

LOST CORVAIR FOUND

After a 32-year wait, Craig Pursley was reunited with his first true love.

Story >>Phil Berg



Pursley reunited with his 1964 Corvair (left) and after its restoration (below).

NO PAIN IS GREATER than that of a broken heart. And Craig Pursley can speak from experience.

Pursley and his first true love - a 1964 red Corvair convertible with red interior - began their relationship when he was just 12 years old. His father purchased the little Chevy in 1966. Pursley became its sole driver while he was in high school.

However, he was forced to leave his love when he headed off to college.

"I can remember driving away in a Monte Carlo and looking in the rear-view mirror at the Corvair parked at the curb," Pursley recalls. "I was

leaving behind so many memories."

It was the last time he would see the Corvair for more than three decades, as his father - without Pursley's knowledge - sold the vehicle while he was away at school.

Fast-forward to 1999, when Pursley had settled into an idyllic life in Bath, New Hampshire. Fate intervened when he became friends with the host of a local car show. "The event rekindled my passion for Corvairs," he says. In 2004, Pursley went Corvair shopping.

During his search, he found a two-year-old photograph of a red Corvair on the Internet from an estate

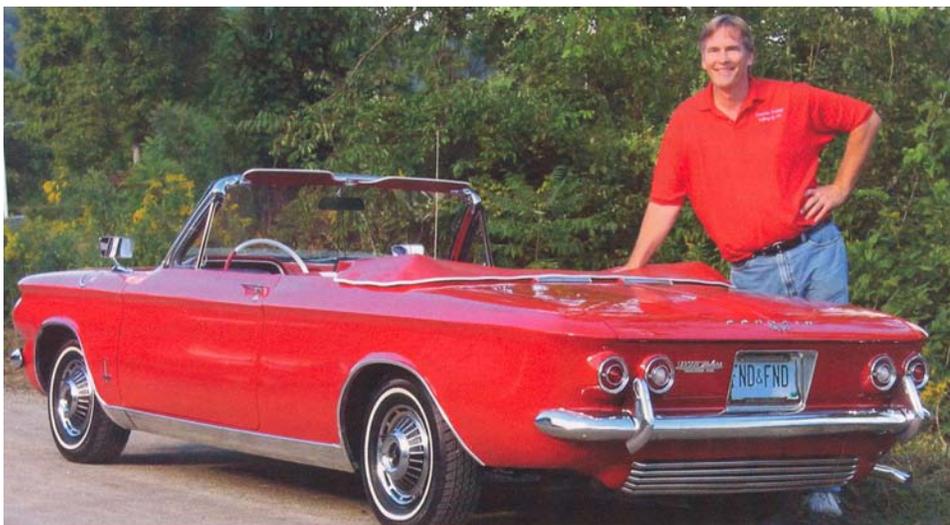
auction. The image showed a dent in the driver-side door. "I knew I put that there in 1971 when I missed a stop sign and another car bumped into the door," Pursley says.

He tracked down the owner, who was only 100 miles from his hometown, and paid \$550 for it. And as if finding his Corvair wasn't enough, Pursley was also reunited with guitar picks and a pair of golf shoes, among other things, that he had left in its trunk.

He finished restoring the vehicle last year, but says had he known the expense it would take, he never would have bought it back.

"Really good condition Corvairs go for about \$12,000," Pursley says. "I stopped keeping track after spending \$17,000."

He may be reunited with his first love, but she's proven an expensive mistress.



Side Story page 3

Georgia family parts with rare Chevy Monza Junior.



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 (CORSAs) chapter 857.

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

Membership Dues are \$15 for individuals and \$18 for families. Initial dues are \$19 for individuals and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to Tucson Corvair Association.

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

CORSA Membership Dues are \$38 per year (\$76 for 26 months) and include subscription to the CORSA Communique, a monthly publication. CORSA 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 per 4-line ad to non-members. Deadline for materials submitted for publication in the Corvairsation is the 10th of the month.

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TCA 2008 Events at a Glance

FEBRUARY

27 WED *TCA General Membership Meeting*
El Cachanilla 2530 N. 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ
(between Grant and Ft Lowell) Parking Lot
Bull Session: 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20,
meeting starts at 7pm.

MARCH

5 WED *TCA Board Mtg.* Magpies Gourmet Pizza
4th Ave & 5th St.,— 6:30pm.

26 WED *TCA General Membership Meeting*
El Cachanilla, 2530 N. 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ
(1½ blocks north of Grant) Parking Lot
Bull Session: 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20pm,
meeting starts at 7pm.

