Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

VOLUME LIV, No. 11 **November 2026**



Rockville 2026. Randy Ricktor Showing Off His Convertible (Left), Convertible on Right Belongs to Rob Neighbour.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

November

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

December

10 – Group Corvair Holiday Celebration! 6:30 p.m. We'll meet at the **Galliano Italian Restaurant and Wine Bar**, 8110 Maple Lawn Blvd., Fulton, MD 20759. Randy Ricktor is handling the reservations, so please let him know by no later than 15 November if you are coming; Email: rricktor57@gmail.com or phone 443-388-3697. We hope everyone can make it!

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

January 2027

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

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

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

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

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 for "The Oval Garage" from club members about their memorable encounters with Corvairs. Phil Richardson has volunteered this article!*)

My Introduction to Corvairs

Phil Richardson

Dave is a tough act to follow for my guest appearance in the Oval Garage, but I thought I would tell the story about my introduction to Corvairs. When I was 16 in the late 70's and about to get my driver's license, my father decided we needed another car for my older brother and me to drive. My family had owned a few VWs over the years, so Dad was familiar with air-cooled cars. But surprisingly, one day he came home with a used 1963 Corvair 700 Coupe in a blue-green color. My brother thought it was ugly and refused to drive it. He had a job at the time, so he bought himself a used car (Ford Torino, as I recall) rather than share the Corvair. I thought the Corvair was pretty cool looking, and I was thrilled that I had a car to myself to drive to school. That year I learned a lot about keeping it running. I grew up in central Massachusetts, so



I joined Bay State Corvair, and they were really great and helped me quite a bit.

Apart from minor maintenance, it ran pretty well and I only had a few issues with it that I had to repair until I started to notice that it was making a strange creaking sound under braking. I took a look under the front end and was somewhat horrified by the state of the front crossmember. The winter salt on Massachusetts roads had taken a toll on it, and it was more holes than actual metal on the passenger side. I guess I should have looked at the underside of the car in a little more detail sooner than I did. I had a bunch of car friends, and we did the junkyard crawl and found a serviceable front crossmember to swap in. After a mighty struggle to get the crossmember bolts free, we managed to get the crossmember out without breaking anything and got it put back together. Overall, I really enjoyed the car and certainly learned a lot. I went to college in Boston, where a car is more liability than helpful, so the car spent way too much time during my college years sitting in my parent's backyard, and eventually it got hauled off to the junkyard.



Once I got settled into a new job in MD, I had a little more disposable income and started to think about the old Corvair. I decided I needed a project car to work on, and a Corvair seemed like the right thing to get. I joined Group Corvair and started to search for one. I didn't have to look far and eventually bought a restored 1969 Monza Coupe from Group Corvair member Warren Friberg. It was a great car, drove well, and although it being an older restoration, it didn't have any real problems. Eventually it turned into a thing, and I bought into the fascinating story of the production of the '69 Corvairs and their relatively small numbers. Everyone seemed to want to point out where I could get another one. Strangely enough I found '69 in a backyard just a few miles from my house. It was a Monza Coupe, but a disaster, having been sitting outside for a very long time with the windows rolled down and the decklid open. But the owner said I could have it for nothing if I got it out of his yard. I hauled it home and although it was too rusty to save, I learned a lot from taking it apart and salvaging what I could. The shell is still in my backyard.

Not content with that one I eventually bought another '69, this time a 500 coupe from Group Corvair member Kevin Broderick. This one was almost too good to be true. A one-owner, low mileage car with very few rust issues. He had parked it in his garage in the early eighties to make some repairs and there it sat, partially disassembled until I bought it. Over the years I've owned it, I took it completely apart and put it back together. Since I had all the original parts for the car, it seemed only right to put it back together to look like a 500. This is the car I brought to the Gettysburg convention, so many of you are familiar with this one. So far, I have resisted the urge to buy more, but who knows…

*(Editor's note: This was Phil's first time to enter a car in the CORSA International Convention concours. He earned a **gold** award! Congratulations. And yes, I've pointed out a couple more '69s to Phil…)*

Minutes of the October Virtual Meeting

Marolyn Simpson

On October 20, members of Group Corvair started logging into the monthly Zoom business meeting at 7:30 pm. There were 10 members online when the meeting officially started at 7:40 pm. The meeting started by sharing stories about dropping engines. Several said they enjoyed the article Dave Edsinger wrote for the September newsletter about his adventures in swapping engines with no floor jack on his return from the Corsa Mini Convention in Birmingham in 1975.

The minutes of the September meeting were accepted as written in the newsletter. Jim Simpson gave the treasurer's report. Corsa distributed the profits from the Gettysburg convention to the four sponsoring clubs. Some of the proceeds should go back to CORSA, but no decisions have been made yet on the amount or where the remainder of the money will go.

