



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LIII, No. 7

July 2025



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

July

10 – 13 – Detroit Area Corvair Club “Homecoming”. Ann Arbor, MI. Visit their Facebook page for more information or to register go to: <http://detroitcorvairs.com/Homecoming2025.html>

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

August

9 – All GM Show, hosted by Capitol City Rockets/Oldsmobile Club of America. 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Eagle Ridge Middle School, 42901 Waxpool Rd, Ashburn, VA. Info, www.capitolcityrockets.com.

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

September

13 – Clarks Corvair Car Show, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., rain or shine. Hosted by Bay State Corvairs at Clarks Corvair Parts, 400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Fall, MA. 14% discount on pre-ordered parts, 10% on day of show.

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

October

18 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. The gate opens at 8:30 a.m. and all cars MUST be on the field by 11:00 a.m. – no exceptions! It's pre-registration ONLY with a limit on the number of cars. So go to <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Rockville-Antique-and-Classic-Car-Show> before September 11 for the "early bird" rate (\$15) to register. Don't delay otherwise you might not be able to have your car on the field. Spectators are free! Group Corvair is a sponsoring club for this great show and yes, cars from outside of Maryland are welcome.

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

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

We were sorry to have missed the June social dinner, but a last-minute problem kept us away. I heard that there was plenty of good conversation and I was happy that Mike Coale was able to join the event. One of the post dinner discussions I had with an attendee pointed out that many of our venues have had a high background noise volume which made conversations difficult. The beauty of the (now closed) Greenbelt Chinese restaurant, that was our go to spot for decades, was that it was quiet. We don't typically have enough attendees to justify the cost of a private room, but we will try to reserve space at quieter restaurants in the future.

The **Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show** is scheduled for Saturday, October 18th from 11:00 to 3:30. On line registration is now open at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Rockville-Antique-and-Classic-Car-Show>. Please sign up soon—it will be a little cheaper—and you'll be sure to have a spot at one of the best, classic, automobile shows on the east Coast.

I talked with Rick Sanford about our volunteers (which GC gave to the lead organizers earlier this year) for the 2026 CORSA Convention in Gettysburg and made some points that Jim Simpson and I had discussed. Rick was looking for the names of people who would be willing to be the coordinator for each event. Tom Rahochik and Dianna Moy of Mid Maryland, the primary sponsoring club, have created a very flexible computer database to track staffing for

the planned events. We would like to see that database shared, at least on a monthly basis, with Group Corvair and the other sponsoring Corvair clubs during the run-up to the convention. This will allow all sponsoring clubs to stay current with their obligations and streamline communications. The beauty of Mid Maryland's database is that it can be kept up to date with changes and substitutions almost instantaneously; there would be no need for individual event coordinators to keep separate lists and schedules if they have direct access to the database during the convention.

Tom Rahochik's email from late May outlining the current convention planning follows:

To: CPCC, MMCC, Group Corvair & NVCC

Our computerized convention volunteer list is now in a format display and ready to add volunteer coordinators for the below listed convention events. The coordinator will organize that specific event and work efficiently with those volunteers within that event. Keep in mind we will probably be adding some additional events, as the need arises in future months. We hope those club members already assigned to an event will take interest as an event coordinator and for those club members not assigned to a specific event will consider one of these coordinator event positions. Please solicit all your club members and respond back to Titus, Rick, Dianna or myself within the next 30 days to add these positions which will then allow us to prepare the list for release to all of you hopefully sometime in July. Here are the current available events for coordinator sign up:

- 1) Corvair Parking*
- 2) Trailer Parking*
- 3) Indoor Flea Market*
- 4) Welcome Party*
- 5) Model Car Display*
- 6) Banquet Seating*
- 7) Bus Tours (probably schedule one or two at most for week)*
- 8) Tech Sessions & Meetings*
- 9) Tally Room*
- 10) Goody Bags*
- 11) Merchandise*
- 12) Economy Run*
- 13) Rally*
- 14) Track Day at Summit Point*
- 15) Silent Auction/Raffles - usually setup in Hospitality Room*
- 16) Restaurant/Eateries solicitation for convention discount coupons*
- 17) Solicitation/Promotion of local areas for visit by convention guests - (ex. EMMR museum, AACCA museum - would they be a sponsor? or offer discount admission?)*
- 18) Trophies & Awards*
- 19) Other event - ex. ice cream social, ladies wine and cheese night - (Usually held in hospitality room)*
- 20) Car Display - in parking lot same day as Concours*
- 21) Autocross*
- 22) Convention Photographer*

Thank you all for your support with this request. We hope to have proper volunteer and coordinator coverage for all events in place no later than late summer.

