

On Saturday, June 20, 2009 the club sponsored a cruise to the top of the Santa Catalina mountains to the little town of Summerhaven. At an elevation of 8,200 feet above sea level the temperatures were fresh and cool. There were only three cars that made the trip: Ken and Heide Farr in their yellow convertible (top rolled down!), Don and Shannon Murray along with their son Logan in their white coupe, and Bill Maynard and Lynn Marris in the red convertible. Barry Cunningham showed up at the McDonald's on Mount Lemmon Highway and Tanque Verde to send the party off and wish them a safe trip but was unable to make the trip.

It was a beautiful and cool trip. The Group ate at the Iron Door and then followed Bill and Lynn through the Incinerator and Bear Hollow. These are wonderfully wooded areas with fairly smooth roads. Everyone enjoyed the trip and lots of people stopped to talk and enjoy nature's beauty as well as the Corvairs!

Here are a few photos taken by Ken Farr. Go to [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org) to see more pictures of the trip.



## Tucson Corvair Association



Established 1975

The 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) as Chapter 357.

Membership dues are \$15 per year for individuals and \$18 for families. Initial dues are \$19 for individuals and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to the 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.

CORSA membership dues are \$38 per year (\$76 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the CORSA Communique, a monthly publication. CORSA memberships is not required for membership in the Tucson Corvair Association, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

Classified ads are free to members and \$3 per 4-line ad for non-members. Deadline for materials submitted for publication is the 10th of the month.

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## TCA 2009 Events at a Glance

**Sat, July 18** Little Anthony's Car Show. Let's all get the Corvairs dusted off and make a good showing. We won't be hosting but be there early so we can park together. 5:00-5:50PM.

**Wed, July 22** Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Last Chance Garage, 3605 N Vine (east of the corner of Prince and Mountain).

**Wed, Aug 5** Meeting of the Board of Directors. 7:00pm at Bill Maynard's Last Chance Garage. Evryone welcome!

**Sat, Aug 22** Cruise Night at Sonic. We usually don't have a mid-month in August because it's a little toasty, but we're going to have a cruise-in at the Sonic Drive-In on First Ave between Prince and Roger.

**Wed, Aug 26** Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Last Chance Garage, 3605 N Vine (east of the corner of Prince and Mountain).

**Sep 19 & 20** Tune Up Clinic at the Last Chance Garage. Starts and 10:00 both Saturday and Sunday and will go until everybody is sick and tired of working on their cars!

**Fri, Oct 2** 50th Anniversy of the Corvair. O'Riely Chevrolet. Stay tuned for details.

**Sat, Oct 17** Tucson Classic Car Show. This is the big one so get out the rubbing compound *and* the wax!

# GM's JUNK HEAP

**Over its history General Motors has made its share of bad products. Some were poorly built, some were badly executed others suffered from lousy timing.**

by Peter Valdes-Dapena

*In the money section of the CNN website this article appeared naming seven of General Motors' mistakes with a little blurb for each one. The Corvair was the first one on the list as they appear to be in chronological order and the "blurb" is included here. You can read the entire article at [http://money.cnn.com/galleries/2009/autos/0905/gallery.gm\\_problem\\_cars/index.html](http://money.cnn.com/galleries/2009/autos/0905/gallery.gm_problem_cars/index.html). The author has obviously never driven a Corvair, but then again, how can you trust anyone with a hyphenated last name. Ed.*

## CHEVROLET CORVAIR

Brought out in the early 1960s, the Corvair was designed to compete against sporty European cars that were making inroads with American drivers. Its innovative rear-engined design was supposed to give it sporty handling.

In early versions, though, the Corvair's rear suspension design seemed unsuited to the job. The car had dangerously dicey handling in turns.

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader featured the Corvair in part of his famous book "Unsafe at Any Speed." which pilloried the U.S. auto industry for emphasizing design over safety.

GM ultimately improved the Corvair's suspension design, which was a good move. What wasn't so good: hiring private investigators to dig up dirt on Nader. Nader noticed the stalkers, of course, forcing executives to publicly apologize and making GM look all the worse.

