



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME LIV, No. 10

October 2026



On the Way Home from “Corvair Day” – Filling them with Liquid Gold

Jerry Yates on left, Jim Simpson on right.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

October

- 16 – MotorWeek debuts episode 6 of its show with a segment on the 2026 CORSA International Convention. MotorWeek is online at its website (motorweek.org), on TV (locally Maryland Public TV), and on YouTube; I assume the Oct. 16 debut will be on their website. The first MPT TV listing I can find is for Saturday, 17 Oct @ 5 p.m. with repeats at noon, 18 Oct, and 7:30 p.m. 21 Oct.
- 17 – Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. **Registration is sold out! No on-site registrations!** If you want to show a car, you'll have to ask around to see if someone can't make it and use their registration. At 8:30 a.m. the gates open to show cars; all cars must be on the field by 11:00 a.m. when the gates close. 3:00 p.m. show closes. Group Corvair is a sponsor for this show. It's one of the best and largest car shows in the immediate area with typically 12,000 spectators. It's restricted to antique and classic cars (up to 2001!) that represent their period, so no custom rods, trick trucks, or others that would be inauthentic. I hope to see you there!
- 20 — **Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m.** Lots of things to discuss, Zoom link instructions will go out the weekend before.

November

- 17 — **Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m.** Zoom link instructions will go out the weekend before.

December

15 — Group Corvair On-Line Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Zoom link instructions will go out the weekend before.

TBD – Group Corvair Holiday Party? Anyone interested? Do you have any suggestions as to date and location?

GROUP CORVAIR Points of Contact

Group Corvair is going through a period of reorganization. Consequently, for the near future we will have neither a President nor a Vice-President. In addition, we are revising the Group Corvair By-Laws, last updated in 1983. In the interim, here are people you can contact about the club:

Jim & Marolyn Simpson
3845 Wayson Road, Davidsonville, MD 21035
301-262-0978 or 240-232-2820
simpsonj@verizon.net
MarolynSimpson1@gmail.com

Randy Ricktor
11605 Mirror Pond Ct.
Fulton, MD 20759-2305
443-388-3697
rrictor57@gmail.com

We will be editing the newsletter as well as handling the duties of treasurer (Jim) and secretary (Marolyn).

Randy will be organizing our periodic social gatherings.

Bob Hall, past president, HallGrenn@aol.com, Mark Shiffler, past vice-president, mshiphty@gmail.com.

(Editor's Note. Since we are, at least temporarily, without a president, we are soliciting articles from club members about their memorable encounters with Corvairs. Here's the first, from Dave Edsinger!)

Corvair Adventures Fifty Years Ago with Dave and Friends Dave Edsinger

As a 19-year-old Corvair enthusiast, I was excited to meet with other Corvair folks down south, so Jack Dempsey and I planned to go to the Corsa Mini Convention in Birmingham in May of 1975. We left the DC area and drove the 700+ miles to the convention without incident. My car was a 68 500 Coupe that was factory ordered with a 140, 4 speed, and I think it had about 70,000 miles on it at the time.

We arrived at the convention and settled in and did some vending. Sales were good and we had a great time hanging out and getting to know some wonderful people. One of the Big Draws to the Convention was the tie-in with the Winston 500 at Talladega Speedway which included an "All Corvair Pace Lap" on the Speedway. I really don't know how it was for everyone else, but my Corvair did not appreciate the slow speed Pace Lap that was barely fast enough to keep the back end of the car from sliding down the 30-degree banking, and all of the oil migrating to the left-hand rocker cover....

Long story short, at the end of the Pace Lap, my car didn't sound nearly as healthy as it did when we started out. I didn't really think the engine was okay, but when you're better than 700 miles from home, you tend to want to be positive.

However, when the Convention finished up and we headed home, we didn't get very far up the road when things started sounding ugly. I don't recall the Route #, but we were headed north toward Chattanooga. We stopped a couple of times to assess the engine damage, and pulled the pushrods on a couple of cylinders as part of damage control. We went a little further and things just kept getting worse. We pulled into a gas station and were wondering what to do, when this long-haired hippy (takes one to know one!) pulled into the station driving an early 4 door Corvair. We befriended him and asked him if he knew anyone who might be into Corvairs or might have an engine for sale - his response was "no". We then asked him if he'd sell us *his* Corvair and after a little negotiation, Jack and I owned an early Corvair for \$200.

