



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LIII, No. 2

February 2025



Group Corvair Winter Dinner at Nonna Angela's

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Membership Dues are Due! Dues are \$10 per year. Send your checks to Jim Simpson, 3845 Wayson Rd, Davidsonville, MD 21035. Some of you have paid for multiple years; if you are unsure if you need to pay, please contact Jim Simpson (301-262-0978 or simpsonj@verizon.net).

February

18 -- Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m. The Zoom instructions will be sent the weekend before. Please check your email! "See" you on-line.

March

1 – Annual NJACE Indoor Corvair Parts Auction, 9 a.m. setup, 10:30 bidding. Pompton Lakes Elks Lodge, 15 Perrin Ave., Pompton Lakes, NJ. <https://www.corvair.org/chapters/njace/auctions.html>

18 -- Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

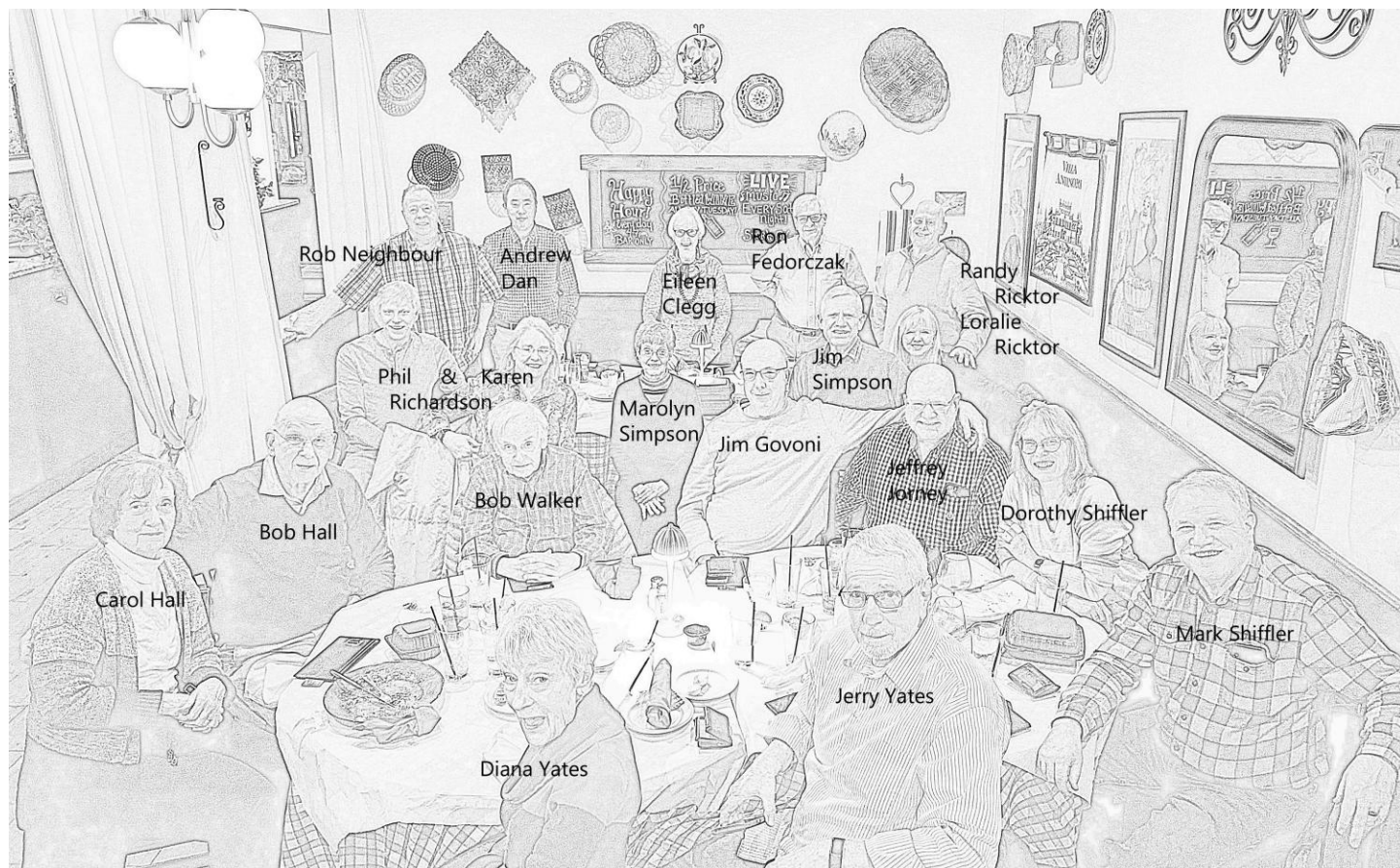
April

15 -- Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

May

20 -- Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

20 – 23 – CORSA International Convention. Note the change in venue to Lan Luis Obispo, CA.



