



# *the fifth wheel*

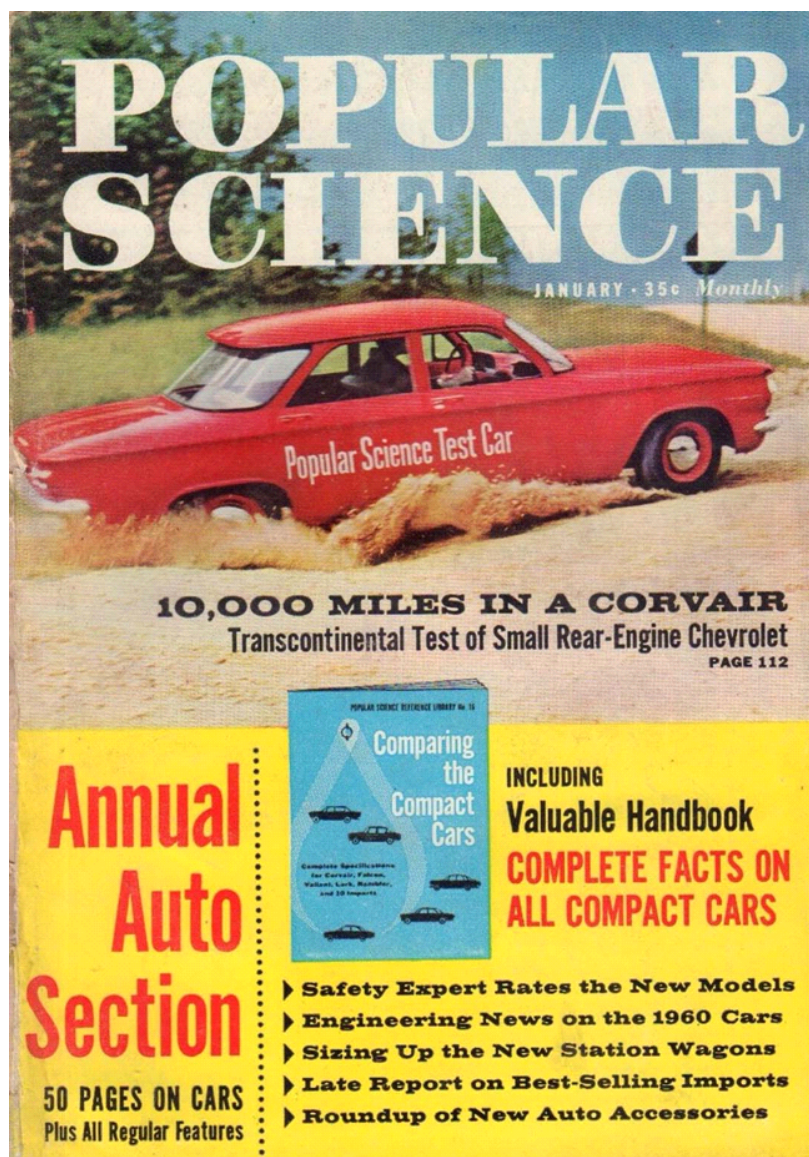
NOVEMBER 2025

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

ESTABLISHED 1976

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***Next Membership Meeting:***  
***Place: America on Wheels Museum***  
***Date: Saturday November 15, 2025***  
***Time: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM***

## ***GM Expert: It Wasn't Ralph Nader Who Killed the Corvair***



*Above photo: Corvair enthusiast Tony Richards (left) interviews David Newell (right).*

Earlier this month, Corvair enthusiast Tony Richards posted a YouTube video of an interview he conducted with David Newell. Dave is acknowledged as the go-to person when it comes to Chevrolet history, including the history of the Corvair.

Dave's premise is that, contrary to the general perception that Ralph Nader killed the Corvair, Chevrolet had already decided to discontinue Corvair production at the end of the 1967 model year, and furthermore, that decision was made back in December, 1964, months before Nader published *Unsafe at Any Speed!* Click or tap on the following link to see the full interview.

