

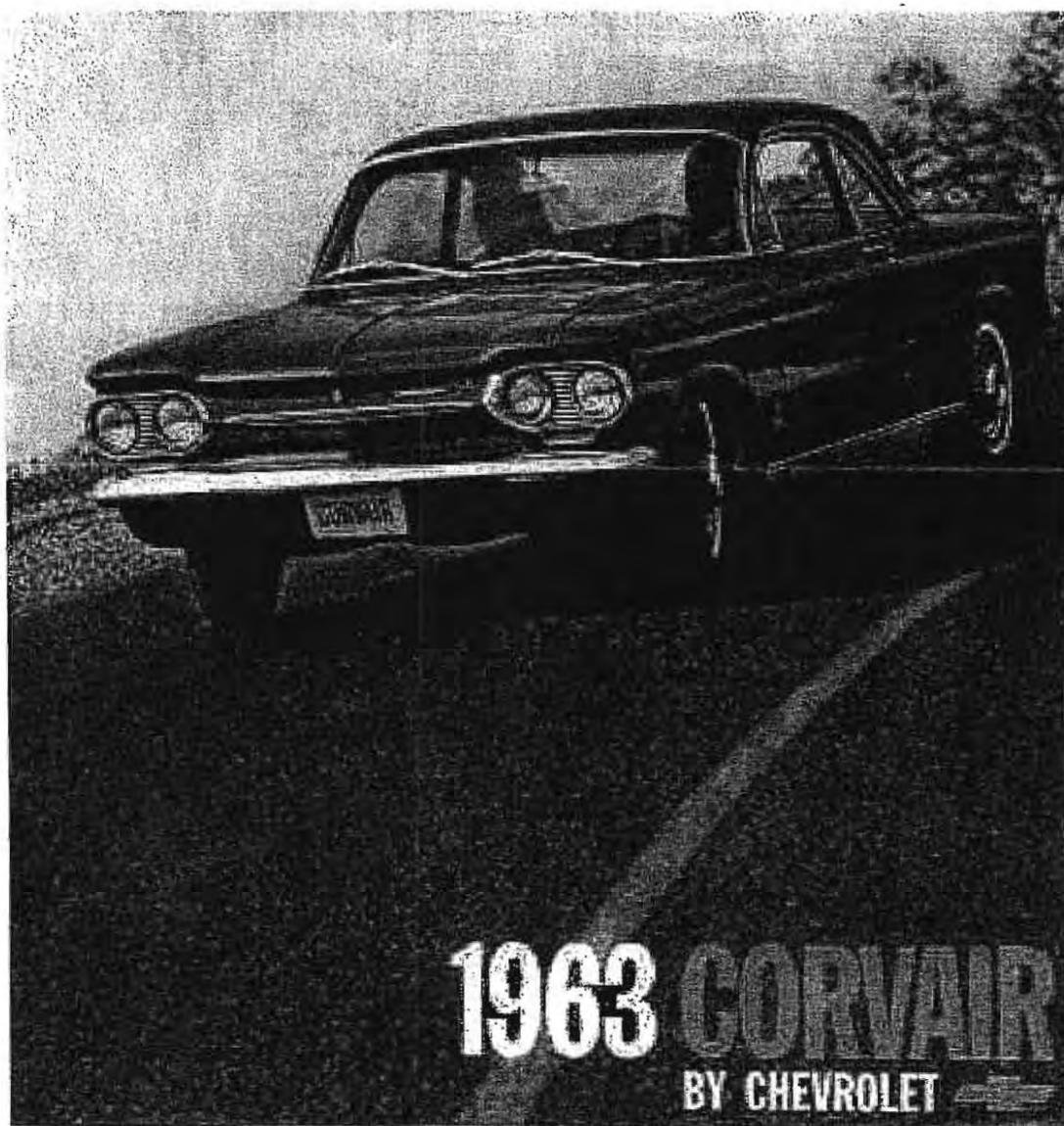


Corvairsation

www.corvairs.org

Tucson Corvair Association
Volume 27, Number 10

Tucson, Arizona
March 2003



Welcome, John and Amy Young!