Since my car would barely move now, we made it to the "Dude Motel", which looked like something we could afford.

The next morning, our hippy friend delivered his car and took his money. We were then faced with the challenge of swapping the engines with no floor jack - we only had a stock Corvair jack, which made things interesting. We jacked up the donor car and cribbed it up using some split-rail fencing, brick, and cinder block that we found in the parking lot. When we got the car up high enough to get the engine out, I got under and loosened all the bell housing bolts and related items. When everything was free, I slid the engine off the input shaft and let it rest on my chest. While Jack pulled on my legs, I wiggled out from under the car with the engine on my chest. We went through the same painful process for removing the engine from my car and then putting the donor engine into *my* car. After we hooked everything back up and put the broken 140 in the trunk of my car, we fired it up and headed for home, hoping the fellow we got the car from didn't get into trouble resulting from us leaving his car abandoned in the motel lot. Heading back to Maryland, we took some slower routes including the Blue Ridge Parkway to keep speeds down on the donor engine because we didn't want to go through this again. It ran flawlessly all the way home, getting 26 mpg. After 55 years of messing with Corvairs, I still enjoy the cars and the people.

Minutes of the September Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

Group Corvair's September 15 Zoom meeting began at 7:30 pm. Bryan Blackwell, president of the Northern Virginia club, joined the meeting along with eight Group Corvair members. It started with a discussion on tachometers and Vair Trix products.

Randy Ricktor invited a possible new member to join the Zoom meeting. Several members recalled that Corsa used to give new members information about a local club. That does not seem to be happening now. CORSA – www.corvair.org – manages the list of local clubs.

Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. He reimbursed Bob Hall for his signs for the convention. Corsa is working through the convention finances and each of the four clubs sponsoring the convention will receive a portion of the profits. *[Note: Group Corvair recently received its portion of the profits.]*

The minutes of the August meeting were accepted as written in the newsletter.

Group Corvair is working on a project to update the bylaws. Phil Richardson created a Google docs page for comments on changes to the bylaws.

There was a discussion on possible activities our club could share with the Northern Virginia club even though the two clubs currently operate quite differently. Northern Virginia is more tech oriented, meeting in a garage to work on a project, while Group Corvair is more interested in social gatherings and shows. The Northern VA club is planning to have a Vair Fair next year.

The Rockville show on October 17, which is pre-registration only, is sold out for this year. We are hoping to have a good display of Corvairs.

Several Group Corvair members are planning to go to York Springs, PA for Corvair Day at the Eastern Museum of Motor Racing on Saturday, September 19. We are planning to caravan at least part of the way up there and back. *[Note: The show took place as planned.]*

Mark Shiffler parked a car on the parking pad at his home and discovered dents from falling acorns. He is looking for a solution, so he doesn't get dents in his Corvair when it is parked outside.

Randy will send out information about our next social meeting. *[Note: October 7, 1:00 pm at Nonna Angela's]* He has been looking into new venues for our meetings but has found it harder than he thought it would be.

Carl Kelsen and Arlette Pat have already booked their flight for the Franklin, TN international convention next year. We look forward to seeing them there.

The meeting ended with the suggestion that if anyone needs help with parts or Corvair work, check with other club members for recommendations.

Corvair Day, 2026

After some debate, the weather gods decided to smile on Saturday, 19 September. So, Marolyn and I got up early, loaded up the Corvair, and met Jerry Yates at the McDonalds restaurant on MD Rt-3 in Gabrills. This was a convenient meeting point, being on the route as well as letting us get a bite for breakfast. Rick Fogarty was going to join us there as well to make a three-car convoy, but home life conflicts prevented him from making such an early start.

We made a short stop in Columbia, MD to pick up Ron Fedorczak so he could photograph the show. He got to ride along with Jerry in his Yenka Stinger clone. The trip up to the Eastern Museum of Motor Racing in York Springs, PA, was – thankfully – uneventful and we arrived about 9:30 and settled into our parking spots on the show field. Rick was able to get away sooner than he thought and he and his red convertible arrived shortly later.