APRIL

2 WED *TCA Board Mtg.* Location TBA. 6:30pm.

23 WED *TCA General Membership Meeting*
El Cachanilla, 2530 N. 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ
(1½ blocks north of Grant) Parking Lot
Bull Session: 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20pm,
meeting starts at 7pm.

CAR SHOWS

MAR-NOV SATURDAY *Little Anthony's Car Show Dates:* - 7010 E. Bdwy.
Day Shows: 10am-2pm: 3/22.
Night Shows: 7pm-10pm: 4/12; 4/26; 5/10; 5/24;
6/14; 6/28; 7/12; 7/26; 8/9; 8/23; 9/27; 10/11; 10/25;
11/8.

MAR 1 SAT *Tucson British Car Roundup* - 8am.-12pm. Tucson
Estates, 5900 W. Western Way Circle. From I-19&
Ajo: 5 miles west on Ajo to Kinney Rd., 1.5 miles
north on Kinney to Western Way. Free Admission.

MAR 15 *11th Annual Benefit Car Show - Sierra Vista, AZ*

APR 10-12 *17th National Bakersfield Swap Meet*

JUNE 23-27 *CORSA International Convention in Ventura CA*
Hosted by CORSA West of Los Angeles.

Chevrolet Dealer Promo Auctioned Off on eBay

Spotted recently on eBay was this auction for an original Corvair Monza Junior Go-Kart as given away by Chevrolet dealers in the Sixties.

According to the listing: "My son won this kart in 1965 from a Chevy dealer in Decatur, Alabama and it has been in our family ever since (I have the original local newspaper clipping with a picture of the winner)."

"This car was made by Rupp Mfg. Inc. (serial #4082) and has the original Tecumseh engine. The front tires are original with the rear ones replaced with slicks. The car is all original

excepting the seat bottom cushion, the gas tank and the above mentioned tires. There is some slight surface rust under the seat cushion, but otherwise the car is rust free. The fiberglass body has two damaged spots in the front (cracks and small pieces of gelcoat missing), but otherwise is good with light scratches on both sides."



"The car hasn't run in years, but the engine turns over freely with decent compression. It has always been stored indoors and is in very good restorable condition. This item must be picked up in Atlanta, Georgia as I will not ship. A \$500 deposit by Paypal is due at auction end with the balance due upon pick-up. If for any reason you are not happy when you see the car I will refund your deposit. Please feel free to ask questions. It will fit in a pick-up truck bed (88" long x 35" wide x 24" tall). Georgia residents add 7% sales tax. Please feel free to email me with any questions about this item. Please check out my other auctions for auto, aviation and nautical books, kits, plans, and memorabilia. Thanks for looking and good luck!"

Auction ended Feb 25. As of press time for this newsletter, seven hours remain with no bids. 567 people have looked at this item. Item number: 350028395492. —Ed.



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Dues are Due

Please see Barry Cunningham, our Treasurer and Membership Chairman, Your dues pay for the Corvairsation newsletter, our Website: www.corvairs.org, and a portion of our activities and events.

*Dues are \$15 for individuals
\$18 for families (includes name tags)*

THANK YOU

We look forward to your participation in 2008!

Photo Highlights from January 2008 Events



"This is my car!" Patrick Lynch proclaims. The '67 coupe attended the recent Tune Up Clinic at Bill Maynard's Last Chance Garage in January.



"This is my donut!" Bill Maynard proclaims.



Three early Porsche speedsters (pre As & 356s) at Tubac Car Show in January.

Editor's Mailbag YOUR POST OFFICE ON WHEELS

Date: Fri. 11 Jan 2008
From: Tommy Hoggins
To: arizaim@hotmail.com
Subject: Odometer Repair Made Easy

Chris: I was reading, with a certain amount of interest, about the article in your December issue entitled *Odometer Repair Made Easy* and was wondering if tampering with any odometer was illegal.

Thanks. Tommy Hoggins, Tucson.

