



President's Message



Hello all!!!

As per our bylaws, we are required to have our annual meeting in 'April'. With April almost over our Annual Meeting is set for **Saturday May 4th**, 10 am-2 pm. As it is the Annual, we need as many to attend as possible.

This will be a bit of a drive for some, as we are having it at Owls Head Transportation Museum this year!! It will be a picnic type meeting. You will need to bring your own lunch and snacks, several sandwich shops and such are in the Rockland area if you choose. We are hoping for outside, if the weather does not agree, we will have an indoor room for us to gather. We will also be passing around a 'hat' for a donation for the Owls Head Museum.

With this date set, it looks like I need to get the Corsa registered!!!

Hope everyone is well,

Ronnie Tinkham
Gorham, ME

Annual Meeting - May 4th



Time to dust off, buff up and check the oil level in your Corvair – Dirigo Corvair's Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 4, from 10 am – 2 pm at the Owls Head Transportation Museum.

The Museum has generously provided us with a picnic space and/or indoor meeting space, depending on the weather. Bring a picnic lunch for yourself and your guests.

If you want to purchase food in the area, try any of the following locales [directions are available online]:

- Owls Head General Store, Owls Head
- Brown Bag, Rockland
- Camden Deli, Camden
- Subway, Rockland and Nobleboro
- Thomaston Grocery, Thomaston

The Museum is located on Rte. 73 just outside of Rockland. Here are the directions from their website:

“In Thomaston, go through two sets of lights; you will see the Knox Mansion up to your right at the 2nd set of lights. Apx. one mile from the 2nd set of lights turn right on to Buttermilk Lane. Follow Buttermilk to the end (apx. 3 miles), and turn left onto Route 73. The Museum is less than 1/2 mile up on the right.”

“From Rockland, at the intersection of Rt. 1 and Rt. 73, turn right. Proceed up Route 73 for 2.5 miles. After 2 miles you will see signs for a left-hand turn to the town of Owls Head, the Knox County Airport and the Owls Head Lighthouse. *Do not take this left.* Proceed on Route 73 for another .5 miles.”

We'll be passing the hat to make a donation to the Museum as a “thank you” for their hospitality.

While you're in the area, you can visit the Owls Head Lighthouse (and watch the ferries on their way to Vinalhaven and North Haven).



Rockland has many art galleries, shops as well as the Maine Lighthouse Museum and the Farnsworth Art Museum.



We look forward to seeing you next Saturday!

Welcome to New Member

Let's take a moment to welcome new member Joe Cyr, Old Town, ME. We don't have any photos of his Corvairs yet, but he wrote us that “I spent about 30 minutes with Ron Moller on Friday. I would like to have him do the mechanical work on a 1966 four-door that my sister bought new and I have owned it since she got rid of it. It needs a lot of work body wise. He told me about some younger fellow in his area that may want to do that. I will get you some pictures of my '63 and '65. “

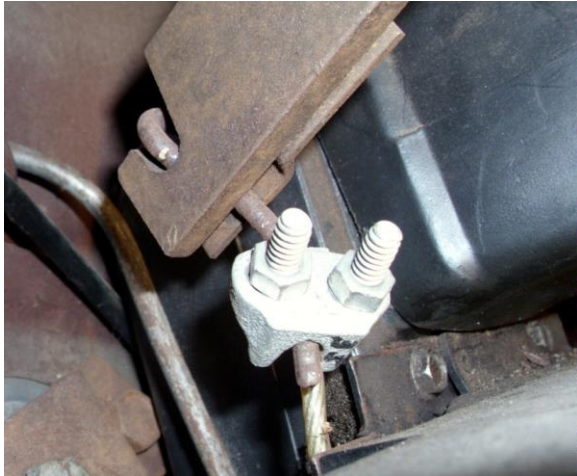
We can't wait to see them Joe – hope to meet you at the Annual Meeting!

Tech Tips – Broken Clutch Cable

A terrific post on the Corvair Center forum provided suggestions on how to repair a broken clutch cable on the road.

A respondent named “Mike C” from “northern Indiana posted these helpful photos of 3/16 by 1 1/2 inch eyebolt and a 3/16 cable clamp. Together he claims they've held his once-broken clutch cable together for three decades!





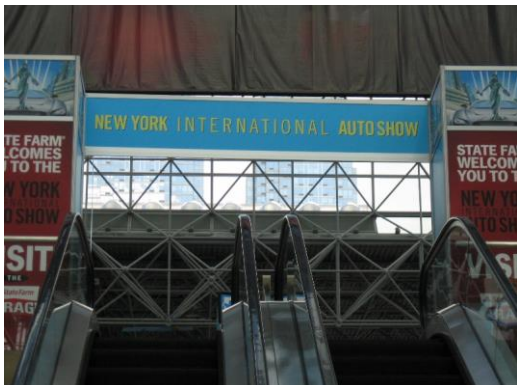
The eyebolt slips into the clutch clevis and the clamp holds the end of the cable. Of course, it helps when the failure is at an exposed end, not under the belly pan.