There were 36 Corvairs registered, so Group Corvair's three cars were a noticeable addition to the show. Not bad considering the distance we had to drive. And in addition to the Group Corvair cars, Jack Dempsey and Andrea Raine were selling parts.



Rick Fogarty & His '64 Convertible



Rick Fogarty, Jack Dempsey, and Mark Holmlund

Jeff Stonesifer was there with his Ultravan. Besides giving tours of the interior, he was offering people the chance to drive it! How could I pass up such an opportunity? Marolyn and I boarded along with Jeff who supervised, and we took off for a loop of the area. It's an interesting vehicle to drive. It has an automatic transmission – a Powerglide of course – so that simplifies things. But the brake pedal is interesting. The steering column goes down at a steep angle between your legs and the brake pedal straddles it so you can use

either foot! (I suppose you could use both feet at the same time, but it really didn't need much pressure to stop...) There is good visibility forward, less so behind. It's a large and ponderous vehicle compared to the cars I'm used to, but that's what you want if you really do want to take the kitchen sink with you.





Test Driving the Ultravan

Jerry and I took home awards. Jerry for his car and me for “longest distance” – I drove 120 miles. There were shorter ways of getting there, but we had to pick up Ron in Columbia and then wanted to stick to the main roads rather than wander the backroads of northern Maryland and southern Pennsylvania.

Our return was also uneventful. This time there were three of us; Rick joined the convoy. We made a fueling stop at the Royal Farms in Gettysburg, across from the CORSA convention site. We also had Rick lead the way and set the pace since his '64 convertible seemed to be down on power. (That’s something we should look into during a tech session!) But all went well and we were home for supper.

And the Central PA Corvair Club had arranged for a food truck with a great selection to be there. They did what seemed like a land-rush business.



Yes, We Have Food!

An Italian Lunch

Marolyn Simpson

For the October 7 social lunch, eight members of Group Corvair met at one of our favorite restaurants, Nonna Angela’s, in Crofton, MD. Randy Ricktor, our new social chairman, had arranged for a reserved table separate from the main dining room, which worked well. While we were ordering I noticed that there were no two orders the same; all eight of us ordered something different. But we had a great waiter who got all the orders right, got the checks to the right folks, and added a bit of humor to the event.

There was a lot of general conversation, but there was a least one topic of “official business.” Jim Govoni told us about the work he has been doing on the Group Corvair Facebook page, and that we now have over 2,100 members using it.

We also mentioned that the Rockville show is coming up soon and we hope to have a good showing of Corvairs. We would like to give Randy a big thank you for setting up this lunch and we look forward to the next one.

Looking for some Fall Tour Ideas?

The Lehigh Valley Corvair Club in Pennsylvania came up with a list of car museums in south-eastern PA that might be worth visiting. For each of these museums, **call or check their websites for days and hours of operation.** Many have limited hours that change with the seasons and you may need an appointment to visit! Here’s their rundown:

America on Wheels Museum
5 N Front St., Allentown, PA.
<http://americaonwheels.org/>
610-432-4200

Specializes in classic American automobiles including Hudson, Studebaker, Packard, and Nash whose creativity and engineering defined the nation’s automotive identity.

Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum
6825 Norwitch Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19153
<https://simeonemuseum.org/>
(215) 365-7233

Located in southern Philadelphia, PA, the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum is one of the world's greatest collections of racing sports cars. Assembled over fifty years by Dr. Frederick Simeone, the Museum contains over 75 historically significant cars including Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Bugatti, Mercedes, Jaguar, Bentley, Porsche, Aston Martin, Corvette, Ford, and more. The Simeone Museum has rotating exhibits, and they regularly take cars out of the museum to drive them on their 3-acre lot in back for demonstration days.

You can sign up on their website home page to receive their email newsletter to keep informed of their upcoming events

Rolls-Royce Foundation Museum
189 Hempt Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
<https://rollsroycefoundation.org/>
(717) 795-9400

Inside, you'll find more than two dozen historic Rolls Royce and Bentley motorcars on display, engaging interactive exhibits, and an elegant art gallery. The museum showcases vehicles spanning the full history of both marques, complemented by rotating exhibits and carefully curated artifacts.