Several folks commented on the September 19 Corvair Day in York Springs, PA. Rick Fogarty drove his 64 Corvair but he has had a problem with it being down on power. It idles and runs at low speed okay but is sluggish on the highway. A discussion followed that was led by Dave Edsinger.

Mark Shiffler gave us a report on taking the dents out of his car (not the Corvair) roof that were the result of falling acorns.

We thanked Randy Ricktor for setting up the last social meeting. The next one will be at the **Galliano Italian Restaurant**, 8110 Maple Lawn Blvd, Fulton, MD on **Thursday, December 10 at 6:30 pm**. The last few social meetings have been lunches, so for our holiday gathering we decided it should be a dinner so those who are working can attend. A reminder about the dinner will be sent out closer to the event.

Carl Kelsen informed us that November 1 marked 100 years of GM in Australia. At one time there were six assembly plants in Australia.

The by-laws for the club are in a Google Docs folder with both the original and revised versions. Phil Richardson has streamlined them to better match the way the club operates today. Everyone is invited to take a look at them.

There were several comments on the Rockville show. This was Randy's first experience at this show. He liked the fact that it was not mostly hotrods, but classic cars. Unfortunately, the day was cold and windy, and the attendance was down somewhat from past years, but there was still a lot of interest in the Corvairs.

The new Group Corvair shirts and hats that we got before the Gettysburg convention have been a big hit. Mark still has several of the hats in his inventory. They are available for $15 each, contact Mark Shiffler to get yours!

Possible discussions for the future: cleaning out rocker panels; a report from Carl on LEDs in Australia; and stories about accuracy, or lack of, in gas gauges.

The last item for the evening was on some possible outings for the future.

The meeting ended at 8:55 pm.

Group Corvair Bylaws

Group Corvair hasn't updated its bylaws in over 40 years! It will come as no surprise to anyone that the club has changed quite a bit since that last update. It's now time to take a look at the goals and operations of the club and make some necessary changes.

Phil Richardson has taken the lead in this effort. He has posted the original bylaws and a draft of proposed changes for everyone to review and comment on. These proposed changes are just a first, rough, cut and we really need more people to take a look and add, delete, and offer other suggestions so we can have a robust discussion.

Here's a link to the Googe Doc folder with the bylaws:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jFc8dC5fvtmSNdXJ_D8c6jlBuGrJ64Ud

Please, everyone, take some time and review the bylaws. They will guide the future of the club!

Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show 2026

It was a dark and stormy night! Well, maybe not stormy, but certainly dark and rainy early on the morning of this year's Rockville show. As committee members, Marolyn and I needed to be at Rockville before 8 a.m. to help set up and assist in getting cars on the field. The forecast had been for rain the evening before with it tapering off overnight as the storm moved off to the east. It was still raining when we left at 6:45, but we crossed our fingers and headed out. (I think this was the first time we've used the windshield wipers on the Corvair in at least a decade, if not longer!)

Jerry Yates and his Yenko Stinger tribute planned to convoy to the show with us; he was waiting at the general store in beautiful downtown Davidsonville and pulled in behind us at the town's traffic light. As we headed west on Rt-50, the rain gradually came to an end and was over by the time we reached the Beltway. The trip around the Beltway was uneventful and we got to the Rockville Civic Center a little before 8 – just in time.

We shouldn't complain, but the city staff had reorganized the field layout a bit so the Corvair section, which for the last 20 years had been in a choice location right next to the food vendors, was now shifted to about center field. Finding the correct spot took a little searching since the overnight rains had washed most of the chalk lines away.

Once we had the car settled into place, I went to assist with registration while Marolyn and Jerry guided cars into place down on the field. The morning was overcast, cold, and blustery; I suspect that kept a fair number of car



owners away. Of the nine Corvairs registered, only five showed up, all late-models. We could have used at least one of the three early-models that were registered so we could explain the differences. And I think that reduced





turnout was typical of all the other makes as well. That was unfortunate because plenty of spectators turned out to see the cars and chat with the owners.



Four of the five Corvairs shown belong to Group Corvair members – Rob Neighbour (turquiose convertible), Randy Ricktor (beige convertible), Jim & Marolyn Simpson (blue Corsa coupe), and Jerry Yates (white w/blue stripe Yenko tribute). The fifth car was a '68 coupe that belongs to Tim Jones; it had what might charitably be call "patina" – lots and lots of patina along with plenty of holes where there had been recent slide hammer work to straighten a rear quarter panel. Perhaps not up to the usual Rockville show standards.



