



Group Corvair Comments

GROUP CORVAIR'S NEWSLETTER FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



VOLUME XLVII, No. 8

August 2019



The "All-GM" Show

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

September

14 – NECC Motorsports track day at Pocono. Got to www.NECCMotorsports.com to register.

17 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., our first meeting of the fall. We'll meet at the Beijing of Greenbelt, 131 Center Way for dinner (at 7 p.m.) followed by our business meeting. See you there!

14 – Bay State Corvairs Fall Classic at **Clark's Corvair Parts**. Shelburne Falls, MA. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Clark's is offering 10% off on parts for cash sales and 5% for credit card sales plus you save shipping. For interiors and large orders, Clark's recommends pre-ordering no later than 26 August.

21 – Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club 40th Annual Corvair Days. 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the AACA Museum, 161 Museum Drive, Hershey, PA. There is a banquet dinner at 4 p.m. at the Skyline Diner, 7511 Allentown Blvd, Harrisburg, PA.

October

15 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., location TBD

19 – **Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show**, Rockville Civic Center, 603 Edmonston Dr., Rockville, MD; 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cars have to be on the field not later than 11 a.m. and it is wise to get there as soon after registration opens (8:30 a.m.) as possible – we expect in excess of 500 cars! Group Corvair is a sponsoring club and Corvairs have a dedicated section. Registration at: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/667/Antique-Classic-Car-Show>

November

19 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., location TBD

December

17 – **Group Corvair Business Meeting**; 7 p.m., location TBD. Note: the regular meeting may be preempted by a Christmas Celebration!

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From the Oval Garage

Bob Hall

I've been spending a lot of time lately going through my Corvair parts and updating my very incomplete inventory to better understand how Corvair wealthy/addicted I am. With the exception of some consulting, I've been retired for over two years now and I thought I would be much further along with projects—which include cleaning up my basement. I do have my carburetor parts in one area, sorted into small parts bins or on shelves. I bought two 3 quart cans of carb cleaner to clean all the dirty carbs and parts. Then they get a coat of 3 in 1 oil to fight corrosion before I put them away. I've started to do the brake parts and the starters are next.

I plan to further break down my spare FC front cross member so I can treat the surface rust, repaint and rebuild it for my Greenbrier. I have the “west coast” style side mirrors disassembled and now I'm stripping the old paint so I can paint and reassemble them. The new rubber floor mats for the Greenbrier have arrived so once I've finished cleaning and painting the floor they can be installed. Then the rear seats can go back in which will make the GB seem more complete.

The Rockville car show is getting closer so I hope anyone with a half respectable Corvair is thinking about registering to show their vehicle in October. Group Corvair is a sponsoring club and we're hoping to have a larger turnout of our cars this year. I sent the Rockville show application to everyone on our address list so all you folks with good cars in Arizona, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere come visit Maryland. Let us know you're coming and we'll give you a tour of the sights when you show your special Corvair in Rockville.

We've still got time for an August road trip. Rob Neighbour has suggested Chesapeake Beach and Don Hibbard has nominated the historic Riversdale/Calvert Estate in Riverdale. (Don is a docent there.) I'll be sending an email to see what will work for our members.

Looking forward to seeing lots of Corvair folks at our September meeting on the 17th!

All-GM Show

Marolyn Simpson

The dog days of summer are not the most popular time for car shows, but on Saturday, August 10, the All-GM Show at Montgomery College had a good turnout. Of course, it was helped by having one of the nicest days of all the summer with temperatures in the low 80s, low humidity and a moderate breeze. Jim and I arrived about 9:15 and the parking lot was rapidly filling up. We were directed to a spot close the entrance and well away from the DJ's loudspeakers. (You could hear the music but were still able to talk to spectators.)

Two Group Corvair cars were entered in the show. Bob Winokur displayed his white '66 Monza and Jim and I showed our blue '66 Corsa. We were both in Class C which was stock cars from 1965 to 1969. Don Hibbard drove his Corvair to the show but did not enter it in the competition. A third Corvair was in Class B (stock '49 – '64) --a dark red early model from the Mid-Maryland club.