Dear Tommy, You are actually right about that. Resetting, disconnecting or altering a vehicle's odometer to conceal the true mileage is known as odometer tampering. It is illegal for anyone to engage in odometer tampering or sell a vehicle knowing the odometer has been altered without informing the purchaser. The Arizona statute is printed below:

44-1223. Fraudulent practices relating to motor vehicle odometers; classification

A. It is unlawful for any person to:

1. Advertise for sale, sell, use or install any device which causes the odometer of a motor vehicle to register mileage other than the true mileage driven. For the purposes of this paragraph the true mileage driven is that mileage driven by the vehicle as registered by the odometer within the manufacturer's designed tolerance.
2. Operate, with intent to defraud, a motor vehicle on any street or highway knowing that the odometer of such vehicle is disconnected or nonfunctional.
3. Replace, disconnect, turn back or reset the odometer of any motor vehicle with the intent to reduce the number of miles indicated on the odometer.
4. Sell or offer to sell, with intent to defraud, a motor vehicle on which the odometer does not register the true mileage driven.

B. Nothing in this section shall prevent the service, repair or replacement of an odometer, provided the mileage indicated thereon remains the same as before the service, repair or replacement. Where the odometer is incapable of registering the same mileage as before such service, repair or replacement, the odometer shall be adjusted to read "zero" and a notice in writing shall be attached to the left door frame of the vehicle by the owner or his agent specifying the mileage prior to repair or replacement of the odometer and the date on which it was repaired or replaced. Any removal or alterations of such notice so affixed shall be unlawful.

C. A person who violates the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor.

New England Corvairs

1960-1976 *by Bourke Runtton*

My brother-in-law traded in his 1956 Chevrolet on a new Corvair at the start of sales for the model. He was a salesman on the road for a bakery supply company, covering 25k a year in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. This area had no freeways, was hilly, and winter could run forever. The car was a little blue 2-door with not much for options and standard shift. On thinking about it, this was a fairly radical choice to get an unproven design when your living depends on the opposite, but the price and cost of operation was right. And the '56 stovebolt six was very tired.

The Corvair was fitted with a gasoline heater, and a set of Firestone Town & Country snow tires one size larger than stock. In the pre-radial days, this tread pattern was the thing for winter going. My sister made windshield and air intake covers out of canvas for the car. By snow time, the engine was broken in and the car went right to work, proving very capable in getting Henry around to his clients. I recall no mechanical troubles at all. He ran the car for four years and 100K plus miles. He was particular about servicing and preventative maintenance. It was done at a private garage which specialized in Chevrolets and Corvairs. It was walking distance from home: a convenient feature.

I drove that car a little when it was in the last summer of his ownership. It was tired and the swing axle rear end felt odd compared to my '55 solid axle Chevy 210. But it still ran every week while the new 1964 was being built.

The '64 was more deluxe, a Monza coupe with bucket seats and 4-speed in the same shade of blue. He did consider the station wagon and thought the van was too big. He didn't want to get into trucking samples around. The suspension was improved and the car handled very well. The engine was noticeably more powerful. This car was used for a couple of years on the route, and then he changed jobs so it became a commuter vehicle, where it lasted for years. By 1972 it was tired and rusty, and was replaced with a 1970 Chevelle 2-door.

I was discharged from the Navy in 1971 and looking for a car. In the base newspaper, there was a listing for a 1965 Corvair, owned by a dentist at the base medical center. It was very well kept; he was given the car as a graduation present from college, and was now ordering a new Corvette which had just arrived. So, I bought it for \$500 which was about the going price for a clean seven-year-old car. It was a maroon Corsa convertible with turbocharger, 4-speed and black bucket seat interior. Mileage was around 60K and it was starting to leak at the seals, so I did that messy job. The rest of it was good, so I loaded it up and drove from Pensacola to Boston a week after buying it.

My first job was at the shipyard, right on the ocean, and with salt on the roads in the winter the rust just took over and there was not much left in a few years. The front suspension came out of the body shell cross member and that sidelined the car. At that time, it was just a used car to drive to work in, but it was fun to drive and a bit different.

Now, I will get myself into trouble with all you Corvair fans: I think the car, while innovative and basically a good design, needed too much service maintenance for the average economy car buyer, who really wanted to do no maintenance at all. If you paid attention to driving habits, took care of preventative maintenance and the few unique needs of the model, you had a 100K+ miles of good use. The average water-cooled economy car of that time was more tolerant of the poor care they received. The handling issue was blown out of all proportion too; the Volkswagen had swing axles as well, and the feel, while not like typical iron, was not unsafe. The benefit was excellent traction in adverse conditions.

A car that makes the transition from a utilitarian vehicle to collectible often gets a major whitewash – all the bad features are ignored and the good aspects made more extreme. An example is any musclecar. But with rising fuel costs, prices of big block collectibles and restoration costs generally, the 60's compact and intermediate cars are being viewed as a sensible choice. This benefits the person using the car for some part of daily transportation needs. They have a lower cost per mile than a contemporary used car, are good looking, fun to drive, and don't depreciate. Parts are available, they are generally easy to work on, and information/help is readily available.

