

# On the Air

Newsletter of the Arkansas Corvair Club ■ CORSA Chapter 722

November 2005

Volume 18, Issue 11

## Early-1960s Corvair sets pace for cool cars

by Dan Jedlicka

Reprinted from the *Chicago Sun Times*, October 3, 2005

Prices for collector cars made from 1960 on continue to soar to astronomical levels, but the low-priced Chevrolet Corvair remains the most collectible auto bargain.

The Corvair was the most adventuresome mass-produced car ever built by General Motors, which sold 1,710,018 Corvairs between 1960 and 1969.

Like the Porsche and Volkswagen Beetle, the Corvair had a rear-mounted, air-cooled compact Porsche-style engine. The Corvair's unit-body construction and all-independent suspension also were unusual for U.S. cars, which had liquid-cooled engines up front and a non-independent rear suspension. The Corvair's optional power-boosting turbocharged engine also was an oddity for a domestic auto.

Chevy might have easily topped the 2 million production mark with the Cor-

vair, but the 1965 Ford Mustang and rival 1967 Chevrolet Camaro stole most of its sales. Corvair production slowed to a crawl after the 1965 Mustang's debut in 1964 because Chevy realized it needed the conventional sporty Camaro to battle the conventional sporty Mustang.

Ralph Nader's criticism of the first generation Corvair's handling didn't help sales, but that car only had tricky handling when driven hard if its tire pressures were incorrect. That was usually the case because most owners didn't note that more pressure was needed in the rear tires than those up front.

Ironically, the Corvair pretty much dug its own grave because its sporty, affordable Monza model, with bucket seats and a floor shifter, gave Ford the idea to build the affordable sporty

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## Tech Tips

### Greasing rear axels on early Corvairs and FCs

by Dave Ewald

Reprinted from *Vair-iations*, Volume 33, No 11, November 2005, newsletter of the Niagara Frontier Corvair Club

Tech Tip shared by Dave Ewald on the Corvanatics e-mail list when the topic of greasing rear axels on either an early model Corvair or Forward Control was mentioned.

Do not consider the other methods. I have done six axles (two from or '65 GB and four others from past vehicles) this past summer. It will involve some work, but the best way is to remove the axle from the vehicle.

You will have to remove the yoke from the end of the axle to get it through the suspension A-arm. The yoke can be removed with carefully placed blows from a 2 lb hammer along with heat and penetrating fluid (PB Blaster), or by using a good puller or an improvised puller made from a spare yoke and a large bolt and nut.

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## REMINDER

The Arkansas Corvair Club will NOT meet in December. Also, there will not be a December issue of our newsletter, *On the Air*. Warmest holiday wishes from the Editor.

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**"Corvairs bring friends together."**

**Corvair sets pace** *continued*

Mustang, which it based on its economy Falcon model.

The Corvair came as a coupe, sedan and convertible, and also as a passenger van and pickup truck, but most were car models. In any case, there are plenty of Corvairs to buy, and the car is supported by an active, helpful national club that can find any part needed for the car.

Nationally recognized Corvair expert Larry Claypool, who has worked on Corvairs for decades at his 'Vair Shop in south suburban Frankfort, says an increasing number of Corvairs keep turning up after being parked in garages unused for decades.

"Corvairs just keep popping up," Claypool said. "We worked on one just the other week with 1991 license plates still on it. I've gotten more customers in the last three years than in the last 10 because people apparently have finally decided to do something with old Corvairs that have been sitting around."

The most valuable Corvairs are the 1962-64 Monza Spyder convertibles, which are valued by the Collectible Vehicle Value Guide at up to \$12,575 if in top shape and the 1965-69 Monza and Corsa convertibles that are valued at \$10,625. However, you should be able to buy a decent 1962-64 Monza coupe for an estimated \$3,625. A 1965

-66 Corsa coupe -- probably the best Corvair of them all with a manual gearbox and four- carburetor setup -- is valued at \$4,425. Corvair convertibles have annoying rattles, like most convertibles of their era, but the 1965-69 hardtop models feel especially solid.