There was a good mix of GM cars and trucks on the field. One of my favorite displays was the four GM motor homes--all from the mid-1970s. They were all open for visitors. There were some interesting features in them. One had its exterior repainted, but the inside was all original and still looked great; a second one had a dog kennel built into it; another slept only two but had a large kitchen with a long Corian countertop; and last one came equipped with a clothes combination washer/dryer.

Throughout the show there was almost always a group of spectators looking at the Corvairs or swapping stories. Rick Sanford (Mid-Maryland club) was there enjoying the show even though he did not bring his Corvair. (It's up at the Corvair Ranch having an oil leak taken care of.) We met Heather James, a former Group Corvair member from the very early days of the club. While we didn't remember her, other club old-timers might. We also met another participant from Davidsonville (not far from us) who was showing a beautiful bright red '53 Oldsmobile in Class B.

The judging was people's choice. When the awards were given out Jim and I received a second place plaque for Class C.

Things You Learn at a Car Show: When you go to a car show and talk to people you always learn something new. In this case, at the All-GM Show we learned that at Pebble Beach, the high-rollers use Pampers (inside out) to wipe down the paint after they place their car on the field! (Jim G. – you were at Pebble Beach, can you confirm this?)

And in the Corvair legends, we heard (again) from one of the visitors about how early model Corvairs are incredibly unstable. No, not that they roll easily, rather that because of their rear weight bias (and apparently great engine power), they'll do "wheelies" at the drop of a hat and do a backwards summersault, landing on their roofs. He assured us that his baby sitter had wrecked her Corvair in exactly that way. Chevrolet fixed this "problem" by lengthening the front of the late-model Corvair thus putting more weight forward. (As far as I can tell from line drawings, the distance from the center of the front wheel to the noses of the early and late model Corvairs is the same within a fraction of an inch. I assume the extra weight is due to making the front bumper out of depleted Uranium or something similar.) No, we didn't argue with him and thanked him for the information.

Dropping in on the Asphalt Angels Summer Sizzler

Jim Simpson

Jerry Yates represented Group Corvair at a couple of car shows this month. The first was the Asphalt Angels "Summer Sizzler" show on July 28

Marolyn and I decided we needed to get our Corvair out of its summer nap and while we couldn't stay, we thought we'd drive over and see how things were going. When we arrived, we snuck in along the back row and lo and behold, there was an open space behind Jerry's white Yenko replica. Jerry was napping in his chair behind his car, but I guess we



weren't quiet enough because we woke him up and he turned to see who was behind him.

Jerry reported that about 130 cars were registered along with a few, like ours, who had snuck onto the lot but only stayed for a short while. He note that "yes, it sizzled, but that he'd been to hotter shows". We walked around and checked out the field; there was a wide variety of cars there – mostly hotrods, but also a nice mix of 60s and 70s muscle cars.

Two weeks later, Jerry and Diana joined the Asphalt Angels in a caravan from Bowie to the American Legion/Bombers Car Club show in Laurel. This time it was on grass (that usually makes it feel 10 degrees cooler) and the weather was great with a high in the lower 80s and low humidity. Jerry said that they turned out 162 cars! Jerry's learned from the previous two times he's attended this show just where to snag a parking spot that will give him shade as the day progresses.



After Jerry finished chatting with some friends, he returned to his car to find that Gus Torbert had arrived and been having a lengthy conversation with Diana. Gus and Jerry then walked around the field and discussed the pros and cons of the various cars on display.

Jerry said that this was his third time at this show and had never been disappointed.



Jerry too had a "Things You Learn at a Car Show" moment.

One of the spectators had seen Jerry's car outside his garage in Bowie and stopped by at the show to tell him just how much he liked his Ford Falcon! Oh well...