[https://youtu.be/Vo4v\\_mZ6JbU?si=pCTzfM5olOGadJ9t](https://youtu.be/Vo4v_mZ6JbU?si=pCTzfM5olOGadJ9t)

I think you'll be intrigued by Dave's insights, some of which a little known among Corvair enthusiasts today. For example....

Slow Out of the Gate. Ed Cole, General Manager of Chevrolet, made the cover of Time magazine just a few days after the public introduction of the Corvair in October 1959. But almost immediately, Corvairs in the field started having mechanical problems, mostly with carburetor icing and oil leaks. Either Popular Mechanics or Popular Science magazine did a whole article about Corvair bugs and flaws when it first came out. The most famous was the tendency for fan belts to fly off. Chevrolet Engineering increased the depth of the groove in the idler pulley and that cured most of the problem. But those early mechanical problems cast a pallor over the Corvair's reputation for reliability.

Million Dollar Warranty Extension. In November 1961, Ed Cole left Chevrolet, having been promoted to be the head the GM car and truck group. Chevrolet's new General Manager, Semon "Bunkie" Knudsen, initiated what they called the Corvair improvement program. Chevrolet budgeted a million dollars to handle out of warranty Corvair repairs for blown head gaskets, oil leaks and fumes in the engine compartment. If a disgruntled customer complained loudly enough to his local Chevy dealer, the dealer would turn him over to the Chevrolet zone office which was authorized to pay to fix those problems even after the car was out of warranty. But they never did spend all the million dollars and few people knew this program even existed.

Sales Department Lassitude. When Ed Cole left Chevrolet in November of 1961, there was less loyalty to the Corvair product line, especially in the Chevrolet sales department. As far as they were concerned, if a car is not popular or has problems, it's his-





Edward N. Cole. Father of the Corvair.



E. M. "Pete" Estes. Chevrolet General Manager.



Semon "Bunkie" Knudsen. Chevrolet General Manager.



James M. Roche. CEO and Chairman of the Board at GM.

tory. It was Bunkie Knudsen who kept the torch lit during those early years with exciting improvements to the Corvair line including the turbocharged Spyder model, the Corvair show cars, and the stylish second series Corvair.

Enter the Mustang. In February 1964, Ford announced they were coming out with the Mustang and sales began on April 17 of that year. Soon, the Mustang took the crown with the highest sales of any new car ever introduced in the country. But it didn't take Bunkie Knudsen that long to realize that Ford had a major success on its hands. Less than a week after the Mustang was introduced, he ordered a new car to be developed; a sporty version of the Chevy II that they could promote and possibly build as a Mustang competitor.

December 1964 Decision. As plans for Chevy's answer to the Mustang were being developed, GM executives decided that the Corvair would be discontinued at the end of the 1967 model year. This was in December of 1964. Word filtered down through the corporation to stop further development on the 1965, '66 and '67 Corvairs for anything other than safety and smog purposes. Although there's no evidence that top management issued an official letter to the troops to that effect, the decision filtered down into the organization anyway.

Pete Estes and the Two-Year Extension. As noted above, the plan was for Chevrolet to discontinue the Corvair at the end of the 1967 model year. It was Knudsen's successor, Pete Estes, who felt that the Corvair production should extend beyond 1967, probably to dispel the notion that Nader forced Chevrolet to dump the Corvair so early. The 1968s and '69s would never have happened without Pete.

Nevertheless, realizing that he could be overruled by top management, Pete Estes commissioned the public relations department to draft a press release announcing the termination of Corvair production at the end of the 1967 model year. Again, this was in accordance with the December 1964 plan to terminate. Luckily, Pete Estes got his way to extend Corvair production and the draft was put aside for the time being.