Spring Cruise
Boyce Thompson Arboretum Herb Fair & Picnic
April 12, 2003

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 American (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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Merchandise Chairman: Don Robinson

The February elections were a unanimous success. The membership has consented to have **Allen Elvick** (Secretary Treasurer), **Don Robinson** (Corvairsation Editor/Merchandise Chairperson), **Paul Dunn** (Membership Chairperson/Webmaster), **Barry Cunningham** (Member at Large) and **Chris Cunningham** (President) back as officers. **John Torpey** has been elected to Vice President after being the Recording Secretary for the past year. Two new officers, **Sandy Dutcher** and **Cris Sharp**, will share the responsibilities of Recording Secretary.

In this issue you will see a black and white representation of the queen/king size quilt made by Kathy Lopez of the Lehigh Valley Club. It is a fund raiser for the 2003 Corvair Convention. Tickets are being sold for \$1.00 each or \$5.00 for six. Our Club gets to keep \$25 of each \$100 worth of tickets sold. The drawing for the quilt will be held at the Convention Banquet on July 19. Help support the Annual Convention and add funds to our treasury at the same time. Contact a Board Member for tickets today – while they last!

Join us for some live music, live culinary demonstrations, children's games and crafts, and more when we head up to Superior, Arizona for the **Herb Festival on April 12th**. Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park is the oldest and largest botanical garden in Arizona. The arboretum, founded in the 1920's, covers 323 acres and includes a desert lake, hidden canyon, mountain cliffs, wildlife, a streamside forest, and towering trees. The arboretum specializes in arid-land plants. See our **Calendar of Events** elsewhere in this issue for details and don't forget to make room in your garden for some fine, Arizona-grown herbs.

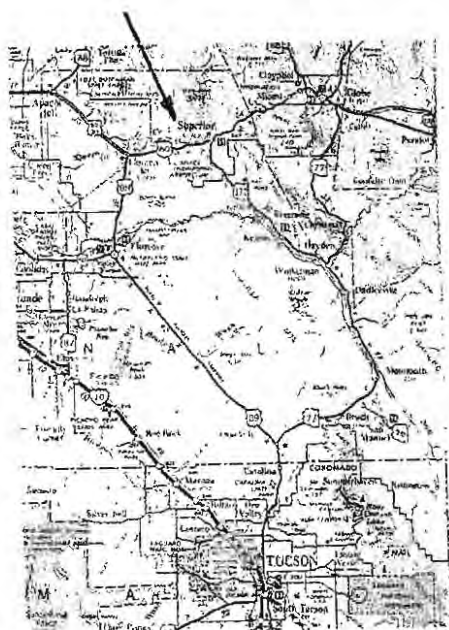
Happy motoring, Chris Cunningham

from the editor.....

Thank you, Bill Meyer! Bill treated everyone to breakfast at the March Mid-Month on the 15th. We toured out to Fred's Arena for a great breakfast and some exercise for Corvairs on the open road. It was a beautiful day and we had a good time.

I hope you are planning ahead for the April Mid-Month. It's a spring cruise up to Superior to Boyce Thompson Arboretum for a picnic. Check the map on this page. To caravan, meet at Casas Adobes Wild Oats Market 7133 Oracle Rd at 9:00AM. TCA will supply charcoal and sodas. There is a great area at the Arboretum to eat your picnic lunch and this is also an opportunity to purchase all kinds of native Arizona plants.

May 18 is our trip to Kartchner Caverns. If you are not on the list and want to go, call John Torpey NOW.



Thanks to President Cunningham for the up-dates to our calendar and the new officers' Roster. Welcome to the Board, Sandy Dutcher and Cris Sharp. Thanks, Van, for the feature article on the 1963 Corvair. I have my eye out for one of those 3.08 differentials.



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Corvairs.

2003 calendar of events

mar

- 12 WED TCA Board Meeting - Lotus Garden 6:30pm.
15 SAT *Fred's Arena Breakfast Run* - 9am
Meet at Tucson Public Library, Mission/Ajo
26 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.

april

- 9 WED TCA Board Mtg. - Great American Cattle Co. 6:30pm.
7189 E. Speedway (near Kolb) - 721-5855
12 SAT *Boyce Thompson Arboretum Herb Fair & Picnic*
Meet at Casas Adobes Wild Oats Market 7133 N. Oracle, 9am
23 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.

