The picture on the left shows a broken weld that can be fairly common and the picture on the right shows a repair that extended into the teeth causing the starter to try and break something like the nose. You would also be checking that the teeth were not worn down excessively.



If the fingers are staggered as in the picture on the left, it is either a broken diaphragm spring or it can be pieces of clutch disc material lodged under the fingers and against the frame. Mark the plate and frame to match during re-assembly and separate the two parts. If the spring does not appear broken, use a press to depress the fingers about half an inch and inspect with a flashlight. Blow out any debris or use a wire or pick. Release the pressure and see if the fingers are back in alignment.



The fingers on the left picture have significant wear, probably caused by a worn or frozen clutch release bearing, or possibly just from incorrect adjustment allowing the bearing to ride on the fingers continuously. The ring gear in the right picture has been flattened slightly, probably from being dropped.



You can measure the clearance as in the left picture, with a feeler gauge (0.200 Early and 0.100 Late) but I have found that measurement to vary quite a bit with both originals and rebuilds.

The better check is actual performance as illustrated in the right picture. Bolt the flywheel/disc/pressure plate assembly with every other bolt and place in a press. Set up a measurement to record the distance the press piston travels from just touching the fingers to a complete release as judged by pressure on the disc with the thin screwdriver. The disc will slide a short distance to the step of the flywheel when released. The vertical distance has been very consistent in my checks and should be between 5/16 and 7/16 inches for all. If that measurement is greater or less, the clutch may not disengage, or it may slip. Your pedal travels much more than that but the final pull of the clutch rod is leveraged through the clutch linkage and the fork. The two arrows in the right picture show the measurement check.

Touching up the face can be done with a dual action sander and varying grades of medium paper or if you have hot spots, they usually can be removed by careful use of a body sander and coarse discs. Follow up with the dual action sander. If you have heavy grooves, it may be junk; I have not found any shop that will grind a pressure plate since Casper closed. An issue with grinding more than a few thousands is the need to shim the spring to compensate or machine the flywheel outer surface (late model only). With the price of rebuilt pressure plates from \$150 - \$300, re-using a known good one may be a consideration.

In the Media

Following His Dream of an Early-Model: Bob Winukur contributed this: Tony Penz found a 1964 Monza: <https://theworldofclassiccars.com/2024/08/01/1964-corvair-monza/>

CORSA has History Pages: While reading the *Prairie Capital Corvair Association* newsletter, I discovered that the CORSA website is starting to accumulate articles capturing the memories of some of the earliest workers on the Corvair assembly line. You need to be a CORSA member to gain access. Go to www.corvair.org, log in, and search on "history" in the search box at the bottom of the left-hand menu.

Vair Vendor

For Sale: Early and Late Parts:

'64 3.27 differential, \$40; '64 3.27 4-speed transaxle, \$100; '64 Synder 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 Synder, \$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.

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

(5/23)

For Sale: Mike Coale is thinning his collection: Contact Mike Coale, mikecoale@verizon.net or 443-994-2559 and see just what he has available!

Corvair Part and Services

Clark's Corvair Parts

400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA
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www.corvair.com

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growing online parts store at:

www.CaliforniaCorvairParts.com

More than 30 parts categories including everything from New, Used, Rebuilt and NOS items. The store currently features over 560 parts available, and we are adding more every week. For those of you who enjoy shopping online we invite you to have a look.

We accept all credit cards and of course Pay Pal payments too. 951-284-3555, 15090 La Palma Dr., Chino, CA 91710.

Thanks, Jeffrey Williams, CCPI

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The Pete Frailey/Lee Hamilton Rear Engine V8 Corvair