What If GM Ignored Nader? *Unsafe at Any Speed* by Ralph Nader first went on sale on November 30, 1965. It didn't catch on with the public until it became known that General Motors baited Nader with prostitutes and alcohol in an effort to discredit him. When this became known to the public, GM's Chairman of the Board, James Roche, was forced to apologize before a federal Senate hearing committee. To add icing to the cake, Nader successfully sued GM. At that point, the public became intrigued with the book, which of course, featured the Corvair in its very first chapter.

A few years later, Nader's Center for Auto Safety came out with a book on the Volkswagen. Its name was *Small on Safety*. Unlike *Unsafe at Any Speed*, which had only one chapter out of eight devoted to the Corvair, the entire content

of *Small on Safety* focused on Volkswagens. But unlike General Motors, Volkswagen didn't react. Consequently, there was nothing calling attention to it. Most people don't know that Nader did an entire book on the Volkswagen. If General Motors had taken the same approach, perhaps the public would not have perceived that Nader killed the Corvair.

Another factor was the loss of support within Chevrolet and GM in general for the Corvair. That went a long way to contributing to the Corvair's demise. Ralph Nader didn't help. He fanned the flames, yes. But his book didn't kill it. No. It was dead before he came along.

## ***Elections Coming Right Up!***

As announced at our October meeting, we are accepting nominations for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Uh oh! So far, nobody has been nominated. But there is still time!

The period for submitting nominations will extend into the Old Business portion of our November meeting, at which time the nominees will either accept or reject the nominations they have received. The remaining nominees will be deemed official candidates for election.

The election will then be held during the New Business portion of that same meeting providing a quorum is present.

## ***LVCC Meeting Minutes America on Wheels Museum Allentown, PA Saturday, October 18, 2025***

The following meeting minutes were prepared for LVCC by Greg Dittrich.

### Attendance

Edwin Buitter, Ryan Cengeri, William A. Dittrich, William D. Dittrich, Greg Dittrich, Rich Green, Allan Lacki, Scott Oberholzer, Pete Pesaresi

### Old Business

The minutes from September 6, 2025 at America on Wheels Museum were approved as presented after a motion by Ryan Cengeri and seconded by Rich Greene.

The Treasurers Report – September ending balance was \$2,710.80. After a motion by Greg Dittrich and seconded by Joe Pesaresi, the report was approved.

Dues Update: 46 Paid, 9 more expected= 55 “active”, 13 unlikely with 68 total in database.

### New Business

LVCC Nominations: We are accepting nominations for the offices of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Please consider taking on a role, it’s important for the health of our club! The election will be held at our November meeting.

Picnic: Immediately after the meeting, all were invited to attend a Corvair Clubs Get Together at the home of Bob & Ann Weidman. A number of the members planned to attend.

CORSA Election - the national club: The election is currently underway with votes being accepted until December 1st. Eastern Division has two candidates: Richard Widman & Sarah Bruce. CORSA member: Please vote.

### Show & Events

Riegelsville, Sunday November 2nd, 2025. Fall Roll Out Car Show and Automotive Flea Market. Location: Riegelsville Ball Park, Rt. 611 Riegelsville, PA 18077. We suggest you get there early, no later than 7 AM if you want a spot for your car! No newer cars than 1990. Vintage, antiques, street rods and customs are welcome. Website: FallRollOut.com

### Discussion

Bill Dittrich brought three Corvair fuel pumps to the meeting – a factory AC original, A NAPA “premier pump” and the new Clark’s reproduction. Bill demonstrated that the Napa pump was a poor China reproduction and not recommended. Conversely, Clark’s appeared to be very well constructed although it is temporarily out of stock.

Rich Green shared that Racersrods.com has a great electric fuel pump kit. It’s very quiet and comes with everything you need!

Ryan needs a good automatic transmission if anyone has one. If you can help, contact Ryan by phone at (484) 707-8801 or by email at halfmile@gmail.com.