may

- 14 WED TCA Board Mtg. - Chili's Grill, 4911 N. Stone 6:30pm.
18 SUN *Cave Run to Kartchner Caverns* - 11am Meet at Triple T
Truck Stop, 5451 E. Bensen Hwy (I-10 & Craycroft).
28 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.
30-31 F-S 10th Annual Charity Beeline Cruise -In & Car Show
Rim County Classic Auto Club, Payson, AZ (928)472-7173

june

- 11 WED TCA Board Mtg. - Yankee Doodle Pizza, 1929 E. Grant, 6:30pm.
21 SAT *Oracle Heights Pool Party & Potluck* 2045 W. Omar Dr. 3pm-6pm
25 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.

july

- 15-19 T-SAT 2003 CORSA International Convention, Carlisle, PA
20 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.
(Note: Board Meeting in July)

aug

- 27 WED Regular monthly meeting - 6pm.
Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.
Mountain View Restaurant 1220 E. Prince Road.
(Note: No Mid-Month or Board Meeting in August)

Calendar

Tucson Corvair Association 2003 Officers Roster

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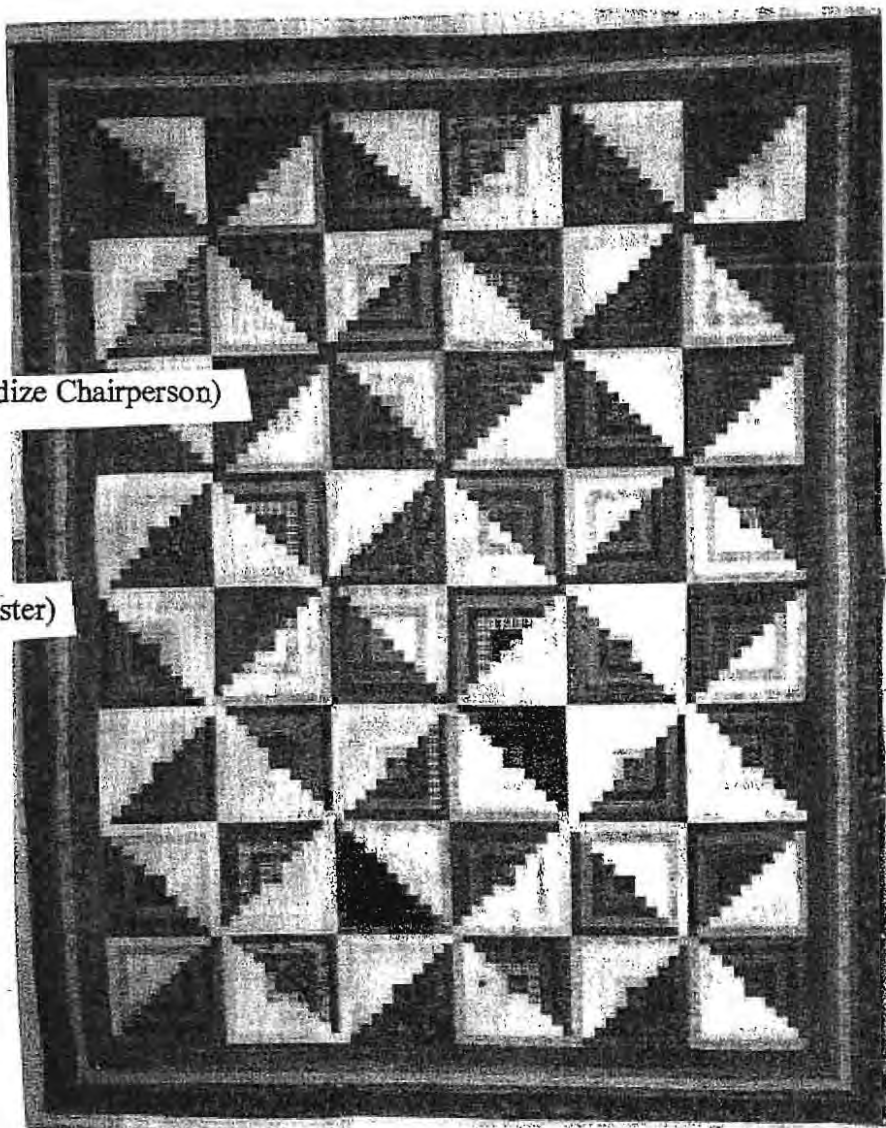
Cris Sharp (Interim Recording Secretary)

4051 West Ajo Way

Tucson, AZ 85746

520-578-0468

Here it is! This is the quilt which will be raffled at the Corsa National Convention in Carlisle, PA, on July 15-19 this year. TCA will be selling tickets for the raffle at the next couple of meetings: one dollar each or six tickets for five dollars.



