



Corvairsation

www.corvairs.org

Tucson Corvair Association
Volume 27, Number 9

Tucson, Arizona
February 2003



And you thought they weren't making the Corsa any more!!! Here's what the 2003 Opel Corsa looks like. Available now at your local Opel dealer...in Frankfort.

Tucson Corvair Association
Established 1975

Corvairsation is a monthly publication of the Tucson Corvair Association, which is dedicated to the preservation of the Corvair model of the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors. The Tucson Corvair Association is a chartered member of the Corvair Society of America (COSA), Chapter 857.

Monthly Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except December. One technical/social event is planned for each month except July and August.

Membership Dues are \$15 per year for singles and \$18 per year for families. Initial dues are \$15 for singles and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to Tucson Corvair Association.

Change of Address: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chairperson. Do not report such changes to the Corvairsation Editor.

COSA Membership Dues are \$30 per year (\$70 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the COSA Communique, a monthly publication. COSA membership is not required for membership in the TCA, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

Classified Ads are free to members and \$3.00 per 4-line ad to all others.

Deadline for materials submitted for publication in the Corvairsation is the 10th of month to the Editor.

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Tucson Corvair Association

Mountain View Restaurant at prince and Mountain Ave.

Minutes from January 22, 2003

Chris Cunningham swung the gavel at 6:50pm. In attendance were Chris Cunningham, Barry Cunningham, Dave Baker and his guest Nancy, Don Robinson, Lance Gillingham, Bruce and Tanya Robinson, Dean, Sandy, Heather and Sean Dutcher, Paul Dunn, Art Dunn, Frank and Chris Sharp, Chris Compton, Herb Berkman, Gordon Cauble, Ed Segerstrom, Bill Maynard and guest, Allen Elvick and John, Amy and Emily Torpey.

Let's welcome our newest members John and Amy Young and their nicely restored early model coupe.

For March our mid-month will be a trip to the Kartchner Caverns. These are some spectacular caverns, considered to be the best in the country. What would be a better way to display our Corvairs than to caravan down to the caverns. Please join us.

February mid-month is a tune-up clinic at Barry's place. Have a knock that you just can't get rid of, that annoying little miss at idle? Bring your air-cooled street rod on over lets fix it! Couldn't think of a better place to bring your car, we'll have more years of knowledge and expertise, collectively, than your car is years old. Any Model!!

Allen Elvick gave us a run down of the clubs finances. The beginning balance was \$4682.86. Monies were collected for a raffle, Corvairs parts sold, Christmas party and cans. The total income came to \$666.19. Expenses were for name tags, the Christmas party, the Corvairsation, Picacho Peak picnic, computer domain renewal and the Brian Lynch award. Total expenses came to \$775.53, leaving the club with a balance of \$4573.52. Thanks Allen.

Gordon announced the nominations for the 2003 officers to be voted upon at the next meeting. Nominations are as follows: President - Chris Cunningham, V.P. - John Torpey, Merchandise and Editor - Don Robinson, Finance - Allen Elvick, Membership and Webmaster - Paul Dunn, Recording secretary - Amy Torpey (grateful as she was, she declined the position to care for our youngest club member, Emily Torpey), Member at Large - Barry Cunningham.

Herb Berkman informed us that there is going to be a Corvair gathering just outside of Las Vegas, about one hour north to be exact, in Mesquite, Nevada. Herb has access to a small airplane, if you think you might be interested in splitting the cost, please contact Herb.

There will be a raffle next meeting, the honors of donating go to Bruce Robinson, Herb Berkman, Allen Elvick, Dave Baker and John Torpey. Thank you for your support.

After a brief time out for dinner there was a movie about Clark's Corvair and their facilities up in the far reaches of the north east. The movie covered some of the history of Clark's beginning and how Mr. and Mrs. Clark have turned it into the second largest source of Corvair parts in the world. A job well done goes to the Clark's for their efforts on saving an American classic.