Al Lacki shared that he learned from Corvair lubrication expert Richard Widman that the best engine oil available for Corvairs is “Valvoline Restore & Protect” Full Synthetic 5w-30 Motor Oil, priced at \$39 for a five-quart jug. Last week, Al changed the oil in his Corvair, filling it with this brand of oil. He will report on noticeable improvements in engine performance – if any - at a future meeting.

## ***LVCC Treasury Report by Joan Lacki***

<b>Beginning Balance: (September 30, 2025) .....</b>		<b>\$2,310.80</b>
<b><u>Receipts:</u></b>		
Membership	\$110.00	
		\$110.00
<b><u>Expenses:</u></b>		
Newsletter / Stamps (Sept)	-\$10.60	
		-\$10.60
<b>Ending Balance: (October 31, 2025) .....</b>		<b>\$2,410.20</b>
<b><u>New/Renewed Members:</u></b>		
Bauman, Forrest & Beverly	\$ 35.00	2 years
Cush, Kenneth	\$ 35.00	2 years
Nenow, William & Deborah	\$ 20.00	1 year
Waltz, John	\$ 20.00	1 year
	<b>\$ 110.00</b>	

## ***Join the Corvair Society of America by Dave Watson***

This is Dave Watson, your CORSA Membership Chair - many of you know me as Davemotohead.

As your Membership Chair, my primary mission is to recruit new members and retain our current ones, while supporting the growth and success of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA). Today, I’m reaching out to the entire Corvair community to ask for your support in keeping this great organization alive and thriving.

Since joining the CORSA Board of Directors last August 2024, I’ve been working closely with fellow board members to modernize operations and make improvements that reflect the needs and interests of today’s Corvair community. But here’s the hard truth: Over the past five years, CORSA membership has declined significantly - we are now at one of the lowest levels in our history. This trend must change, and we need your help to reverse it before we reach a critical tipping point.

CORSA was founded in 1969 to celebrate and preserve the

legacy of the Chevrolet Corvair. For decades, it's been the heart of our hobby - supporting local clubs, hosting national events, publishing the *Communique* magazine, and offering resources that enrich the Corvair experience for everyone.

Without your membership dues, CORSA cannot survive. It's that simple. And I truly believe we cannot afford to let this historic organization fade away. Since 1969, CORSA has served you - the Corvair community - with pride and dedication. It's time for all of us to give back.

Here's just a glimpse of what your CORSA membership makes possible:

- The annual National CORSA Convention,
- Support and insurance for local clubs and events like the Great Western Fanbelt Toss, Homecoming, Spring Fest, and more,
- The award-winning *Communique* magazine,
- Exclusive access to Corvair merchandise, apparel, technical guides, and books,
- Discounts on Hagerty insurance (in most states),
- And many other member benefits and resources.

The current board is working hard to bring CORSA into the modern era - upgrading the Corvair Center Forum, developing new merchandise, and planning exciting changes to the *Communique*. These include fewer board reports and more high-value content like tech articles, club spotlights, racing and off-road reports, EV updates, and member builds. We're also working on revamping the CORSA website to make it more user-friendly and engaging.

My goal is simple: put CORSA back at the top as the go-to hub for everything Corvair. We want CORSA to be the place where all Corvair enthusiasts feel welcomed, represented, and inspired. But we can't do it without YOU.

This is your club. We're simply the volunteers working on your behalf, and we want your ideas, input, and involvement to help shape the future of CORSA.

On a personal note: I've been part of the Corvair community since I was a kid. I've always tried to give back through videos, tech support, advice, parts, and tools - and now, as part of the CORSA leadership team, I'm more committed than ever.

But again, we need your support. Your membership matters. The more support CORSA receives, the more we can do to

serve the community, your local chapters, and the Corvair hobby as a whole.

So, please - do me a favor.