Please note: Due to private events and ongoing museum renovations, all visits and tours must be scheduled in advance

Bill's Bike Barn
7145 Columbia Blvd, Bloomsburg, PA 17815.
<https://billsbikebarn.com>
(570) 759-7030

In a wooded grove, on the hill just behind Bill's Custom Cycles - the parts shop - Bill Morris worked to make his dream materialize. There you will find his museum - Bill's Old Bike Barn - a true collection of vintage motorcycles and Americana memorabilia.

At a glance, the green metal pole barn appears to be a storage building constructed to house equipment for the long harsh winter. Stepping over the threshold you are in yesteryear. First thoughts are, "Not in your wildest dreams!"

You're in an old barn circa 1800, that was purchased in a nearby town. Painstakingly dismantled piece by piece, transported and reconstructed inside the building. Some of the beams are 40-50' long including the ladders.

The 16' ceiling is now home to the thousands of posters and signs. His 1947 Harley Davidson, Allentown, PA neon sign towers sixteen feet above the 1961 Moto Guzzi one-and-a-half-ton dump truck which was totally restored. It's known to be the only one in the U.S.A.



Demonstration Day at the Simeone Foundation Museum. Here, we see a Shelby Cobra Daytona coupe followed by a Ford GT 40. These are just a couple few of the running race cars that are on display.



Bill's collection also includes a 1941 Police UL, '49 HydraGlide, '37 Indian Chief and a '37 Knucklehead, all glistening under the light of a seven-foot Indian motorcycle sign.



Bill's Old Bike Barn has an overwhelming display of the pristine collection of motorcycles and memorabilia. Any true motorcycle enthusiast is sure to be impressed as they gaze upon all there is to see. Each time you visit, you are sure to find another item you missed on your previous visits, whether it be the Zundapps or Toppers - or how about the 1956 German NSU?

Then there's the military display complete with foxhole, a '45 NOS military bike with 30 caliber machine gun, palm trees finished off with Spanish moss. No detail was left out, right

down to the 1940 military parachute that covers the display!

Old Spokes Car Museum

10399 Old 22 in New Smithville, PA

<https://oldspokes.com/>

(484) 641-5500

Old Spokes Car Museum is the world's largest collection of Hudson automobiles and consists of over 60 antique vehicles from the 1900's - 1960's like Maxwell, Plymouth, Chrysler, and of course, Hudson, Essex, and Terraplane.

In addition to the impressive car collection, Old Spokes Car Museum showcases an extensive collection of car memorabilia displayed throughout a fully restored 1830's farm property, a 1930's Ford dealership, and 1930's Maxwell car warehouse with an original café.

The car exhibits are housed in two buildings, the "Ford Building" and the "Maxwell Building". "The Ford Building" was the well-known O.J. Fritz Ford Dealership decades prior. When purchased, it was in severe disrepair and needed a lot of love and hard work to restore it back to everyday working condition. It has since been fully restored and is now proudly used to display part of the Hudson collection.

"The Maxwell Building" started as a Maxwell car dealership. It required extensive structural and cosmetic restoration before it became the "Home of the Hudson." The Maxwell building houses some of the Old Spokes' Hudson collection, as well as "Bob's Auto Orphanage" office for all official car and auto sales.

The Old Spokes Car Museum is open only by appointment, so please contact them on (484) 641-5500 with any questions or to schedule a museum tour.



A factory hot rod, this 1936 Hudson Terraplane Coupe could outrun a flathead V8 Ford.

Tech Topics

Jim Simpson

Flat Tappets and Engine Break-In. (Derived from Hemmings Motor News, Tech 101: *The Flat Tappet Break-In Fix*, October 4, 2026). I'm not entirely sure this really applies to Corvair engines, but it is something to think about. Apparently, there's been a lot of discussion on the internet about flat tappet cams, like those used in Corvairs, failing during engine break-in. People accuse makers of poor material quality, improper heat treatments, and "modern oils" among other things. But the Hemmings article highlights one thing I'd never really considered.