Tom Rahochik - 2026 Gettysburg Convention Chairman

Jim, Mark, Marolyn and I will keep you up to date with convention planning as we learn more.

Minutes of the June Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Nine Group Corvair members logged into the June 17 Zoom meeting at 7:30 pm. Bob Hall, president, called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm. Since we did not have a May meeting there were no minutes to approve.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. The treasury has been holding steady, so Jim suggested that we might subsidize our Christmas holiday dinner.

Mark Eisenburg, a new member, is planning to have work done on his Corvair – mostly pushrod tube seals – at Mike Coales shop but hasn't gotten to it yet.

Under new business, Bob H. made a motion that Group Corvair should pay half of the cost for Jim's subscription for Zoom. Randy Rictor seconded the motion. The motion passed. We've looked at some alternatives, but Zoom has worked out well for our monthly online meetings.

2026 Convention Updates: Titus Stewart was the only Gettysburg convention official at this year's national convention in San Luis Obispo, CA. He said they were going to start including Group Corvair when they send out the minutes of a meeting. Jim Simpson had a phone conversation with Rick Sanford and discussed the arrangements for the autocross. Rick had hoped that the local SCCA chapter would provide the equipment, but apparently, they've declined. Rob Neighbor pointed out that Eddie Meadows, who is in Florida, has autocross timing equipment. Bob H. said he is impressed with the database the convention committee is using. Rob Neighbour said he would like to volunteer for the convention. He also has several walkie-talkies we could use.

Randy has talked to Mike Coale about a lubricant leak from his differential. Mike has done previous work for Randy, and he was impressed with the results.

The Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show planning meeting should be coming up soon. This year there is no rain date. It will be a "Go or No Go" decision based on the forecast. If the show is cancelled, registration fees will be refunded.

Phil Richardson's white '69 is doing well. The red '69 will be back on the road soon. He has been working on the brakes. It also needs some spots repainted.

Carl Kelson's 1965 Monza needs engine work. He is not interested in short cuts—he wants it done right—so he is planning to do the work himself with the help of some experts he knows from the aircraft world.

The June 26 social dinner will be at the Rams Head Roadhouse in Annapolis. *[Note: See the article in the newsletter.]*

Jim had tried several types of LED lighting on the Corvair dashboard and decided that the soft white lighting is the best.

The meeting ended at 8:49 pm.

Group Corvair's June Social Gathering

In our quest to find restaurants in various locations to better accommodate our members, Bob Hall and Mike Coale decided on the Rams Head Roadhouse on General's Highway in Annapolis. The restaurant was easy to find as we gathered on Thursday (June 26) evening and had a spacious parking lot. When we arrived, the table was set up with a "reserved" sign on it. Unfortunately, we had several last-minute cancellations, so we were down to only seven members at dinner. The orders ranged from salads to fish and chips. The seating arrangement was a bit different than usual. The four guys were at one end of the table and the three gals were at the other end. It worked out well: the guys got into deep conversations about differentials, spark plugs, LED lighting—you get the idea. At the other end of the table the gals talked about careers, travel, and home activities. Unfortunately, the noise levels were high and one common suggestion was that perhaps we should try for a lunch meeting when restaurants tend to be less busy. But everyone seemed to enjoy the evening and look forward to the next dinner.

Trying Out the Upgrades

Marolyn Simpson

The driver's door had been repainted and was now a perfect match, and Jim had finally finished making repairs, upgrades, and swapping out the original dash lights and taillights on our '66 Corsa and replacing them with LEDs. It now has a Vairtrix speedometer/odometer, tachometer, and the prototype LED light dimmer module. The Corvair (and Jim and I) were anxious to get out on the road again and try out all the new upgrades. The Fourth of July was sunny, dry, and not exceptionally hot, at least not in the morning. It seemed like the perfect chance to take the car out for a spin.

We checked the map to find a reasonable route. A lot of people head for the beach on a summer holiday so why not give it a try. After a few tries the carburetor refilled and the engine fired up and sounded good. We checked the taillights, brake lights, and turn signals and when they all passed the test, we started our trip. From Davidsonville we headed south on Route 2. A couple of minutes later there was a honk and wave from a driver heading north. Further down Route 2 we turned east towards the beach. Traffic was unusually light for a holiday weekend, and we soon arrived in Chesapeake Beach. As we pulled up to a stop light, we saw a car in the left lane driving up slowly until he was even with us. He rolled down his window and said he used to have a Corvair just like ours, but he had wrecked it in 1967.

After passing through several more beach towns, we decided it was time to head home. Close to home we stopped to fill up the gas tank. That is usually a foolproof way to draw admirers, and this time was no exception. We got some nice comments on the styling and condition of the car. Overall, it was a very enjoyable outing.