- If you're not a member of a local CORSA chapter, find one and join!
- If you're in a local chapter but not yet a CORSA member, now is the time to join and get involved!
- You do not need to be in a chapter to join, we provide fantastic online support.

Let us know what you need from CORSA. Your feedback is welcome and encouraged. Together, we can build the best version of CORSA yet.

Visit [Corvair.org](http://Corvair.org) and go to the sign up page to join. If you have any problems, call the Club office listed on the web site for help.

We want you back!

Sincerely,  
Dave Watson  
CORSA Membership Chair

## ***Corvair Clubs Get-Together*** ***by Dave Fox***

*Editor's Note: The following article, written by David Fox, appeared in the November issue of "Transmissions", the official newsletter of the Philadelphia Corvair Association (PCA). David is a member of both PCA and LVCC.*

On Saturday, October 18th, 2025, many Philadelphia Corvair Association members took a drive out to the cool stone farmhouse and property of Bob and Annie Weideman, located in Walnutport, PA. This is in the general vicinity of Allentown, and here we held our monthly club meeting, and also helped Bob to belatedly celebrate his birthday which was about ten days earlier.

As shown on the PCA Activities Calendar for 2025, the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club was invited to this PCA Event that we called a Corvair Clubs Get-Together. They had held their meeting a couple of hours before at their usual nearby venue, the America on Wheels Museum in Allentown, so afterwards they were able to stop by and join us.

Mother Nature has been treating us well on our meeting dates recently, and once again that trend continued going into this early fall weekend. With the excellent weather, we ended up



having a sizeable turnout from both the PCA and LVCC, including some with their significant others. And that's not to mention the great multitude of furry, feathered, scaled, and even shelled members of Bob and Annie's extensive pet family!

Throughout our gathering I made the acquaintance of a wide variety of different creatures including an inquisitive dog named Belatrix and a very friendly long-haired cat named Delta, each of them more than happy to be petted and scratched. But indeed, that was truly only the beginning!

In total Bob says there were 5 dogs, 4 cats, 16 chickens, 3 turkeys, 4 ducks, a parrot and even a large free-ranging Red-

Footed tortoise dubbed Flash. I thought that tongue-in-cheek name was great, and it reminded me of a couple funny TV commercials, but that still doesn't mean I'm going to buy what they're selling! Let somebody else pay for all those ads...

I also spotted an aquarium with fish, however they didn't seem at all anxious to engage in any type of interaction, so I chose not to reach in and disrupt their aquatic solitude.

In addition, Bob said that he and Annie have a corn snake and a giant salamander as well, so it really was quite the little zoo, and in fact I bet they probably could have charged admission! To me it was great to see that all of these animals



were living in a caring environment, and I expect that if there was ever a disastrous flood, Bob and Annie would be building a Corvair powered ark to shuttle them all off to safety.

In terms of actual people, many who showed up, me included, belong to both the PCA and LVCC. With that in mind, I'm simply listing everyone here under the club from which I knew them first. From the PCA we had Bob Weideman, Rich Greene, Dave Smith, Jeff and Deb Marvill, John DiBenedetto, Len Gregory, Larry Asheuer, George Dietzel, Bob and Christine King, and me, Dave Fox.

Almost all of these PCA members are also members of LVCC. Other attendees included Edwin Buiter, David and Jamie Buzzard, Scott Oberholzer, Pete & Nancy Pesaresi, and LVCC President Allan Lacki.

## ***Corvair Clubs Get-Together!*** ***By Allan Lacki***

*Here's another article about the Corvair Clubs Get-Together*

After our LVCC club meeting on Saturday October 18, we were all invited to Philadelphia Corvair Association's "Corvair Clubs Get-Together" at the home of Bob and Annie Weideman in Walnutport, PA. Approximately twenty club members and friends were in attendance and Bob made sure they were well-fed!

The fixin's included a variety of home-made salads, broiled sausages, snack foods, cake and plenty of beverages, all paid for by the PCA. There was plenty of food. It was great.