There was a parts inventory day at the Torpey's, many parts were categorized and stocked but there is a considerable amount of parts to go. Thanks to Don Robinson, Frank and Chris Sharp, Dean, Sandy and Sean Dutcher for their work. It is greatly appreciated.

Lance Gillingham - Vice president; Allen Elvick - Treasurer; Lance Gillingham - Librarian; Recording Secretary - John Torpey; Paul Dunn - Webmaster and Membership Chairman; Merchandise Manager - Don Robinson and Barry Cunningham - Member at Large.

A Letter from the President

This month marks the Club's annual election of officers. Candidates elected at the Wednesday February 26 meeting will take office beginning March 1. Show your support for the Club and cast your vote at the February general membership meeting. We have lots of interesting items also on the agenda that night.

To raffle or not to raffle, that is the question. We plan to take a close look at our monthly raffle. Should we continue, modify, or suspend this long-standing activity? Speaking of raffles; a member of the Lehigh Valley Club has made a beautiful king/queen quilt to be raffled off at the 2003 Carlisle Convention Banquet on July 19. A photo and raffle tickets will be available at the February meeting.

We experienced a wrinkle in our plans to visit Kartchner Caverns Park in March. Their schedule was not accommodating. We will attempt to make the trek in May. Potential dates in May will be discussed at the February meeting. We had over twenty members sign up for March.

Our club survey is underway. More forms will be available at the February meeting. Look for them next to the Girl Scout Cookies (Heather Dutcher will fulfill orders taken in January). And that takes care of dessert.

Happy motoring,

Editor Receives Highest TCA Award

The Editor of the *Corvairsation*, Don Robinson, was awarded the Club's highest honor at the annual Christmas dinner in December. The Bryan Lynch Award is given out at the end of each year to individual members for continued support and dedication beyond the ordinary. In addition to being the editor four years running, Don has held the position of club president and vice president.

Bryan Lynch, who succumbed to cancer in the early eighties, was a long-time member of the Club. Bryan's award-winning 1969 Corvair convertible was an inspiration for any car enthusiast. Congratulations Don for your sustained support and dedication!

TCA Events at a Glance

FEBRUARY

- 12 WED TCA Board Mtg. Yankee Doodle Pizza, 1929 E Grant Rd. 6:30pm
- 22 WED *Tune-up Clinic at Barry's* 362 N Bull Run Dr. 10am-2pm 733-7387 (See map elsewhere in issue)
- 26 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm. Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road. (Election of Officers)

MARCH

- 12 WED TCA Board Mtg. Lotus Garden 5975 E. Speedway 6:30pm
- 15 SAT Fred's Arena Breakfast Run 9am meet at Tuc Pima Library Mission branch (3770 S. Mission at Ajo)
- 22 WED *Tune-up Clinic at Barry's* 362 N Bull Run Dr. 10am-2pm 733-7387 (See map elsewhere in issue)
- 26 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm. Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.

February Meeting Features Clark's Corvair Parts Video (Part 2)

If you attended the January meeting you were undoubtedly riveted to your chair during the viewing of Clark's Corvair Parts video. Part Two of Cal and Joan's tour and product overview will be shown at this month's general meeting on Wednesday, February 26. It promises to be even better. Do not miss part two!

For the March mid-month we will make a breakfast run to Fred's Arena, 9650 S. Avra Rd. This is a short jaunt for your Corvair and a nice Saturday morning drive. To avoid getting lost, we will caravan from the library at Mission and Ajo at 9 AM



Corvair Corsa, Ford Mustang and Plymouth Barracuda:

"And it is here too, that we have to go on record and say that the Corvair is - in our opinion - the most important new car of the entire crop of '65 models, and the most beautiful car to appear in this country since before World War II.