The cam lobes on camshafts for flat tappets are ground with a slight taper. The lifters correspondingly have a slight crown on their base. This combination of taper and crown causes the lifter to rotate as the camshaft turns, evening

out wear. If something prevents that rotation, then there will be an early failure of the camshaft and lifter during break-in.

On most pushrod engines, the camshaft is inserted from one end of the engine during assembly. It's very easy when removing or installing a camshaft this way for one of the camshaft journals to catch the bottom of a lifter bore. This can produce a nick or burr at the bottom of the lifter bore. If that nick or burr is enough to interfere with the lifter rotation, you have a problem.

This is where Corvair engines differ – the cam is laid in place during the block assembly, not inserted from the end. So having cam journals catching on lifter bores is virtually impossible. But there are other issues that might interfere with lifter rotation such as varnish buildup or mechanical damage during handling. After all, Corvair blocks are made of relatively soft aluminum alloy.

The recommendations in the Hemmings article are two-fold. First, make sure the lifters are free to move in their bores. If a lifter feels tight or is difficult to install in its bore, that's a sign you should investigate further. And once the engine is assembled with the lifters in place, mark the visible top of the lifter with a "sharpie". Rotate the crankshaft (and the camshaft) and observe to see if the lifters are rotating. The rule of thumb in the article is that the lifters should rotate about a quarter turn after 10 full revolutions of the crankshaft – that's five turns of the cam since it's geared to turn at half the crankshaft speed. (The quarter turn of the lifter may vary depending upon the camshaft manufacturer's design. The key thing to look for is rotation of all the lifters.)

If you are building a high-performance engine with higher pressure valve springs, the recommendation is to use "weak" or stock springs during break-in. Once the cam and lifters are seated, then install the high pressure "performance" springs.

And finally, be sure to use both the recommended camshaft break-in lubricate and an oil with sufficient ZDDP.

There's also a recommendation to keep the engine speed above about 1500 rpm during break-in. This is to ensure enough oil is splashed on the camshaft to ensure good lubrication of the cam and lifters. Again, this is where the Corvair engine design may be superior to the common V-8s. The camshaft in the Corvair engine is below the crankshaft so all the lubricating oil from the crankshaft ends up flowing over the camshaft and lifters. Higher rpms are not needed to throw oil up onto a camshaft above the crankshaft.

Vair Vendor

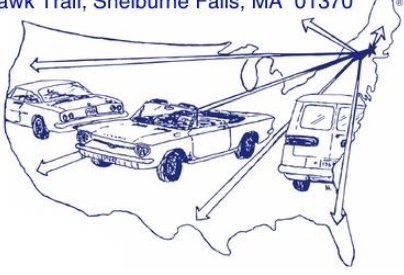
For Sale: '69 Monza coupe, 110/powerglide, LeMans Blue. 84,000 miles, AM/FM radio, rechromed bumpers and bumper guards, new tires, new carpets, new paint. According to Rick Sanford, he and two other members of the Central Carolina club just finished it, stating that it has had a lot of time and money spent on it and it drives and shows very well. It belongs to the late Scott Good's family. It's garaged in Charlotte, NC. Asking \$29,000. Contact Rich Sanford 843-231-2257 or ricksanford2020@gmail.com for details, or Scott's son directly at 704-607-6303 or tim@timgood.net.

For Sale: '66 Monza 4-door Sports Sedan, 110/powerglide, factory A/C. Does need a little work, never had a radio, has clock, some aftermarket gauges, front disk brakes with dual master cylinder, dual exhaust, GM Rally Wheels. Car is garaged in Goldsboro, NC. Asking \$10,000. Contact Jeff Briggs, 919-920-1120 or Rick Sanford, 843-231-2257 or ricksanford2020@gmail.com.



Corvair Part and Services

clark's 2019-2025
Corvair Parts
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EMAIL: clarks@corvair.com
INTERNET: www.corvair.com

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Royal Farms Chicken Inspecting Jerry's Yencko



Ralph Nader, 1991 CORSA National Convention, Hosted by Group Corvair