And what's a Corvair gathering without a bunch of Corvairs? The guys inspected each and every one to see the secret sauce that makes these classic cars run!

Aside from the food and good company, there were two main highlights.

- (1) Bob and Annie's friendly pets, including four poochie dogs, a bunch of chickens, a flock of turkeys (including two juveniles), some noisy ducks and even a big turtle.
- (2) Edwin Buiter's rare and wonderful 1929 Franklin, which he drove all the way in mid-day traffic through the back streets of Allentown, then on to Route 145 to Bob's place. This takes guts! But not to worry - the Franklin has a reliable six-cylinder air-cooled engine, of course!

The directions to Bob's place were clear, but nevertheless I got lost on the way. This was quite unfortunate because I was leading a mini-caravan consisting of Edwin, Ryan Cengeri and Pete & Nancy Pesaresi.



Edwin had the good sense to break away from the caravan as soon as it became apparent that I didn't really know where I was going. Then, after I missed the exit on Route 145 to Bob's place, Ryan flagged me down and offered to lead the way using his GPS. So, the Pesaresis and I followed Ryan without further ado.

When we arrived at Weideman's, we found Edwin and his Franklin already there. He made his own way and arrived several minutes ahead of us.

## ***Treasure Trove of Corvair Parts!*** ***by Ryan Cengeri***

*Editor's Note: LVCC member Ryan Cengeri recently visited the premises of Hansberry Enterprises Inc. Over the years, the proprietor, Tim Hansberry amassed a huge supply of car parts – especially Corvair parts - including but not limited to engine tins, brake drums, wheels. Used, of course. No NOS.*

The parts are for sale, of course, but Hansberry is not really looking to sell the parts on a onesie-twosie basis. Ideally, he'd like to sell the whole lot. Suggest price: \$1,400. If someone takes a large amount he might split it, but they'd have to work that out with him.

Nevertheless, Mr. Hansberry seems willing to let customers stroll through his parts barn, whether or not he makes a sale.

Hansberry Enterprises inc.  
2476 Rt. 724

Also known as New Schuylkill Road.  
Parker Ford PA 19457  
[www.Hansberryinc.com](http://www.Hansberryinc.com)

Photos on next page!



## ***Hansberry Enterprises Corvair Parts***



## ***LVCC Calendar of Events***

### **Sunday November 2, 2025. Fall Roll Out Car Show and Automotive Flea Market**

Location: Riegelsville Ball Park, Rt. 611. Riegelsville, 18077. Time: Get there no later than 7 AM if you want a spot for your car! Earlier is better. No entry fee or registration fee. No cars newer than 1990. Open to vintage, antiques, street rods, customs and trucks. Vendor spaces are available. For more information call (484) 316-0204 or email [RiegelsvilleFallRollOut@gmail.com](mailto:RiegelsvilleFallRollOut@gmail.com). Website: [FallRollOut.com](http://FallRollOut.com)

## ***LVCC Classified Ads***



Contact Larry Asheuer if interested in any of the following offers. [a-lcorvair@msn.com](mailto:a-lcorvair@msn.com)

**For Sale: 1965 Corvair Drag Race Car** (Set up for NHRA Bracket Racing 2018) - \$4,000. This Corvair is totally set-up for Drag Racing and is NOT street legal (15.29 Sec @ 90 MPH).

**For Sale: 1969 Corvair 500 Coupe.** Frost Green - \$6,000. This Corvair has only 36,000 miles on the original Odometer. Corvair was stored in a garage from 1982 until purchased by Larry, in 2016. Runs great and will smoothly drive down interstates doing 80 MPH.

**For Sale: 1966 Corvair Monza Convertible.** Project Car - \$2,500. Car was taken completely apart by previous owner. Larry is slowly making it a roller. This Corvair has a very solid Body. It is a Project Car.