Who's Who

GROUP CORVAIR 2024 OFFICERS and Points of Contact

President: Bob Hall

4612 Franklin St., Kensington, MD 20895

301-493-8405 HallGrenn@aol.com

Vice President: Mark Shiffler

174 Dividing Ct., Arnold, MD 21012

443-770-4719 mshiphty@gmail.com

Secretary: Marolyn Simpson

3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035

301-262-0978 or 240-232-2820

MarolynSimpson1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Jim Simpson

3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035

301-262-0978 or 240-232-2820 simpsonj@verizon.net

Newsletter Editor: Jim Simpson

3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035

301-262-0978 or 240-232-2820 simpsonj@verizon.net

From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

Our February social dinner at Nonna Angela's in Crofton was well attended by 19 Group Corvair members—we almost had 21. We met Randy and Loralie Ricktor for the first time and learned about their plans for their Corsa. Bob Walker and Phil and Karen Richardson made it to Crofton as well, coming from Reston and Southern Maryland respectively. They are joint winners of the Farthest Distance Award, and they will each receive an AC PF4 (blue) oil filter the next time we see them in person. Ideas for the location of our next social dinner in March are welcome.

Carol and I recently saw the film “A Complete Unknown” in a theater and recommend it. Being set in the ‘60s when Bob Dylan was “completely unknown” meant that I would also be searching for any Corvairs used in the production. I noticed a green with white stripe Corvan in the New York scenes, a '63 (trunk being loaded with luggage) and a LM dark coupe in some of the scenes at the Newport Festival which was shot in Cape May, New Jersey. The film made us both feel a bit younger, which is one more reason we are recommending it.

Spring is coming and now is the time to think about Tech Session ideas. Our club has a wealth of experience and tools that can be tapped to help club members with their Corvairs. Let us know if any assistance with your cars would be helpful.

And while we do have a wealth of experience among us there is also a dearth of submissions to our newsletter so share your photos, stories (good and bad) with Jim. He's a first-rate editor among his other skills (with an assist from Marolyn).

If you haven't sent your \$10.00 dues payment for 2025 to Jim, please get it to him soon at the address listed above.

Looking forward to “seeing” you at our next Zoom meeting.

Minutes of the January Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Group Corvair members started logging into the January 21 Zoom meeting at 7:30 pm. At 7:43 Bob Hall called the meeting to order with 11 participants including Rob Neighbour who joined us from Hanoi, Viet Nam and Carl Kelsen from Melbourne, Australia. Rob told us that the air quality in Hanoi was not good.

The minutes of the December meeting were accepted as written in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. The treasury is doing well now, but some expenses will be coming up soon.

There was a discussion on various types of virtual meeting platforms (Zoom, Meet, etc.), but we will probably stay with Zoom for now even though we are paying for a subscription.

Mark Shiffler discussed the work he needed to do on his Corsa such as new transmission synchros and a look at the clutch. For now, he is keeping the car covered while it is stored outside. There was a discussion on the transmission work and Bob recommended checking with Virtual Vairs for helpful suggestions.

Carl showed us a copy of the magazine *Unique Cars* which is published in Australia and said they wanted to do an article on Corvairs. Carl will be interviewed for the article and promised to get us a copy. On another note, his car now has a small transmission fluid leak, but he has not been able to determine the source.

We discussed having an in-person social meeting in early February—possibly at Nonna Angela's Italian Bistro in Crofton, MD. [Note: *The dinner was at for 6:00 pm, Tuesday, Feb 4 at Nonna Angela's.*]

We are waiting for more information on the 2026 convention. Our understanding is that it will be at the Wyndam Hotel in Gettysburg with the autocross at the nearby Harley Davidson lot. There haven't been any planning meetings lately as far as we know.