Tech Topics

Repairing FC Taillight Bad Grounds: My Greenbrier taillights have gotten dimmer over the past year, which is not good because the lights are small to begin with. Ten or 15 years ago the same problem, caused by poor grounding, was fixed by removing the lights and cleaning up the J-nut connections to the body. As the two



photos show, the J-nuts cut through the paint to complete the grounding of the aluminum light base to the body when the mounting screws are tightened. Rust will weaken or insulate the ground. To fix the problem remove the J-nuts that clip to the body tabs, clean the body tabs with steel wool, a Scotch Brite pad or similar and remount the J-nut. This time I added some dielectric grease to slow future rust before I put everything back together.

I also added Sylvania 2357R (Red) LED taillight bulbs to brighten the lights even more. I want to be seen both coming and going.
Bob Hall

FC Fuel Tank Vent: For everyone who owns a FC, did you know that the gas cap is NOT supposed to be vented? Unlike other Corvairs, the FC fuel tank has a factory installed vent fitting at the top of the tank. If you use a vented gas cap, when you make a right turn and have a full tank of gas, the gasoline will slosh up to the cap and leak out the vent. It makes a mess and smells bad as well. (Editor's note: Now we need an article on how to check the vent fitting. Anyone out there familiar with it?)
From the *Leaky Seel*, newsletter of the Corvair Minnesota club.

Thinking of Changing your Early Model Instrument Lights to LEDs? It's a good idea with one exception. LEDs are longer lasting and usually significantly brighter than the original bulbs. But if you haven't swapped the original generator in your early-model for a late-model alternator, use a standard incandescent bulb in the "GEN" socket. Apparently the generator (regulator?) requires a modest amount of current to flow through this bulb when the car is first started in order to "kick start" the generator charging. (Editor's note: I can't verify this; the early shop manual doesn't say anything about it and it's not obvious from the circuit diagrams. Nor do I have an early model car with which to experiment.)
From the *Leaky Seel*, newsletter of the Corvair Minnesota club.

Forty, Thirty and Twenty Years Ago This Month

Jim Simpson

There's another gap in the *Group Corvair Comments* archive for August, September and October of 1979 so whatever the club did for that period is forever lost to history!

The August 1979 edition of the *CORSA Communiqué* was the last issue before the Detroit CORSA National Convention. This was a homecoming event for the Corvair. (Marolyn and I attended, although without a Corvair.) Among the events planned were tours of the Willow Run assembly plant and the GM Tech Center. In racing events, Stingers were having mixed results. All three Stingers at the Elkart Lake June Sprints had serious engine problems resulting in none of them finishing. But out on the West Coast, at Laguna Seca, three Stingers took 1st, 3rd and 4th in D production. (The 4th place car was running on only two carburetors at the end of the race – both on the same side of the engine! A linkage pin had come out leaving the right side carbs at idle.) Bob Helt published an article on GM tests of Corvair engine cylinder head and oil temperatures. As you might expect, the addition of A/C and the anti-smog air pump had major detrimental effects on the running temperature. In the *CORSA Classified*, about ½ of the cars for sale were from the '65 and '66 model years. Lots of Corsas!

In August 1989, according to the *Group Corvair Comments*, we were planning on a combination business meeting and pool party. I'm quite sure that the emphasis was on the pool party. Ward Bourgondien reported on his trip to the Kansas City CORSA National Convention; he and Shirley Swiney took copious notes on how they did things and what could be done better, all in preparation for our own planned 1991 CORSA convention. We had only four cars for sale – a '61 Lakewood, '62 Spyder, '66 Monza 4-door and a '66 Monza convertible.

In August 1989 *CORSA Communiqué* focused on Tech Tips. There were articles on everything from correcting bump-steer on lowered cars to Warren LeVeque's secrets of how to make a turbo faster, to the latest in paint and painting techniques. In the *CORSA Classifieds*, there really weren't any unusual cars for sale although Charlie out in Phoenix was in full swing with his cryptic ads. Prices were all over the map but \$4,000 to \$6,000 seemed to be the range for a car you could be proud of.