This whole family of collectible cars has not seen a lot of value appreciation yet. The 2-door hardtops and wagons remain an excellent value. Of course, the convertibles with a V-8 are pricey, so look around them to the other body types. There is still quite a lot out there looking for a home, and if the price to buy plus the work to put it in service (not restored 100%) is less than the average basic used car, you have a good value! Never mind that it now appreciates from that point if you keep the condition up....

Let's be specific, and, no it isn't a Corvair, but keep reading...a friend bought a 1970 Dodge Dart Custom 2-dr. hardtop with 225 6-cyl., AT, for \$ 1,500, running and legal to drive. He did a tune-up, serviced the brakes, added four tires, topped off all fluids, put in a new radiator and some small parts, all for \$650. While driving it for a year he found a better front bumper, NOS grille, and did some bodywork, then bought a shop paint job in original color for \$1,200. New carpets and some cosmetics cost another \$195. So, the total so far is \$3,800 for a good-running #3 cruise-night-worthy car. This is spread over 18 months while the car is being used regularly. Not bad, considering the sales tax on a new big SUV is more than his whole car project.

continued on next page

New England Corvairs from page 5

This favorable situation encourages Corvair owners to get a less than perfect car on the road for general use and generates interest in the make by getting others who would like a collectible/transportation car to try one.

BOURKE RUNTON is the Museum Director at the Franklin Museum in Tucson, Arizona. Originally from New Hampshire, Bourke spends his time between Tucson, Tombstone, and Frankestown, NH.

More Highlights From Tubac Car Show



Most Unique: 1972 2CV Citroen owned by Ken Henry. 60 miles per gallon is possible with this air-cooled opposed 2-cyl machine.

Below: "For Sale" by Tom and Sue Dougan of Green Valley, AZ. Sign states a '66 coupe with a 110hp engine. Price: \$6500. Phone: 520-398-9324.



From the Editor

Late last year the Club experienced several set backs that truly tested our stability. Just before Christmas Marcy, our Recording Secretary, suffered a massive brain hemorrhage. She spent the next month in the hospital and underwent brain surgery to correct the bleed. On December 20th, we lost a long time member in Al Crispin's passing, and a week later his wife Gail passed away, obviously from a broken heart.



For many years, Albert "Cris" Crispin III was responsible for the Club's huge inventory of parts generated when Gordon Cauble retired from his business as a Corvair consultant and parts locator. Cris had health problems (diabetes) that made it difficult to walk, but enjoyed being a member in the background. We are missing a good friend.

In addition, on two separate occasions – only months apart – we found ourselves shut out of our regular monthly meeting restaurants. First it was Michas North, then Pescado Feliz. Both gave no notice.

Furthermore, the production of the *Corvairsation* limped along in December and finally had a major meltdown in January when the editor's computer bit the dust. A new computer has been set up and new software purchased and loaded. A regular monthly publication will resume in March. Stay tuned—things are looking up!

The prognosis of Marcy is nothing short of a miracle. Bill and Marcy are back at home together. Marcy made an incredible recovery from the operation and is regaining much of her former self.

We have a new meeting place with a full menu including Mexican Baja style seafood. El Cachanilla (I have no idea what the word translates to in English) is relatively new in town, but reputedly has excellent food and offers fermented beverages for those who indulge. Come indulge with us.

Join us for a new start in a new location on Wednesday, February 27th at 6:30pm. Remember our Website www.corvairs.org has all the current activity information at the tip of your keyboard.

Happy Motoring!

Chris

Beware, The Oil Filter

By Van Pershing

The good oil filters that we are used to getting at our local Pep Boys may be lost, and gone forever. Whenever I go in the store, I always check to see if they have Corvair oil filters available and if they do, I snatch up a few for my supply shelf. Purolator has been the brand that I have been buying and using successfully for years. I recently discovered that they have changed their design and, as usual, the new one does not work very well, if at all.

The outer seal design has been changed from an inserted rubber seal (Figure 1) to a donut-looking seal that slips around the outer edge of the filter housing (Figure 2). "No harm, no foul", you say? Well, according to J.R. Read, a fellow Virtual Vair member, the new outer seal is so thick that it does not allow the inner seal to fully seat into the oil filter housing, thereby allowing oil to bypass the filter altogether. J.R. went to the trouble of cross-sectioning one of the castings and mounting a new filter on it to prove his point. The old ones came in a white box and the new design comes in a blue box.