Patina Special



Other than the cold and wind – Jerry was bundled in at least three layers of jackets – the show went very well. We'll get the official counts at the wrap-up meeting in early December, but I'd estimate we had between 450 and 500 of the 640 cars registered and 8,000 or so spectators. Down a bit from previous years, but still a substantial turnout.

(Left – Japanese Toyota "President")

I wandered around the field looking for cars that I had never seen or perhaps even heard of before. One that stood out was a 1999 Japanese car. There was no obvious manufacturer name on it, just the name "Century" across the trunk lid, some subtle gold phoenix badges, V12 engine emblems, and what was obviously a flag holder on the front bumper. The interior was luxurious, with it obviously being designed for a chauffeur with pampered passengers in the rear. This is the Toyota flagship car, built primarily for the Japanese market and can be compared to the Maybach and Rolls Royce limousines. Its design is understated, not intended as a flamboyant statement of wealth, but rather something that says, "I have achieved much and this is my reward". As you might guess from the flag holder, these cars are used to transport prime ministers and other heads of state.



Note the Lace Curtains



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We'll be back next year Hopefully the weather will be a bit better, and we'll turn out even more Corvairs!

Vair Vendor

For Sale: CorvEight. This is the third Corvair that Art Silva converted to use a Buick 215 cu. in. aluminum-block V8 in place of the original Corvair engine. The two engines weighed about the same, so the overall handling was largely the same. Pete Frailey was the original owner and did a lot of customization work on the car including a Fitch Sprint roof, taillights from a Mercury Capri, fender flairs, and much more. And as everyone who knew Pete would tell you, it was always a work in progress. Unfortunately it was involved in a minor collision that damaged the left rear quarter sufficiently to put it off the road. Pete never got around to completing the repairs and ultimately Lee Hamilton bought it. Based upon conversations with Lee a couple years ago, there's a new engine with the





reverse rotation parts ready for installation. (A new owner would need to confirm that.) But Lee never found the time to do much to the car and now that he's passed on, it's ready for a new home. Contact Lee's daughter, Laura Custer, email: boonesgirl@icloud.com for information. Please put the word "**CORVAIR**" in the subject line so she doesn't just reject the email as spam. The car is located at 3011 Marlin Dr., Riva, MD.

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.

Tech Tip

Engine Blow-by (*Inspired by an article by Mike Dawson, Prairie Capital Corvair Association newsletter, November 2026*) Mike points out that the Corvair engine is somewhat more prone to excessive crankcase pressure (blow-by) than most other vintage engines due to its higher operating temperatures. These higher temperatures result in greater expansion of parts, which, in turn allow more blow-by. Up through '62, Corvair engines were vented via a road draft tube. Starting in '63, Chevrolet installed positive crankcase vent systems (PCV) – vent tubes with small orifices that recycled the engine vapors back into the combustion cycle to reduce emissions.

Since some blow-by is inevitable, you need to maintain the systems that control the engine crankcase pressure, the road draft or crankcase vent tube. After 60 or more years of operation, the vent system tends to clog. Check the shop manual for vent orifice specifications and consider using an old, frayed speedometer cable to clean the vent tubes.

Excessive blow-by can produce obvious symptoms such as excessive smoke or vapor from a '60 – '62 road draft tube or from the upper vent tube on later engines if you disconnect it from the air cleaner. A rough idle may also be a symptom, particularly if you have a Powerglide car. In more severe cases with a Powerglide car, the engine idle will get worse and worse until the engine dies.

But if your engine does have truly excessive blow-by, it's likely related to worn engine parts – rings and valve guides being the usual culprits. If that's the case, about the only real solution is an engine overhaul.

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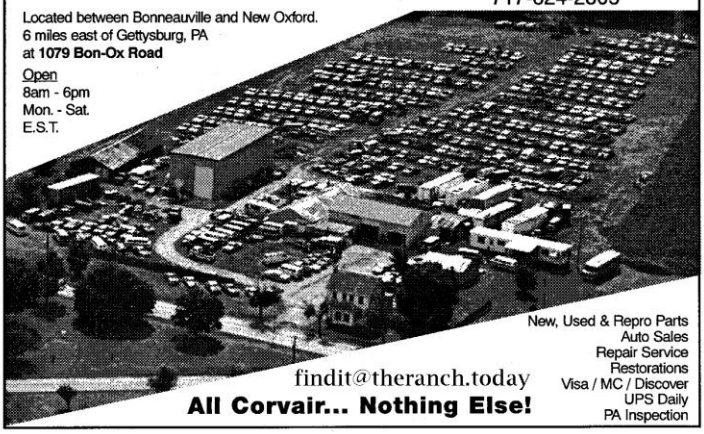
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