When the pictures of the '65 Corvair arrived in our offices, the man who opened the envelope actually let out a great shout of delight and amazement on first seeing the car, and in thirty seconds the whole staff was charging around, each wanting to be the first to show somebody else, each wanting the vicarious kick of hearing that characteristic war-whoop from the first-time viewer.

Our ardor had cooled a little by the time we got to drive the cars - then we went nuts all over again. The new rear suspension, the new softer spring rates in front, the bigger brakes, the addition of some more horsepower, all these factors had us driving around like idiots - zooming around the handling loop dragging with each other, standing on the brakes - until we had to reluctantly turn the car over to some other impatient journalist. We were actually annoyed about having to drive the new Sting Ray and the new Impala SS with a great, storming 409 to propel it.

We said we'd give you a comparative opinion, and there it is. We liked both the Mustang and the Barracuda - for different reasons - and they're very good cars. They have speed and handling and they're the right size - excepting the Corvairs, they're the best of their kind.

The '65 Corvair is an outstanding car. It doesn't go fast enough, but we love it."

David E. Davis Jr., Car and Driver, October, 1964

Larry Claypool's Home-Spun Corv-8 Conversion

Anyone who spends time in the *Virtual Vairs* Internet Corvair discussion group can tell you Larry Claypool is among its most active participants. Practically on a daily basis, Larry offers free technical advice to Corvair owners and enthusiasts all over the world. Whether the questions relate to how to change the pushrod tube O-rings on the stock flat-six without pulling the cylinder heads, or the procedure to follow to correctly install an electrical accessory, Larry freely offers his expertise to fellow enthusiasts. In his own pursuits, however, he strays from the beaten path.



Witness Larry's '66 Monza Sport Coupe.

As you view this vehicle, with its custom rear quarter-panels and widened rear track, you realize there's something special going on. Beneath the skin of this Aztec Bronze beauty, there lurks the running gear of an Oldsmobile Toronado!

Built to stock 1966/67 specifications, the 385 horsepower, 425 cubic engine is longitudinally mounted (as opposed to transverse-mounted). Power is routed through a Vari-pitch Hydramatic transmission to 3.21:1 final drive gears. The combination propels the car to 13 second quarter-mile times at over 100 mph. When you consider the converted weight of the car grew to just over 3,500 pounds, a thousand pounds heavier than a stock Monza, that's quite amazing!

To cool the big Oldsmobile engine, Larry modified the stock headlamp treatment by sinking the stock headlamp sub-assemblies to the inner fenders, doing away with the headlamp buckets and bezels. Cooling air enters the openings where the buckets once were, where it is directed to a trunk-mounted big block Chevy radiator with air-conditioning capacity.

The area around the radiator is completely sealed off from the main part of the trunk. This creates a high pressure area in front of the rad when the car is in motion. Electric fans mounted behind the radiator draw air into the low pressure side and help exhaust it through exit vents cut into the inner fender wells in a manner similar to that illustrated in the Corv-8 section of www.corvaircorsa.com.

Water delivery to the front is via a pair of 2" steel pipes, placed where the stock Corvair heater duct would normally run. A stock Toronado air-conditioning water pump moves the coolant and in-car heat is provided by a blower/heater core assembly from a Renault R5 (Le Car).

The modifications to the rear section of Larry's Monza are extensive. In the picture above, you get a good look at the custom rear quarter-panels that not only accommodate the wider track of the Toronado transaxle, but incorporate ample air exit vents to help exhaust heat from the engine compartment and give the car a unique "I'm built for speed" appearance. The extensions fall short of the rear bumper wrap-around, allowing the retention of the stock rear bumper and preserving the attractive rear contour of the body.

The stock Corvair rear suspension was replaced by what was formerly the Toronado front suspension and axles. This is obviously not a job for the faint of heart!

