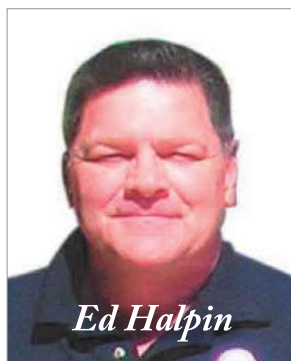


Helping Our Hobby



Ed Halpin

Early last year, the CORSA Board approved a flat \$35 per year administrative fee, levied upon each of the CORSA chapters, to cover the annual premium of our event insurance, and to help pay for various fixed administrative costs associated with the business of running CORSA. The fee was implemented after an internal review committee found that the administrative process at the time, which involved collecting chapter fees tied to the number of non-CORSA members one had in their club, was not only cumbersome but provided no opportunity for validation by CORSA. At the same time, they removed the long-standing exemption of that fee for those chapters which reported 100% of their members as CORSA members. Everyone pays the administrative fee, fair is fair.

Within the local clubs I belong to, the change in policy generated some healthy discussions, ranging from why the fee was initially set so low (if the fee was levied at \$50 a year, the clubs would still pay it), to why it was established as a flat rate instead of being proportionate to the size of the club membership (larger clubs should pay more). In the end, no one disagreed that it was a good move on the part of CORSA to standardize the policy regarding our local chapter status, and to clarify what it takes to maintain that level of association with the national organization.

One particular side discussion did pique my interest though, and that was related to what CORSA does, or does not do, for the collector car hobby in general. Sure, we're focused on the preservation of the legacy of the Corvair, and the event insurance is a great benefit of being part of the larger group, but what else is being done with other groups, at a national and state level, to ensure we can continue to affordably drive our Corvairs for years to come?

For purposes of brevity, I'll only speak to what we're doing here in Colorado, and preface this by saying that I am not a particularly political person, but I am a realist. In order to be heard on the things you need addressed, I believe that you not only need to have a voice, but a seat at the table. To that end, one of the clubs I belong to, Pikes Peak Corvair Club (PPCC), is a proud member organization of the Collector Car Council of Colorado (CCCC), whose mission is to effect input to the Colorado state legislation process. To achieve that goal, they employ a lobbyist, and have done so for several decades. What this does for us in the larger Colorado car hobby is to allow our voices to be heard at the State Capitol. Through all of the noise that every other special interest group is making, and yes, we are a group with a special interest, we do have a seat at the

table, just by virtue of our association with the CCCC.

Just a few of the positive outcomes resulting from these Colorado lobbying efforts include:

Five-Year Collector Plate with Emissions Exemption: The creation of a five-year collector license plate for all vehicles 32 years or older, along with the reduction of emissions testing requirements for all vehicles with those collector plates.

Title Reforms: A law designed by the CCCC created a "Rebuilder's Title" to help collectors and builders gain title to vehicles found in barns and pastures that can make great hot rods, vintage cars, and other projects. It applies to vehicles that are at least 25 years old.

Inoperable Collector's Item Registration: This rule applies to vehicles that were manufactured in 1975 or earlier (collector vehicle eligible) which you do not plan on driving on the street until the restoration is completed. This will exempt the vehicle from most registration fees and fines.

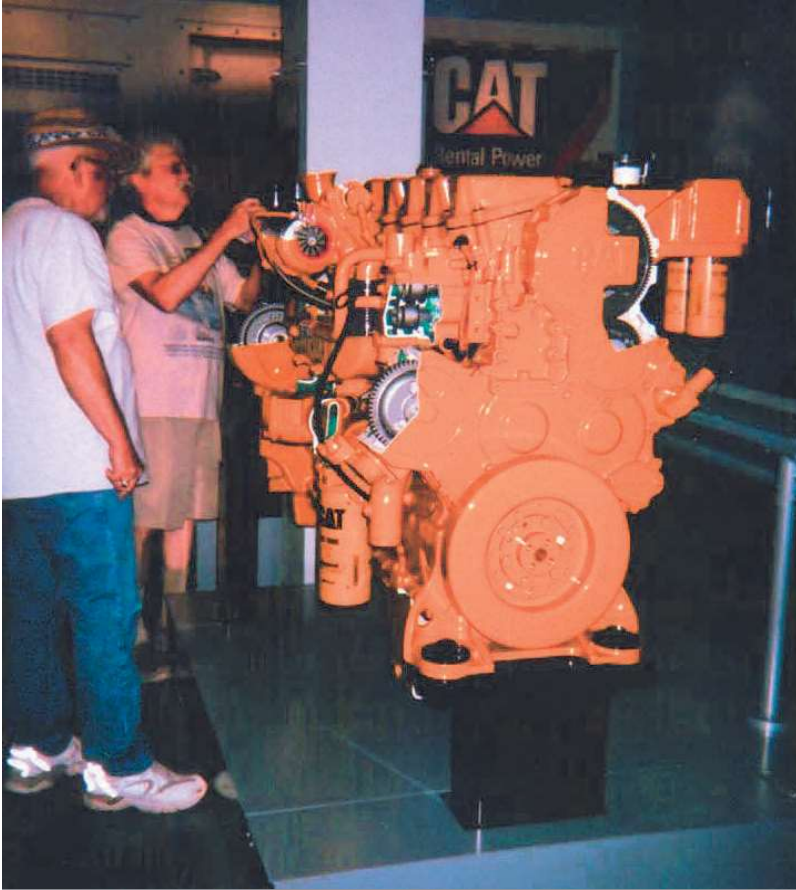
But here in Colorado, the fight continues. Just last year, the CCCC rallied against a bill, sponsored by out-of-state crushers, which would have designated that any time a car was totaled by the insurance company, it would need to be crushed. No more salvage title, straight to the crusher. The resulting legislation would have meant not only the elimination of available original parts cars, or donor cars for you to build that awesome ride you've always envisioned, but it would have also sent that modestly damaged Corvair to the crusher simply because the insurance company said it cost more to fix the car than what the car was worth (to them).