Jim asked that members send him more tech topic suggestions for the newsletter. Mark brought up the topic of fuel pumps, which was followed by a more in-depth discussion.

Jim mentioned that he had seen a red late model Corvair by the side of the road on Rt. 50 the previous weekend.

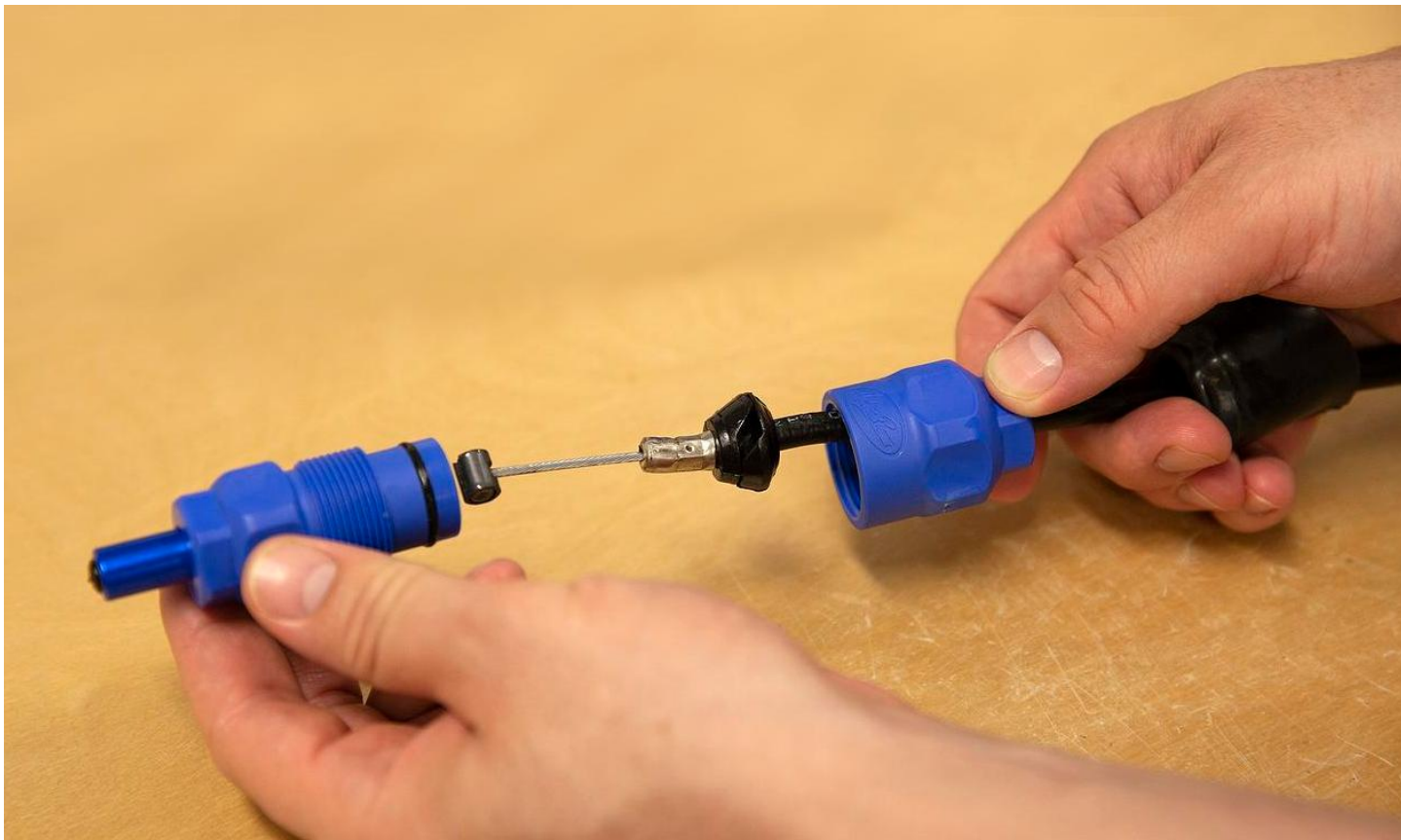
The meeting ended with several stories of driving a Corvair without a clutch cable.