2025 CORSA Convention

Last month, I mentioned that we saw some new “billet” cylinder heads on display in the vendor’s room, but that I couldn’t find any photos. Well Ron Fedorczak has come to the rescue with his convention photo collection. Here are a couple views of these new, experimental, cylinder heads:



These are still in development and as you can see in the photo on the left, there are fewer, thicker, fins than the GM castings. The developer is going to install a set on an engine in the near future and instrument them to see just how well the cooling works. But there's considerable promise here with easily customizable intake manifolds, more modern combustion chamber designs, and if nothing else, they really look great!

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Phil Richardson asked me a question a couple days ago which sent me off to do some research. His specific question was “what gear oil do I use in my Corvair’s transaxle?” The quick answer is that I have Amsoil synthetic 75W-90 gear oil. But that started me thinking about just what is the “right” lubricant for a Corvair manual transmission and differential today.

Just to be clear, my Corsa has a so-called “Saginaw” 4-speed transmission and a 3.55 positraction differential. When Chevrolet built this car, they specified SAE 80 weight gear oil that met Military Specification MIL-L-2105-B for all conditions, ranging from freezing cold to desert heat. The Mil Spec has been interpreted as a SAE 80 weight GL-4 gear oil. And if you check the Corvair Factory Assembly manual, there’s a part number – 9985044. But like all automobile lubricants, gear oil has changed greatly over the more than 60 years that have elapsed since Chevrolet engineers last did any serious testing of our Corvairs.

Talk about a fraught subject! Online research reveals a huge number of sources, most of which are far from authoritative. That is, most of what you’ll find are car buffs trading opinions mostly based upon their own experience with little or no data to back up their claims. Major manufacturers – Mobil, Castrol, Amsoil, etc., do have some information, but they seem reluctant to make any absolute recommendations and generally refer you to look at the owner’s manual. Thanks a lot!

But here’s what I’ve found. Essentially there are three currently active specifications for gear oil that have been published by the American Petroleum Institute (API) – GL-4, GL-5, and MT-1. These are described as follows:

GL-4 denotes lubricants intended for axles with spiral bevel gears operating under moderate to severe conditions of load and speed as well as hypoid gears under moderate speeds and loads. They may be used in selected manual transmissions and transaxles where MT-1 lubricants are unsuitable.

GL-5 lubricants are for gears, particularly hypoid gears in axles operating under high-speed/high shock load and low-speed/high torque conditions

MT-1 lubricants are intended for non-synchronized manual transmissions such as buses and heavy-duty trucks.

Of course, to get to the actual specifications, you must be a member of the API. I’m not a member.

Which to pick? Early GL-5 lubricants were criticized for using high-sulfur content anti-wear additives. The sulfur would attack copper alloy (brass) synchronizers. But from what I’ve read, they changed the formulation so that’s not so much of a problem. There’s also some controversy about how the extra anti-wear additives affect just how the synchronizers work – they depend upon some friction to match gear speeds.

But if you consult the lubrication maker’s web pages, you’ll get language such as this from Mobil: “*Mobil 1™ Syn Gear Lube LS is a supreme performance, synthetic, multi-purpose SAE 75-90 automotive gear lubricant designed to meet the highest performance requirements of modern passenger vehicles in all types of operating conditions... (Has) excellent rust, staining and corrosion protection of copper and its alloys... Excellent limited-slip performance.*” They list this as a GL-5 gear lubricant.

Another manufacturer – Schaeffer’s Specialized Lubricants – offers their 170-012 synthetic 75W-140 gear lube that they claim meets the GM 9985044 specification I listed at the beginning. (It is also supposed to meet GL-5 and MT-1 requirements.) It’s not cheap at just over \$30/quart.

So, what is the bottom line? In my opinion, a major brand synthetic 75W-90 gear oil should work just fine. I wouldn’t worry much about it being a GL-4 or GL-5 spec, just perform your due diligence and make sure they say it works with copper/brass components, and you should be fine. And as an added benefit, if you have a Positraction differential, with these lubricants, you shouldn’t need any anti-chatter additive.

Carl Kelson’s Marvelous Monza Down Under (Pt 3)

This is the last part (3) of the article in the Australian magazine *Unique Cars* about Carl Kelson and Arlette Pat’s 1965 Corvair Monza. It’s been a long and arduous job converting and restoring his car, but it is a magnificent creation, something the original designers, engineers, and line workers would be proud of.



THIS PHOTO
Compass crowns
the floating dash,
and it was a big
year with the
introduction of
an AM/FM radio
option.