And just recently, our lobbying efforts targeted a bill which intended to limit the number of collector cars an individual could sell in a given year, prior to being levied with a Colorado Dealer's license fee. On the surface, folks might say, that's a good thing, people don't need to be buying and selling that many cars in one year, and if they do, then they should pay up. However, what happens when a modest collector of, say, Corvairs, has five or six in his/her stable, and they unexpectedly pass away, or become incapacitated to the point that the family needs to liquidate their assets to pay for medical bills or hospice. That well-intended legislation just handcuffed the family from being able to access funds that they need. That bill was defeated.

So, you can see there is a lot going on within the car collector hobby, and that's just in one state. Do you know what is happening in your own state? With more than 90,000 collector plates issued in Colorado, the case could be made that any car club in Colorado which is not a member of the CCCC is, in effect, riding on the coattails of the clubs which do make that commitment. They continue to reap the benefits of our lobbying efforts, without having any skin in the game.

At the national level, the CCCC has been a member of SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) for many years and SEMA employs a number of lobbyists in Washington that work to protect our interests. Additionally, SEMA has organized a caucus of state legislators to support our hobby, called the State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus.

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described the company, its products, and its employees. The enormous size of the machinery produced by the company was demonstrated by the viewing area itself: the bed of an "earth mover" converted to a movie theater. And the 14-foot tall tires were equally impressive.

Next to the Caterpillar Visitor Center is the Riverfront Museum. Many of the exhibits showcase the history of the area, from the native American inhabitants to the European settlers, on to the modern activities of distillery and manufacturing. The Illinois River Encounter tells the story of the river's ecosystems. The river's gifts of economic growth and prosperity are countered by tales of devastating floods.

Our final tour through the area took us to Grandview Drive, a scenic road with impressive views of the Illinois River and valley. The historic homes along the drive are part of a residential district that was added to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1910, Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed Grandview the "World's Most Beautiful Drive."

Although we encountered some difficulties with our bus, the trip turned out to be another wonderful day shared with a group of great people.



From the **President:** ...Record Books

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ing this project on as his number one priority last year.

A few short weeks ago, right before the convention, we were tasked with moving the Super Monza and the 1969 Corvair body from the Ypsilanti museum to the Chevrolet Hall of Fame Museum in Decatur, Illinois. For those who were able to go to Decatur while in Springfield, we hope you enjoyed the museum. We are really just getting a good start with our Corvair display at this location. The CPF plans to expand our Corvair presence in other museums in the future, but it all takes time. Back in the winter Pete Koehler brought his 1969 convertible to the museum so it could be on display with the last coupe built, united again, which was our plan since last May and the Meet the Makers event. The CPF is moving forward with museum plans and a greater presence nationwide. Soon the CPF will be finalizing operating criteria, and get going with our foundation donor program.

This is the convention issue, so I know we have lots of stories to share from convention participants. Enjoy this issue and thank you to every one of you for supporting your local club, CORSA, and helping your Corvair friends worldwide. This is your club, let's get it going!

The **Director's** Turn at the Wheel

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The Caucus is a bi-partisan group of state lawmakers whose common thread is a love and appreciation for automobiles. Over the past several years, their work has brought a series of significant legislative accomplishments for the vehicle enthusiast community on issues ranging from equipment standards to registration classifications, and from emissions test exemptions to hobbyist rights. For more information, and to see who your state representatives are, check out semasan.com/page.asp?content=state&g=semaga.

In closing, I can tell you that since joining the CORSA Board of Directors, I've heard comments from some in our membership who believe that those clubs which are not comprised of 100% CORSA members are, in effect, riding on the coattails of those in clubs who do maintain that 100% benchmark, specific to using the event insurance for club sponsored activities. While I respect their opinion, I do believe that thinking is a bit short-sighted and no longer an accurate litmus test to gauge a chapter's level of support for CORSA. If CORSA requires a \$35 payment as a condition to maintain chapter status, earmarking a portion of that payment to go towards the premium payment for event insurance, and the club pays it, then they've paid their fair share as a member organization in good standing. Would those folks prefer the admin fee be tier based, wherein the more members you have, the more you pay? Seems like that's what put us in the position to make the change in the first place.