The meeting ended at 8:40 pm.

Tech Topics

Stiff Heater Control Cables? The lubricant on the push-pull cables that connect the dash control to the heater box back by the engine is now somewhere between 55 and 65 years old. It's dried out over the years and whatever lubricity it had back when new is now likely long gone. So, what do you do about it? About a year ago, there was a discussion on the Virtual Vairs email list that I saved.

Cliff Tibbitts found a cable lubrication tool for sale on-line: <https://www.motionpro.com/product/08-0609> It's apparently designed for motorcycle control cables, but it looks like it will work just fine on the late-model jacketed control cables.



Take a look at the website but essentially it is a plastic device that clamps over the end of the cable and assists you in forcing lubrication into the cable jacket. There's also a less expensive version on this site; it's not entirely clear to me how it works. Of course, the maker recommends using their brand of cable lube at \$18/can; perhaps it's really worth that much?

In the Virtual Vairs discussion, there was a comment suggesting it wouldn't work on early-model Corvair control cables. I'm not familiar with the early model cables. Do they lack the jacket on the late-model version? If so, I would agree that this wouldn't work.

GM Heritage Archive: While this is not a new tip, it's worth repeating that GM maintains an archive of information about nearly every make and model they've ever produced. While the content and completeness varies over the years, GM has scanned detailed descriptions, technical information, and options available for all their cars. While this is not a substitute for either the shop manual, assembly manual, or the original showroom sales brochures, these records give huge amounts of detail that aren't available in any other source. And the best thing about them is that they are FREE!

Download your own collection from: <https://www.gm.com/heritage/archive/vehicle-information-kits> And while you are there, go up to the home page <https://www.gm.com/heritage> and poke around there for a while, particularly in the GM Heritage Vehicle Collection. And if you are really serious about something, check the archive link. They state that they have trained researchers who are available to assist you in your search.

Here's an example from the 1962 Corvair package. This is one of the pages that specifically addresses the turbocharged engine in the new for 1962 Corvair Spyder. If you are of a technical bent, it is interesting to have this detailed information. For instance, you can look at the engine power curves for the '62 base 80 hp engine and see the difference between the "gross" and "net" hp rating. It turns out that at 4400 rpm, that poor little engine is actually producing less usable hp than at 3600 rpm. As it turns out the cooling fan and muffler are "eating" about 22 hp at 4400 rpm. At 3600, the losses are much lower – about 10 hp – so there is more "real" hp available at that lower rpm.

145 CUBIC INCH SIX CYLINDER ENGINE – Cont'd.

TURBOCHARGED ENGINE
150 H. P. 6-CYLINDER (RPO 690)

VEHICLE PERFORMANCE FACTORS (Model 927)

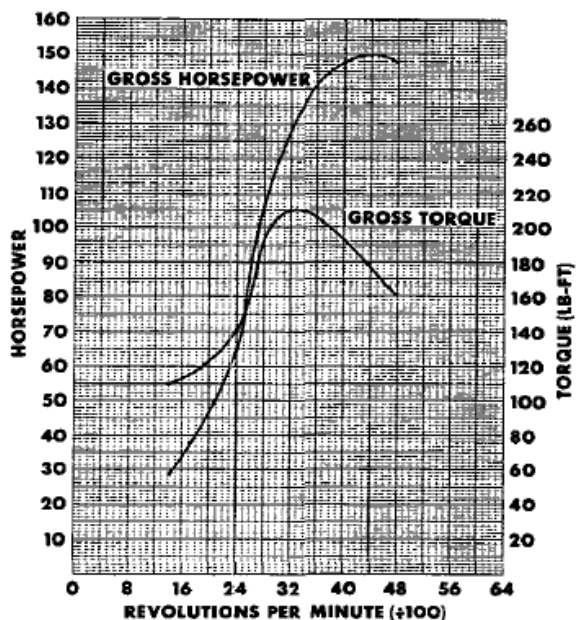
Rear Axle Ratio	3.55:1
Transmission	4-Speed
Performance Weight (lbs)	3175
Pounds per Gross HP	21.16
Pounds per Cu. In. Displacement	21.90
Gross HP per Cu. In. Displacement	1.034
Power Displacement (Cu. Ft./Mile)	127.04
Displacement Factor (Cu. Ft./Ton Mile)	80.03