Clark's offers a "take apart" cable for LM's that they claim will install quickly in an emergency.

715 Miles in a Corvair: What Could Go Wrong?

In the last issue of DiriGO I reported that I decided my '66 Monza should be the preferred form of transportation for my trek to cover the New York Auto Show for *Rovers Magazine*.

Before starting out I did very little prep work on the Monza; in fact, all I did was to put gas in it. However, from my experiences driving only "classic" cars daily, I decided I should carry the parts that would be hard to find at a FLAPS: a fuel pump, an alternator and an oil cooler.



Once again I begged a room in Cos Cob, CT, at the home of a summer family for whom I work as their caretaker on Vinalhaven. I left on a Monday morning and the car ran just wonderfully. Apparently speed limit signs in MA and CT serve advisory purposes only, such as "we suggest you drive no faster than 65 mph but don't insist upon it." So as not to get rear-ended I found myself going an indicated 70 - 75 mph while remaining generally in the right lane.

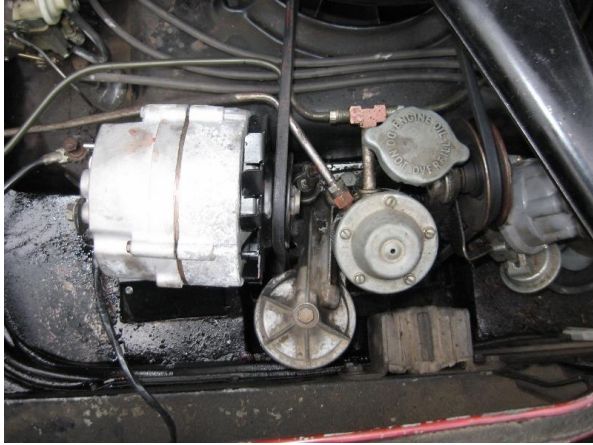


When I turned onto the Merritt Parkway for the final hour's drive, I got about 10 miles before noticing a smoky smell in the car. Looking outside I saw many trees cut down from the edge of the road [still working on cleaning up after last fall's storms]. I hoped someone was burning brush so I rolled down my window to sniff the air outside. I did not smell any smoke - until I rolled the window back up. Now I could see a white sheen in the air so I pulled over to the side of the road and shut down the engine.

Lifting the engine lid I noticed white smoke rising above the alternator. I felt the [newish] wiring harness and found it cold, with no signs of burning insulation. So I removed the fan belt and examined it, and could not find any obvious problems. I spun the fan and the idler pulley, and both were silent. Then I spun the alternator pulley and could hear a raspy sound. Hoping the alternator was the problem [it was still charging properly], I took the spare one from the trunk as well as a new fan belt.

The alternator bolts were well hidden from view but a call to John at Clark's uncovered

their location for me. Luckily I had the right size extensions and sockets for the job (yes, that's my blood on the alternator!).



After swapping it out and installing the new belt, I started the car, saw nothing untoward, and then drove the rest of the distance without a problem.

The drive home was almost problem-free; I found a new oil leak. You can see the sheen of oil in this photo, extending from the oil cooler area towards the battery, along the perimeter seal.



The last mechanical work done in the car was to repair an oil cooler fin leak and install new oil cooler seals. This leak extends as far forward as the left carb area of the seal, and then it pools down to the rear. Some oil appears on the ground beneath the oil cooler area; in addition,

this seems to appear only after a somewhat long, hard run -not running around town.

With the Corvair on the mainland I took it to the garage that replaced the oil cooler seals in December and also repaired a leak in the oil cooler fins. I had ordered new cooler seals from Clarks and had a used cooler that I had purchased from Ron Moller of Maplewood Motors: he assured me that the cooler was in good shape.

Since it was time anyway I had the mechanic do an oil and filter change at the same time. Before he began, he had me start the car while he held a light and mirror underneath the cooler. Within a few moments we saw drops of oil leaking onto the mirror.



So he drained the oil and removed the cooler. The seals were still quite pliable and you could see that the December epoxy repair had held nicely. The new leak was likely from a split in one of the fins itself.

The used cooler went back in and when we started up the car, there was no sign of leakage. Happily the Monza now leaks only from the usual places!

While the car sat on the lift we greased it up and took a moment to remove the dissolving metal from around the muffler. Sadly, this Clark's muffler - "aluminized for longer life," according to their catalogue - isn't lasting very

long. It's molting its outer shell, just like our Penobscot Bay lobsters.