The brakes on Larry's '66 use a power-assisted dual master cylinder, replacing the stock single cylinder unit. Front brakes are stock Monza drums fitted with metallic shoes. Future plans call for swapping out the drums for discs. Rear braking is provided by stock 1967/68 Olds Toronado/Cadillac Eldorado 4 piston caliper discs. Incidentally, stock late model Corvairs were strong in the braking department. Front brakes were equivalent to those used on Chevrolet's larger Chevelle model.

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This shot reminds me of the Beach Boys' lyric "Two cool shorts standin' side by side, a fuel-injected Stingray and a 413"... substitute "425!"

That's Larry's wife, Marybeth, having some fun at the track! The 'vette lost! She also eliminated a Camaro the same day. She says it might have eased off to avoid breaking out. That's bracket racing, Marybeth. You won fair and square!



Larry's best run to date was in the 13s. He's been collecting pieces to freshen up the motor, which he describes as "tired." He plans to send the heads to Mondello, the Olds performance experts, and have them "do it to it." He'll also install a higher-stall torque converter at the same time.

When asked about the car's handling, Larry gave me the straight goods: "Handling? Admittedly awful! It's just too tail heavy. It was named "Lead Tail Lump" by an acquaintance. We've called it that ever since. I'd say it handles on par with a Renault Dauphine, which, if you can't relate, is not as good as a stock '60/63 'vair. If calm driving finesse is not required, it can be driven in a manner of a 385 horsepower go-cart, the tail hung out at the touch of the throttle. I have autocrossed the car twice, with amusing results. But let's be honest, its forté is *not* cornering."

Some good advice from the man who crafted the (say it with affection) *Lead Tail Lump*:

"I bought this car partially complete. It was either finish it or scrap it, so I finished it. If I had started it from scratch, I would have used a '79/85 Toro as the base frame/suspension, rather than the '66/67 unit it uses now. The newer parts weigh a lot less, and take up less space."

The reference to "breaking out," adjacent to the picture of Marybeth at the drag strip might not be familiar to those not acquainted with bracket racing. In this class of drag racing, competitors determine the true potential of their cars in pre-race time trials. They then declare the quickest time they expect to run when they race. This is called a "dial-in." If you complete the quarter-mile more quickly than your dialed-in elapsed time, you are disqualified. This practice is intended to allow unevenly matched cars to race fairly, using staggered start times tied to the dial-ins of each car. It discourages cheating.

June, 2000 - Larry reports he's sold his uniquely styled Monza coupe to Steve Cole, of Houston. It seems fitting that the large cubic inches would end up in Texas!

Special thanks to Larry and Marybeth for their assistance in preparing this feature.

Spares & Vairs

For Sale: 1962 4-Door Monza, automatic, factory air conditioning (it works), 85K original miles. 102 hp, Original white Paint and beautiful original interior with front bucket seats. Now reduced to only \$2250. Drive anywhere! Call Dick (520) 299-4723.

For Sale: Corvair parts - Large outdoor yard full of Corvairs of every model. Call Barry Cunningham (520) 733-7387.

For Sale: 1966 110 hp Corvair engine. Ran fine until teeth stripped off of the cam gear. Sitting more than 10 years. Originally equipped for California smog req. No carbs or alternator. \$150 or offer. Call Herb (520) 751-9500.

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TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS

FOURTH WEDNESDAY of each month (except
as scheduled in December)

Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road, Tucson, Az.

6:00 pm: Parking Lot Bull Session

6:20 pm: Dinner (optional)

7:00 pm: Meeting starts

C COMING EVENTS

PLEASE CONTACT A
BOARD MEMBER WITH
ANY SUGGESTIONS

Feb. 22 Tune-up Session at Barry's 362 N. Bull Run Dr. (10 to 2).

Mar. 15 Breakfast Run to Fred's Arena. Meet at Tucson/Pima Library
Mission & AJO at 9 AM

Regular Monthly Meeting, Mountain View Restaurant Feb. 26, 2003
TCA Executive Board Meeting: March 12, 2003.

AA

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