**For Sale: 1967 Corvair Monza Coupe.** Project Car - \$2,500. Car was completely taken apart by previous owner in 1974 to paint but never painted. At this time, it is only a body that is a roller. Car sat inside from 1974 till 2023 in this condition. The body is solid with no rust anywhere. This is a solid start but is a project

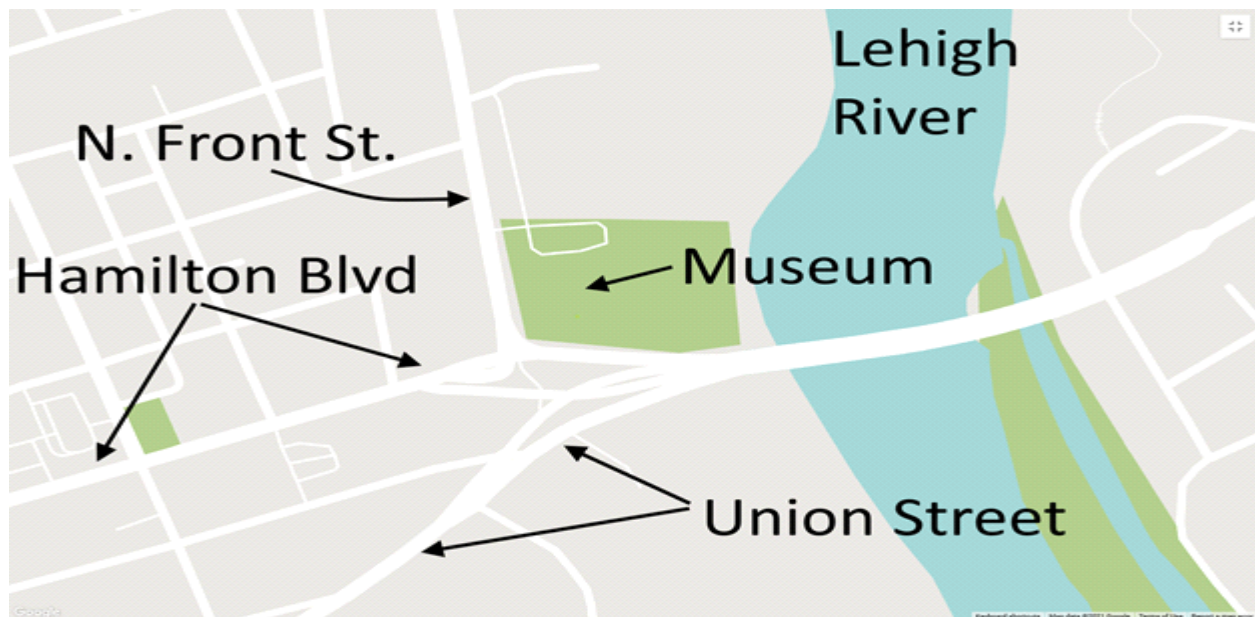
**For Sale: 2000 Dively Car Trailer.** Bought new. - \$2,500. Selling because I upgraded to Featherlite Car Trailer. Used this trailer to tow race car for years. Open deck with front tool box. Trailer brake system works well.

## ***Next Meeting. We Meet Here!***

Next Meeting Date: **Saturday November 15, 2025, 10 AM**

Place: America On Wheels Museum

5 North Front Street, Allentown, PA 18102



**Clark's**  
Corvair Parts®

**Clark's Corvair Parts®**  
400 Mohawk Trail  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370  
(413) 625-9776  
[www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com)



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## ***LVCC Officers & Volunteers***

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LVCC's Instagram Account, [lehigh\\_valley\\_corvair\\_club](https://www.instagram.com/lehigh_valley_corvair_club), is maintained for us by Ryan Cengeri, [halfmile@gmail.com](mailto:halfmile@gmail.com)  
Contact Ryan to have your favorite Corvair photos posted on Instagram!