The second-generation 1965-69 Corvair has far more rakish styling than the first-generation model, and also has additional power and a Chevrolet Corvette-style rear suspension that enables it to handle like a sports car. Indeed, the Yenko Stinger racecar versions of Corvairs developed by an East Coast Chevy dealer regularly beat Corvettes on race tracks.

Corvair prices constitute pocket change, when compared with, say, a fast but clumsy 1964 Pontiac GTO convertible. It's valued at \$45,750, and an equally clumsy 1971 Plymouth 'Cuda with a Hemi V-8 is valued at \$162,000. A 1971 Plymouth 'Cuda convertible with a Hemi V-8 but careless construction has sold for well over \$1 million.

Corvairs are sturdy and fun to drive, being light and agile. They drive much like modern compact cars and are especially good on slippery winter roads because most of their weight is above the drive wheels for especially good traction. They take lots of abuse without complaining, and required

maintenance is minimal.

Many younger people mistake Corvairs, especially the 1965-69 models, for slick foreign cars. In the early 1960s, before the first Mustang arrived, many college students drove Corvair Monza Spyders. The 1965-69 model was snapped up by older car buffs who liked its styling and handling.

Indeed, after all these years, the Corvair is proving to be a timeless



Happy Birthday  
to our ACC associates  
born in January.

Corey Holtz  
January 1

Mary Vaughn  
January 4

Bobbie Brown  
January 6

Frank Campbell  
January 8

Barbara Coffey  
January 16

Jane Carter  
Larry Levy  
Joey Walker  
January 20

Camelia Franson  
January 27

Joe Gregory  
January 30 (69 years)

**ACC Dues Alert**

In an effort to keep everyone informed about the status of your ACC membership dues, we publish a membership *Dues Alert* in every issue of *On the Air*.

The *Dues Alert* lists names of members who are past due and those due for the current month.

Dues are **\$20.00** for regular membership and **\$15.00** for associate members. Please mail payments to: **Arkansas Corvair Club, P.O. Box 627, Little Rock, AR 72203.**

Here are the names that are **past due** and due in **November**.

**Past Due** ..... Joe Gregory  
Bill MacSorley

**Due Nov** Hank Wangle

Please disregard if you've already paid.  
Thanks for your generous support.

## ACC October Meeting Minutes



JB King

The Arkansas Corvair Club met at Just Like Mom's restaurant, on Kiehl Avenue, in Sherwood, on Tuesday, October 18.

The meeting was called to order by president, Cathy Smith.

### Old Business

No one offered any old business to discuss.

### New Business

After discussion about Christmas holiday activities, members decided that our club will not participate in a Christmas parade this year.

Our annual after-holiday party again will be hosted by Stew and Ronnie MacLeod, with the date and details to be announced.

### Tech Session - Corvair specialty tools

Elvis King showed and explained the use of several specialty tools made

for specifically for Corvair applications.

These tools included both homemade and manufactured examples. The shop-made tools shown by Elvis included the following:

- Pushrod tube remover made from thin walled electrical conduit
- Thermostat adjusting tool (made by Butch Chapman)
- Differential side-bearing adjustment tool
- Transmission main shaft fitted with a 3/8-inch socket, used to set the preload for the bearings in a differential rebuild
- Wooden block used to remove late dripedge trim molding
- Distributor and shaft only to be used to prime the oil passages after an engine rebuild
- Short piece of angle iron used to remove upper A-arm bushings.

The manufactured tools shown by Elvis included the following:

- Two bent end box wrenches
- Fuel sending unit spanner

- Uni-Syn for carburetor balancing
- Compact crank pulley puller
- Snap-On telescoping head bolt socket (the Holy Grail of Corvair specialty tools, owned by Bill Smith)

### November Meeting

Our final meeting of 2005 is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15. Just Like Mom's restaurant plans to include turkey and dressing as a menu special, for this meeting. We hope for a strong turnout for the November meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Respectfully submitted,

JB King



## Halcyon Days

by Edwin Meade Robinson

Ere yet the giants of modern science had gone a-slumming in smelly slums,  
And through the Ghettos and lazarettos had put in plumbing (and pulled out plums!)  
When wily wizards in inky vizards employed their talents at homicide,  
And poisoned goblets for faithless squablets by knightly gallants were justified;  
When maids were fairest, and baths were rarest, and thaumaturgy was wrought by dames,  
When courts were rotten and faith forgotten, and none but clergy could write their names—