The Other Mistakes were:

CHEVROLET VEGA  
CADILLAC CIMMARON  
EV-1  
PONTIAC AZTEC  
SATURN L-SERIES  
HUMMER H2



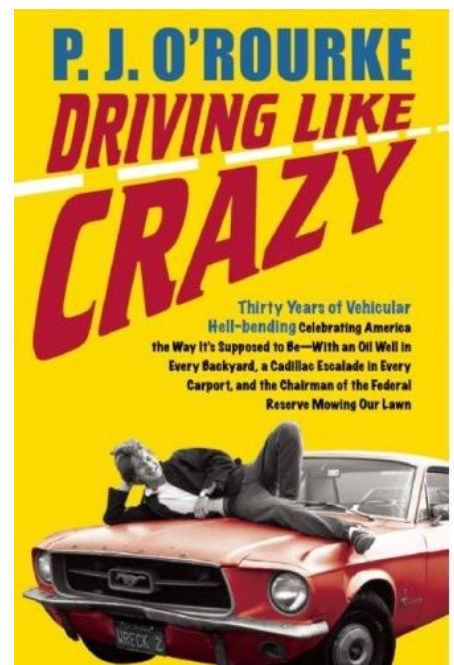
# Driving Like Crazy:

Thirty Years of Vehicular Hell-bending, Celebrating America the Way It's Supposed To Be -- With an Oil Well in Every Backyard, a Cadillac in every carport, and the chairman of the Federal Reserve Mowing Our Lawn.

P.J. O'Rourke's latest book addresses the decline of the American automobile industry about the Corvair. and, wouldn't you know it, there are a couple of paragraphs that talk about the Corvair.

"I take the demise of the American car personally. I'm looking around furiously for someone or something to blame. Ralph Nader for instance. What fun it would be to jump on him with both feet and send the pink Marxist goo squirting out of his cracked egg-head. And let's definitely do that even though Ralph is seventy-five and insane. But it took more than one man and his ignorant and ill-written book *Unsafe at Any Speed* to wreck the most important industry in the nation. (My high school girlfriend Connie had a Corvair. Connie was the worst driver in the world -- and one of the fastest. If Connie couldn't get that rear-engine, swing-axle setup to spin out and flip, nobody could.)

"American car designers and engineers are supposedly at fault because American cars fell behind foreign cars in sophistication of design and engineering. American cars fell especially behind during the 1960s era of chrome and tailfin excess that car-hating Volvo-butts still like to natter on about. Too much jogging has addled their brains. There's little chrome and barely a fin to be seen on American cars after 1960, excepting the modest lark tails on Cadillac rear fenders and the shark attack of the 1961 Chryslers. In fact, early '60s American cars exhibit some of the cleanest, crispest, most restrained lines in automotive design history - the 1962 Lincoln Continental; the Avanti; the last of the Studebaker Hawks; the 1964 Buick Electra, Oldsmobile 98, and Pontiac Grand Prix hardtops; the 1965 Buick Riviera; those maligned Corvairs, including the Corvair Greenbrier precursor to the minivan; Mustangs; the 1965 Pontiac GTO and similar early muscle cars; and the 1964 Rambler American sedan in its own oddball way. Then, when it comes to down-and-dirty, gnarly, totally unrestrained lines, there's the Corvette Stingray."



# VALVE LIFTERS

Mike Dawson

This article comes courtesy of the VairCor, the monthly news letter of the Heart of America Corvair Owners Association, Kansas City, Missouri. Mike Dawson is a member of the HACOA and has granted us permission to reprint this article.

Valve Lifters: Wonderful little inventions that usually work so well they are never touched for the life of the engine, assuming you change the oil regularly. If you don't or someone else didn't, you will probably become familiar with them.