"FACTORY AIR WAS EXTREMELY RARE ON CONVERTIBLES – ACCORDING TO CARL, FEWER THAN ONE PER CENT OF SOFT-TOP CORVAIRS LEFT THE FACTORY WITH AC"



with ivory trim emerged afresh sporting a high-gloss black body with red trim. While Carl went right through the transaxle and replaced engine accessories, he judged the engine's internals to be fine based on its low miles and an internal inspection with the top cover and sump off.

A big part of the task was converting the Corvair to RH-drive. Carl acknowledged that it was a controversial move, saying: "Some purists would argue that Corvairs were never factory-built as RH-drive and therefore a RH-drive conversion detracts from the vehicle's originality. However, I have restored our Corvair to represent a car that GM might hypothetically have exported to Australia in 1965 as a new car for the Australian market."

Producing the converted dash and glovebox to its factory-original looking standard proved a huge challenge for Carl, but he pulled it off. I found it interesting

that the dash-mounted Powerglide selector reads only 'R N D L'. It must have been built just before the 1965 USA requirement came in to play requiring all automatic cars to have a 'Park' (P) position that locks the transmission when parked.

The conversion enabled Carl to improve on the one Corvair feature he had criticised – the 5.5-plus turns lock-to-lock, old-school steering box. With no RH-drive factory-equivalent available, Carl chose a late-1970s Toyota Corolla unit. He is very happy with the result: "The low-ratio box just wasn't necessary for a car with no engine weight over the front wheels. This modern set-up gives about 3.5 turns. So, it's more direct and quicker and it's not heavy to steer."

Although Carl called in help from time to time, he more or less rebuilt the Corvair himself in its current garage – even to the point of assembling and fitting all the

upholstery and interior trim items using materials that had been cut and sewn by specialists. Building the support frame for the soft-top ranks as another task he found surprisingly difficult.

The search for correct parts around the globe was quite a job. "Hard-to-find items included remote-adjustable external mirrors, genuine factory AM/FM radio (1965 was the first year for the FM option) and then there was the metric speedo – the Canadian Corvair enthusiast I got it from believed it came from a Corvair in Sweden."

Our final conversation beside the stunning Corvair was basically about my admiration for Carl's achievements and his satisfaction with a big job well done – an outcome he acknowledged depended on vital support he received along the way.

"My very good friend Peter McKenzie gave me unbelievably valuable support with the build. I believe I have reasonable car skills –

LEFT The stamp of quality – a Fisher body.

BELOW US Royal cross-ply tyres transform us to 1965.



CORVAIR MONZA

THIS PHOTO
With all the hard work done, it's time for Carl to get some enjoyment out of the Monza on the road.



Vital Stats

1965 CORVAIR MONZA CONVERTIBLE

PRODUCTION: 26,466

BODY: Steel monocoque w/ front and rear subframes - rear-engine/transaxle

ENGINE: 2683cc air-cooled, six-cylinder boxer - two Rochester carburetors

POWER: 82Kw at 4400rpm

TORQUE: 217Nm at 2800rpm

PERFORMANCE:

0-100km/h: 16 seconds (est)

0-400m: 19.5 seconds (est)

GEARBOX: Powerglide 2-speed automatic

SUSPENSION: Independent, double-wishbone, coils, anti-roll bar, tube shocks (f) Corvette-based, double-jointed axles, coils, lower links, trailing arms, tube shocks (r)

BRAKES: 229mm duo-servo drum brakes (f) and (r)

TYRES: 6.50 x 13 white-wall, cross-ply



but Peter's leave mine for dead. If I got caught up with something he would help me. His help has been invaluable.

"Then there's Perry Bekkers who painted it. He is an artist. He did all the metal finishing on the body, and the paintwork. It's just magnificent.

"Also, I could not speak more highly of a Massachusetts business, Clark's Corvair. Their customer service was excellent. And when they supply a part, it will be the best example of the part you can get."

Finally, I asked Carl to suspend disbelief long enough to perhaps show at least a little love for offerings from Ford or Mopar. The immediacy and enthusiasm of his response surprised me: "If I had buckets of money, I would love to add an XM Futura coupe to my garage. In a heartbeat I'd have one of those. And I could happily go for an R or S series Vallant" 🙄

Vair Vendor

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.

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 - including some nice cars! Contact Mike Coale, mikecoale@verizon.net or 443-994-2559 and see just what he has available.



For Sale: '65 Corvair Monza Coupe. 110 hp, power glide. Mechanicals totally gone through, engine recently rebuilt by a professional mechanic. Drives great. Located in Myrtle Beach, SC. (It's a southern car.) Asking \$17,000. Contact Fred, 516-640-8074. (5/25)

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