Twenty years ago in the August 1999 *Group Corvair Comments* we reported on our "Not-Quite-Fourth-of-July" outing to the Motleys and our tour of the White Post Restorations facility. As we noted in the newsletter, White Post does great work, but that great work does not come cheap. We'd also largely finished up our restoration work on the cut-away Corvair power train that we'd acquired from Jack Dempsey. It had needed a lot of TLC, but it came out pretty good. (It's now with the Corvair Preservation Society museum.) We had 10 cars listed in the Vair Vendor.

And wrapping things up, the August 1999 *CORSA Communiqué* was the Lake Tahoe CORSA International Convention issue. Seriously! There was little else in the *Communiqué* other than articles on the convention – which by all reports was fantastic – the CORSA Calendar and Classifieds. From the size of the Classifieds, only about 2/3 a page of cars ads, everyone must have been at Lake Tahoe and offering their car there.

Vair Vendor

Available: 1961 Monza four-door sedan. Spotted at the B&B auto salvage yard, 18911 Central Ave, Upper Marlboro, MD. 301-249-5111. Looks pretty rough, but the salvage yard owner says it runs well. While the yard owner says it's a '62 and it does have '62 tail lights, the engine and most body trim indicates it's a '61.



For Sale: 1965 4-door, Light blue, powerglide, fair condition. This is the late Ben Petree's daily driver and was last run about 4 years ago. Was maintained by Jack Dempsey until Ben could no longer drive; parked under shelter since then. Asking \$1,000 but willing to listen to reasonable offers. Contact Caroline Inglehart, only between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., 301-775-0379.

For Sale: '64 Corvair Dune Buggy. New lower price. It has a Maryland title and "Street Rod" tags as a '64 Corvair. Built in 2009, street legal, tagged as a 1964 Corvair with "Street Rod" tags. Never been off road, street



driven only. Specs: 1964 Corvair 110 HP engine, automatic transmission. Front and Rear Suspension are 1964 Corvair. The frame is square steel tubing factory built for complete running gear from a Corvair and was probably built in the early 60's by Devin of El Monte Calif. Tires are 13" on front and 14" on rear with only have 600 miles on them. Fiberglass body was new old-stock, a Berry Mini "T" 2, built in California by Berry in late 1960 / 70's. I have only driven it about 600 miles, but it is fun to drive! Asking \$3,900 or an offer I can live with?? Bob Lewis, 301-246-4278, Nanjemoy, MD.

For Sale: 1965 Monza 4-door. 26k miles, recent seat covers, repainted about 10 years ago. Asking \$10,000. Denny Shue, 717-818-2904, Dover PA.





*You can
take it
with you*



Over half a ton of it, if you wish, and that's only part of the beauty of a Chevrolet El Camino. Along with the capabilities of a light-duty truck, you get sleek '66 Chevelle styling and a lap-of-luxury interior you can make as lush as you like . . . plus all the riding comfort and handling ease you could ask for. And you can ask for just about anything going in the way of equipment to make your El Camino exactly *your* cup of tea.

Pick your power from two sixes and five V8's ranging up to the 360-hp 396. Deliver it via 3-speed, overdrive, 4-speed or Powerglide transmission. Add Positraction rear axle, extra-firm suspension, quick-ratio power steering, power brakes, etc. Inside, too, indulge yourself with bucket seats, floor shift console, air conditioning, power windows, Comfortilt steering wheel and what have you. What you'll have will be a personal pickup *par excellence*, a swinging two-seater that's really YOU! Your Chevrolet dealer would like to discuss it with you, soon. . . . Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Detroit, Michigan.

EL CAMINO BY CHEVROLET

Probably not the Upper Marlboro Race Track, but this certainly captures the feel of amateur racing in the late 1960s. I'll bet most of the cars you see there were driven to and from the track.