GLOSSARY

Performance Weight = Curb Weight plus 600 Lb
(weight of four 150 Lb passengers)

Power Displacement = $\frac{\text{Crankshaft Revs/Mi} \times \text{Piston Displacement}}{2 \times 1728}$

Displacement Factor = $\frac{\text{Power Displacement}}{\text{Performance Wt (tons)}}$



The engine performance curves represent full throttle performance as obtained from dynamometer test data corrected to standard barometric pressure 29.92 inches of mercury and standard temperature of 60°F.

GROSS POWER and TORQUE were obtained in a regular dynamometer test with the dynamometer exhaust

system, no fan, generator not charging, optimum spark advance, and optimum fuel setting.

NET POWER and TORQUE were obtained from a dynamometer test simulating actual operating conditions when the engine is in its vehicle, except the generator is not charging.

And Something for you FC Fans

(Via *The Four Wheel Independent*, the newsletter of the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club.)



Corvair “Rampside” Was The Most Radical Pickup GM Ever Made

Taken from “MotorBiscuit”

Author: Thom Taylor, Published on Dec 7, 2019

From our 2000s perspective, it's hard to think back to realize how radical Chevy's Corvair Rampside pickup really was. In many ways, it was more of a shift in pickup design than the Tesla Cyber truck is seen as today. But everything about the Corvair pickup was a departure. From its rear-engine location to the cab-forward design it was unique in more ways. Its novel built-in ramp allowed for loading from the side. This had never been seen or imagined before.

GM went after VW with its Corvair line of radical cars and trucks

Chevy made the unorthodox decision to go after Volkswagen back in the mid-1950s. Its plan, which it fulfilled, was to offer more versions of its rear-engine vehicles than VW. Two- and four-door sedans, convertibles, station wagons, a van, and a pickup truck were all aimed directly at VW. Called the Corvair 95, these pickups were added to the Corvair line in 1961. This was the second year of Corvair production. The “95” came from the pickup's 95-inch wheelbase. Its forward control cabin was a first, as was the rear-engine location, and the air-cooled engine. This was a direct shot at VW because there was nothing like it manufactured by Americans.



Corvair Rampside Pickup with a conventional 1961 Chevy truck | GM

The pickup featured two cab-forward pickups



Corvair Rampside Pickup | GM

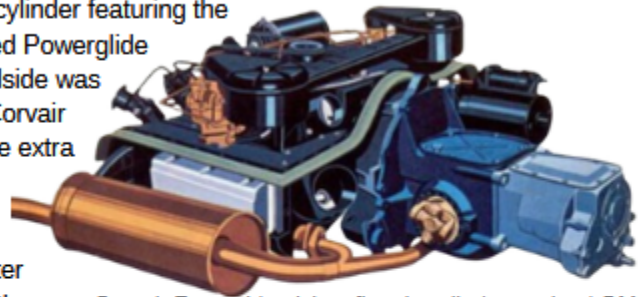
Besides one-upping VW with an air-cooled six-cylinder engine as opposed to VW's four, it had more ideas. There were two cab-forward pickups available. The “Loadside” was configured like a conventional pickup except for the engine in the rear and cab-forward design. Adding to the Corvair truck's uniqueness was the “Rampside.”

The Rampside featured a ramp that was integrated into the bodysides. It could fold out from the body and swing down to the ground. Cargo was loaded or unloaded by cart or by hand down the ramp. It was a

novel idea that only saw production on this one Chevy product. The Loadside version was the same but without the side ramp. Loading was handled through a swing-down tailgate as with a conventional pickup.

An 80 hp air-cooled engine was a radical powerplant departure

The 80 hp air-cooled engine was a flat opposed-cylinder, six-cylinder featuring the radical idea of a split case. It was hooked to either a two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission or four-speed manual trans. The Loadside was capable of a 1,750 lb payload. As this was also found in the Corvair passenger line Chevy performed a few upgrades to handle the extra loads the engine would be under.



Corvair Rampside pickup flat-six-cylinder engine | GM

Better exhaust valves, exhaust valve rotators, a bit lower compression, and carburetors were given larger jets for a better fuel mixture. The aluminum engine block could be split down the middle to aid in engine rebuilding. Also beefed up was the swing-axle rear suspension from the sedans.