Willow Run Plant Faces Wrecking Ball



Hemmings Motor News reported on April 29 that the spiritual home of the Corvair, the Willow Run Auto Plant, will face the wrecking ball after all. Here's their report:

It built bombers in World War II, Kaisers afterward, and the Corvair in the Sixties. It served both Ford and General Motors, and it remained in operation for seven decades. Yet the Willow Run assembly plant near Ypsilanti, Michigan, faces demolition if the current owner of the plant doesn't sell it by August.

As reported last week by the [Detroit Free Press](#) and [AnnArbor.com](#), the trust that controls the properties that GM shed during its 2009 bankruptcy – including the entire 332-acre Willow Run plant – has

announced that its efforts to sell the property have been stymied by the 72-year-old plant and associated buildings.

“We were told unequivocally by the market that the real opportunity at this site relies on capitalizing on the amenities the site has to offer and not on the building,” said Bruce Rasher, redevelopment manager for the [Revitalizing Automotive Communities Environmental Response Trust](#). “The building is an impediment to redevelopment on the site.” As a trust and not a liquidating company, RACER's mission is to sell the former GM properties to companies committed to creating jobs and revitalizing the surrounding community.

RACER has reportedly pegged the market value of the property at more than \$32 million. It has been able to sell a 23,000-square-foot portion of the property to an aircraft maintenance company, but the 5 million-square-foot building that formerly housed the GM Powertrain Center remains unsold, and Rasher said that nobody has yet made an offer for the building. The [Yankee Air Museum](#) last week launched a campaign to buy a 175,000-square-foot portion of the GM Powertrain Center where Ford built bombers during World War II, but it would need to raise \$6 million by August 1 to do so. The museum has already secured \$1 million toward the purchase of the bomber plant and has an agreement from the Smithsonian to get the world's last surviving Willow Run-built bomber for display, should the museum raise enough money to go through with the purchase.

Built on land owned by Henry Ford to [crank out B-24 Liberator bombers](#) in 1941, the Albert Kahn-designed plant became the largest single industrial building under one roof, encompassing about 3.5 million square feet. One it ramped up to full production in late 1943, the so-called “Grand Canyon of the mechanized world” would produce a bomber per hour, along with a number of wood-bodied gliders. After the war, Ford declined its option to buy the massive plant from the federal government, so the government – through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the War Assets Administration – ended up leasing, and eventually selling, Willow Run to the newly formed Kaiser-Frazer.

Kaiser-Frazer moved into Willow Run in November 1945 and began the Herculean task of converting the bomber production lines into automobile production lines – a task it accomplished in six months. A month later, in June 1946, the first pre-production Kaisers rolled down that assembly line. Kaiser-Frazer production at Willow Run lasted until July 1953, shortly after Kaiser bought Willys-Overland, and Kaiser then sold the plant that November to General Motors for \$26 million. The remainder of Kaiser production took place at the Willys plant in Toledo.

GM initially bought the plant to build Hydra-Matic transmissions; a fire destroyed the Livonia, Michigan, plant that previously built the transmissions, so GM needed to quickly convert an existing plant to fill that sudden need. While it continued to build transmissions in the main facility, GM built an entirely new assembly plant in 1958 for the upcoming Corvair. As Dave Newell wrote in the book *1969 Corvair Fingertip Facts*, “the Willow Run Corvair plant used none of the old B-24 bomber or Kaiser-Frazer production facilities.” Though Chevrolet would go on to [build Corvairs elsewhere](#) during the 1960s, Willow Run was always considered the Corvair’s “home” assembly plant and was the only plant to build Corvairs throughout the Corvair’s lifespan. Eventually, Chevrolet would build Chevy IIs, Novas, Citations, and Caprices there before ending vehicle production at Willow Run in July 1993. Transmission and powertrain production continued there until December 2010.

Bylaws of Dirigo Corvairs

You can find our bylaws online at our website, www.dirigocorvairs.com.

The bylaws require us to hold an annual meeting; one purpose is to elect officers for the upcoming year. Our leadership team is:

- President – Ron Tinkham, Gorham
- Vice President – Ron Moller, Cape Neddick
- Treasurer – Ken Holm, Whitefield
- Secretary – Kathryn Billington, Norridgewock

Dirigo Corvairs is also a chapter of CORSA, the international organization for Corvair enthusiasts.

Jeff Aronson, Vinalhaven, serves as the Editor of Dirigo, and as our webmaster. He thanks everyone who has donated to the annual cost of the website [approximately \$150/year] hosting. He’s received one contribution in 2013 for the 2013 hosting/domain name costs and will happily accept others during the year. Jeff will continue to contribute his services as webmaster.

Our 40th Year!

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When you place your first order over \$40.00 you get a **FREE Catalog as a**

40th Anniversary Thank You

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The new Catalog includes parts from the last 5 Supplements as well as 100's of improvements (including better descriptions, more photos & new charts). Changes / additions to over 70% of the pages, this is our most major revision ever.



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For more information contact Bob at bobhelt@aol.com. Check or money order to:

Bob Helt
3016 Pearl Harbor Dr.
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