So, beware, the oil filter! It may be your friend and, then again, it may not. Be sure to check your filters before you leave the store; it may save you a trip back later.

Figure 1



Figure 2



REGISTER TO WIN A 1964 CORVAIR CONVERTIBLE

Saturday, February 09, 2008 3:06 PM

Subject: Win a 1964 Corvair Monza Convertible

For those of you who have already donated, THANK YOU! For those of you who haven't, it's not too late to send in your donations to the Corvair Preservation Foundation/Tidewater Corvair Club fund raiser! Here are the details:

The Tidewater Corvair Club (TCC) is giving away a silver 1964 Monza Convertible at the 2008 Virginia Vair Fair (on May 4, 2008) to the lucky person who donates, through the TCC/CPF fund raising campaign, a minimum of \$5.00. The bigger the donation (in \$5.00 increments), the better your chance to win. The winner will be responsible for all taxes, title transfer, shipping or other associated fees. You do not have to be present to win.

About the car:

This is a 1964 Monza Convertible which has been resurrected by the Tidewater Corvair Club as the basis for Club Tech Sessions over the past year. Photographs of the work performed can be seen at the following Web address: <http://s1150.photobucket.com/albums/s114/65CrownV8/TCC%20Project%20Car/>.

A brief listing of work performed includes:

Replacement of non-original '63 differential with a good '64 differential; replacement of the original 110HP motor with a good running 110HP motor; new clutch; new leaf spring bushings; POR-15 on both the interior and underside flooring; re-upholstery of the bucket seats and rear seat; new front and rear door panels and armrests; new black convertible top with a new red top boot; new front grille bar; bottoms of doors had rust cut out and new metal welded in; rear quarters had rust cut out and new metal welded in; battery tray bottom replaced; engine perimeter seals replaced (with staples, not riveted); engine bay cleaned and painted prior to engine installation; interior metal surfaces sanded and repainted; steering wheel refurbished by Smitty Smith; and lots and lots of sanding.

Why aren't we calling this a restoration?

Well, two reasons: first, we tried to keep everything as original as possible, but if a specific item needed replaced, we had one '64 parts car that was pretty well gone already, and a '63 parts car. So, if we needed a part, and it wasn't available from the '64 parts car, we moved to the '63 parts car. In the case of the rocker trim, we chose to leave it off all together, because we couldn't find a complete set of usable '64 trim, and the new owner could make the judgment call as to what year they wanted to install (if any).

Second, our initial goal was to turn this car into a good 'daily driver', so some things were left off of the 'must do' list, such as detailing the suspension, etc. In my opinion, we exceeded in our goal to turn it into a good 'daily driver', and I believe we are at the level where I believe the car would score in the mid 80s at a convention concourse. With a little work, it could become a "show car".

Where does the money go?

75% of all profits raised will go to the Corvair Preservation Foundation
25% will go to the Tidewater Corvair Club General Fund

Where to send the money?

You can send a check, made payable to Tidewater Corvair Club, in increments of \$5.00 to: Tidewater Corvair Club c/o George Jones, 528 White Oak Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462.

Once I receive your check, I will complete the number of entries corresponding to the amount of your check, and scan them into PDF format and email this to you. If you prefer to have the actual tickets in your hand, please add the postage to your check amount, and I will mail the stubs to you. If you buy a book or more (10 tickets, \$50) I will pay for the postage to send the original stubs back to you.

Information needed:

Your name, address and telephone number are needed for the drawing. If you want to have the tickets emailed to you, please include your email address as well.



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Corvair Society of America Chapter 857



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. November meeting is on the third Wednesday. The December meeting is our annual Holiday party.

NEW MEETING PLACE FOR FEBRUARY 2008: El Cachanilla, 2530 N. 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ (1½ blocks north of Grant Road). A parking lot bull-session starts at 6pm. Optional dinner starts at 6:20pm. Meeting starts at 7pm. Guests are welcome.

ELECTIONS are on the horizon. Come participate in selecting our next officers at the February meeting. New officers take over at the March regular membership meeting. Bring out the Corvair and join us for a delicious evening.

Please remember to pay your dues this month. See Barry on Wednesday, February 27 at El Cachanilla restaurant—6:30pm.

REGISTER to win a 1964 Corvair convertible. Find out how inside this issue.



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