1963 CHEVROLET CORVAIR

For the Corvair, 1963 was a mark-time year. Following the increased success of the previous year, Chevrolet chose to let well enough alone. The model lineup was again modified slightly. The station wagon was gone completely, apparently due to the appearance of the Chevy II wagon and the decided buyer trend toward sporty Corvairs and away from the mundane, work-a-day versions. The Loadside truck also went away, although the Rampside, the Corvan and the Greenbrier were still there.

Although '63 was a year Chevrolet opted to let the Corvair coast along, there were a few minor alterations to set the new year's models apart from the 1962 versions.

The nose got a single narrow chrome strip filled with black running from headlight to headlight, and the turn signal lenses were amber instead of clear. There was a new Corvair name badge in the upper left of the nose panel, and again there were new name badges for the 500 and 700 series placed in front of the front wheels. The rocker panel trim on the 700 was narrower than that on the Monza.

The Monza sedan had front buckets as standard equipment, and all Monzas got a new tufted upholstery design on both seats and door panels. The Monza's interior came in a choice of seven colors. The 500 and 700 series interiors were basically unchanged, although patterns were altered a bit.

The Spyder option was reduced to just \$327 which probably accounted for 1963 being that option's biggest sales year. The sintered metallic brakes and heavy-duty suspension were optional instead of standard.

Although '63 was a year for precious little change in the Corvair, it was also the year Chevrolet chose to reveal the dramatically new and different Corvair show cars, the Monza GT and SS, and Bertone unveiled its Corvair-based Testudo.

In yet another effort to squeeze more mpg out of the Corvair - an attempt to continue to woo those economy-minded buyers - there was an almost unknown 3.08:1 axle ratio available for the 102-hp four-speed Corvair. On the Mobilgas Economy Run a Corvair with the 3.08 scored 27.9 mpg, a formidable feat, but of little notice to Corvair buyers who were flocking to the performance Monzas - nearly eighty percent of the total production run were Monzas.

But something was amiss in Corvair land. Sales were off dramatically. Without a doubt the introduction of the Chevy II cannibalized some Corvair sales. All along, there had continued to be some basic consumer reluctance to such a radically different automobile. The Chevy II with its familiar look-alike styling and its front-engine/rear-drive layout, offered those reluctant folks a ready alternative. The Corvair's rather dismal fuel economy history and its decided trend toward sporty had become an even greater impetus for some to go to the comfortably familiar Chevy II.

By 1963 Chevrolet had played out its Corvair hand. There was nothing left to do, short of a major restyle, and that, although planned, wasn't to be ready for two more model years. The turbo and the sportification of the Monza were Chevy's hole cards. The 1963 relied on the inertia established by the '62, but that wasn't enough to keep the sales figures up.

The car magazines continued their love affair with the Corvair, however, albeit tempered through familiarity. The blush was off the rose by the fourth model year, and the road testers were a little more prone to criticisms that had been downplayed, or not realized, during the early days. Specifically, they called attention to the great improvement in handling and the suspension, to the detriment of the standard setup.

Car and Driver typified the basic setup as "every-now-and-then-you-almost-catch-up-to-it," and *Motor Trend* said "Rear-end sway was very pronounced at all speeds, and above 50 mph it was intolerable if not downright dangerous, running the factory recommended tire pressures." Still the Corvair was easily the best thing around for the low-budget enthusiast.

Car and Driver again: "Where else can you buy a four-seater that will break 100 mph, do 0-60 in less than 12 seconds, have all-independent suspension, four-speed synchromesh gearbox, American-car luxury, and reasonable handling for under \$3000." Where, indeed?

But the handling deficiencies the car magazines alluded to were becoming more than mere annoyances to enthusiasts. The specter of lawsuits alleging inherently unstable handling was beginning to crop up. In fact, the first such had been filed as early as 1961, and during 1963 more were added. Not only was Chevrolet faced with a dramatic drop in sales to 281,539 the 1963 units, it had a whole new problem with which to contend.

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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7:00 pm: Meeting starts

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