Corvair lifters are hydraulic, meaning they fill with oil under pressure and keep the valves adjusted "automatically". They will make a noise for two reasons (assuming your cam is good): lifter tapping will occur if the lifter is low on oil or if it is so far out of adjustment that the range for automatic adjustment is exceeded. If you listen carefully you can hear a small extra "clink" along with the tap when the lifter is actually out of adjustment. **Remember that a lifter that is noisy cold but becomes quiet when hot is not out of adjustment. A lifter that is quiet cold and noisy hot may be out of adjustment (unless you have very poor oil pressure).**



Once you finish your work in the valve train area, use the second style valve cover with the wider area at the bolt holes to accept the spring reinforcements, install all four reinforcements and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch grade 8 bolts. You can use 1 inch bolts but chase the threads first. A rubber valve cover gasket with no sealer works best if you tighten the bolts just until the spring reinforcement bends in and touches the cover.

One final note: Valve lifters that are full of varnish or have been sitting for a very long time in dirty oil will not only be very difficult to adjust but they may not let oil flow into the pushrods and out onto the rocker arms and valve stems. The wrong lifter can also cause this. A dry valve cover area, worn out valve guides and worn rocker arm balls would certainly indicate the need for a check of pushrod holes, oil pressure and probably new lifters.

Mike Dawson

The cold startup noise that disappears hot is a lifter that has lost its oil because the valve spring pressure exerted on it overnight has pushed the oil out through a leaking check valve system. Lifters can lose their ability to retain oil usually for two reasons: the lifter is worn internally making it impossible for the check valve system to hold the oil, or there may be dirt in the check valve system causing it not to seal. Two oil changes close together combined with some highway driving might cure the latter. It is possible to replace one lifter that has a rapid leak down if you can isolate the problem. More than likely you will have other lifters do the same thing.

A lifter that is adjusted too tight will cause the engine to miss when cold but smooth out when warm. This will eventually cause loss of compression due to material build up on the valve seat or a burned area. Check compression cold if you suspect this.

Lifters are easier to remove if the engine is warm; work fast and have a strong round magnet to fit the bore. If there is varnish on the exposed portion of the lifter in the crankcase you need to be patient and wiggle a lot – in worse cases, you may have to apply carburetor cleaner to the end of the lifter exposed on the inside of the case where the varnish has built up. Be sure you use the correct lifter for replacement and coat the bottom with a break in lube or STP. Check the bore for noticeable wear and be sure the lifter slides in the bore freely.



*Editor's Note: We obtained permission several weeks prior to this edition to use Mike Dawson's articles in the Corvair-sation not knowing that the some of the same articles would be published in the July issue of the CORSA Communique. We apologize for the repetition but hope this good technical information will make you a better Corvair person!*

# Greenbrier Class C Motorhome



Here's a 1963 motorhome built on a Greenbrier platform. It was seen recently for sale on ebay. The Oklahoma seller did not know much of its history other than it appeared to be professionally built - it doesn't look at all like a back yard job. Here are a couple of shots to give you a flavor of its coolness. Enjoy.



The above picture was taken from the rear of the coach looking toward the front. The cab is divided from the living quarters allowing a little more room for the kitchen. Notice the gas range WITH an oven!

The picture above was taken from outside the entry door looking toward the rear of the coach. There is a "large" dining table for those big family gatherings and a full width sofa in the back that folds into a nice large bed. Remember, this motorhome only has a 95-inch wheelbase so space is at a premium. There is a small closet but no toilet or shower.





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**Regular Monthly Meetings** are held on the Fourth Wednesday of every month with a bull session starting at 6:30pm with the meeting starting at 7:00pm.

The November meeting is held on the third Wednesday. The December meeting is our annual Christmas party with the time and place to be announced.

**Monthly Meeting Place:**

Bill Maynard's Last Chance Garage, 3605 N Vine, Tucson, Arizona (north off of Prince Road just east of Mountain).

## Visit the TCA Forum

*Ask tech questions, get to know other club members, chat and share your knowledge with others. Go to [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org) and click on TCA Forum.*



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Coupe or Sedan?