When he who flouted the Church, or doubted, would find his neck fast in hempen ruff,  
And saint and sinner thought eggs for dinner and beer for breakfast the proper stuff;  
When men were scary of witch and fairy, of haunted castle, of spook and elf,  
When every mixer of cough-elixir was thought a vassal of Nick himself;  
When income taxes and prophylaxis and Comic Sections were yet unborn,  
When Leagues of Nations and Spring Vacations and Fall Elections were held in scorn—

When all brave fellows would fight duellos with sword and dagger, with lance and mace,  
When good men guzzled until, clean fuzzled, they'd reel and stagger about the place;  
When pious journeys and jousts and tourneys brought high adventure and secret tryst,  
When knives were many, but forks not any—'twas fist to trencher, and mouth to fist!—  
Oh, men had chances for true romances, for fame and glory, and knightly acts...  
(And childish quarrels and beastly morals, if song and story would stick to facts!)

### Tech Tip *continued*

Drill out the rivets and remove the dust shields. Soak the bearing end of the axle in parts cleaner or diesel fuel overnight. Use aerosol carb or brake cleaner to clean out the remaining grease. Do not blow air to dry--use lint-free rags. Inspect the bearings and races; if they are scored or look blue (overheated) or feel rough, try to find a new bearing or a used axle with a good bearing. A worn or overheated bearing w/axle might be repacked and kept as an emergency spare, a rough bearing will be junk.

Use a needle attachment on your grease gun to pump grease into every roller cavity. The bearing should have plenty of grease in it, but should not be packed entirely full, otherwise grease will be spewed out onto your brake linings when it warms up. The bearing halves and dust shields can be reas-





# On the Air

Arkansas Corvair Club  
370 Windwood Drive  
Cabot, AR 72023-8344

Place  
first class  
postage  
here.

FIRST CLASS

*"Promoting the maintenance,  
enjoyment, and preservation of  
the Chevrolet Corvair."*

## Arkansas Corvair Club Information

### Meetings

The Arkansas Corvair Club (ACC) meets on the **3rd Tuesday** of each month at **Just Like Mom's** Home Cooking restaurant, 3140 E. Kiehl Ave., in Sherwood.

### November Meeting

The ACC will meet Tuesday, **November 15**, 7:00 p.m., at Just Like Mom's, on Kiehl Ave., in Sherwood.

Join us at 6:00 p.m. for food and fellowship prior to the meeting. The club offers an array of merchandise for sale—oil filters, gas filters, hats, decals, patches, T-shirts and more.

### Officers

**President:** Cathy Smith, 370 Windwood Drive, Cabot, AR 72023, 501 843-8413.

**Vice-President:** Meredith Chapman, P.O. Box 243, Jacksonville, AR 72078, 501 676-6693.

**Treasurer:** Elvis King, 21305 N. Mill Rd., Little Rock, AR 72206, 501 888-1224 (evening).

**Secretary:** JB King, 21305 N. Mill Rd., Little Rock AR, 72206, 501 888-1224 (evening).

**Elected Board:** Allan Embrey, 501 834-5373; Ronnie MacLeod, 821-3622; Clyde Jones, 479 774-6789; Bill Smith, 501 843-8413.

**Appointed Board:** Pending.

### Committee Chairs

**Membership:** Elvis King

**Publicity:** Bill Smith

**Newsletter Editor:** Bill Smith, 370 Windwood Drive, Cabot, AR 72023, 501 843-8413.

**Newsletter Advertising:**

Non-members and businesses:  
\$100/year full page; \$60-½ page;  
\$35-¼ page.

**Program & Events:** Open

**ACC Webmaster:** Ken Franson, 608 Ridgelea Ave., Sherwood, AR 72120, 501 835-6005.

### Web Address

**Arkansas Corvair Club Web site:**  
<http://corvair5.tripod.com/acc.htm>

**ACC Mission:** The mission of the Arkansas Corvair Club (ACC) is to promote the maintenance, enjoyment, and preservation of all types of Corvairs and related vehicles, and to advance and improve driving skills, automobile safety, and the Corvair's image.