In front, the I-beam axle was sourced from the Corvair sedans. It was soon replaced with the front axle from the conventional half-ton pickups.

The semi-unitized body received a subframe for the cargo bed area. The bed itself was double-walled.

The Rampside pickups sold well their first year, but then...

Things started off with a bang as sales reached 13,262 units sold in 1961. Of those, 80% were the Rampside version. By 1962 sales had dropped off to only 4,471 for Rampside. The Loadside version just eked out 369 pickups. It was not produced after 1962.

The Rampside continued to be produced with sales in 1963 falling to 2,046, then 851 for 1964 which was its final year of production.

Today there is a good network of parts suppliers, and a club with lots of info called the Corvanitics.



Corvair Rampside Pickup / GM



Corvair Rampside Pickup / GM



Facebook

Thom Taylor is a celebrated automotive journalist. He was awarded the Top 100 Most Influential People in Hot Rodding from Hot Rod Magazine, and was inducted into the Grand National Roadster Show Hall of Fame and the National Rod and Custom Hall of Fame. He's a member of SEMA and the NHRA.

Staff Writer
Thom Taylor

Thom has authored a number of books, including *Hot Rod & Custom Chronicle* and several guides for drawing vehicles like a pro, which pull from his distinguished ventures as an automotive illustrator.

Thom joined the *MotorBiscuit* team in 2019, and focuses his coverage on new vehicle releases, design, and the latest features and tech in the industry. His tenure of 25 years writing about the industry gives him a unique context for the auto news he covers, whether it's part of the Rusty Monday series or the latest news from Chevy. Thom has built two complete cars from the ground up and driven vintage roadsters at the Indy 500.

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.

Free – CORSA Communiqué from 2016 through 2023. Pickup or mail (\$14.38 for USPS).

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

(5/23)

For Sale: Mike Coale is thinning his collection: He's constantly acquiring cars and parts and likely has what you need and maybe even something you didn't know you needed! 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
01370

www.corvair.com

+++++

Wolf Enterprises

Carburetors & Collectibles

32605 Rhode Island Ave.
San Antonio, FL 33576

E-mail: GyoungWolf@earthlink.net

Write, call, or send an email to request
your Free Catalog at 352-588-0645

+++++

Eddie Meadows Automotive

991 Foxfire Trail
Oviedo, FL 32765
407-36-09748

S & S Corvair Parts

1816 Laurel Road
London, KY 40744

Bill Slusher Owner

Phone 606-878-2862, Text 606-224-2207

+++++

Handy Car Care – Ken Hand

1896 S. Gregory Rd.
Fowlerville, MI 48836
248-613-8586

www.corvairmechanic.com
vairmech@aol.com

+++++

Corvair Parts

Nos Late Model
Used All Years

Pete Claffey - Cell 706-830-2818

+++++

Bill Cotrofeld Automotive, Inc

America's Oldest Corvair Shop
3630 Route 7A Arlington
P.O. Box 235
East Arlington, VT 05252
Call or write for a free brochure.
802-375-6782

California Corvair Parts

We would like to let everyone know about our
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

+++++

Corvair Ranch

1079 Bon-Ox Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325
717-625-2805

Comics Alert: Did anyone see the *Red and Rover* comic strip from January 31? It featured an early-model Corvair. I was going to post it here, but another club I participate in has been receiving duning letters from a “copyright trolling firm” about a photo published in their newsletter several years ago. These copyright trolls spend their time scanning the internet looking for websites that post photos, excerpts from books and magazines, and yes, comic strips. They then send legal sounding letters demanding payment of exhorbitant copyright fees. Generally you can ignore them and eventually they go away, but it’s still very annoying. (And yes, the photo in that newsletter was in the public domain!)

So rather that post the *Red and Rover* strip from January 31, here’s a link:

<https://www.gocomics.com/redandrover/2025/01/31>

I wonder if Brian Basset, the comic strip creator, contacted GM over use of the early Corvair design?



1962 Corvair “Super Spyder” Concept (GM Heritage Collection)



1962 Corvair Monza GT Concept (GM Heritage Collection)