

The First Production Turbocharged Cars

When you think of turbochargers, performance quickly comes to mind. While that thought might be right, turbochargers are actually efficiency devices. According to automotive history, [the Oldsmobile Jetfire](#) and the Chevrolet Corvair Monza were the first production cars to experience the whirl of the turbo turbine.

It's unclear which between the Oldsmobile Jetfire and the [Chevrolet Corvair Monza](#) got a turbocharger first. Jay Leno believes the Jetfire got out a few weeks before the Corvair but agrees the Monza received a lot more publicity, making people more inclined to think it could be the first turbocharged car.

Turbochargers didn't just stumble into the American automotive space by chance. Facing ever-increasing competition from European automakers with smaller, lighter, fuel-efficient cars, GM figured a way to keep running their huge V8s without compromising efficiency - turbochargers.

Everything new faces a few teething problems, and unfortunately, like all flagship designs, the Oldsmobile Jetfire took the fall.

For starters, the Oldsmobile's suspension wasn't at its best. Even with 35% more torque from the turbocharger, GM used the same suspension system on the F85 Cutlass that needed a ton of improvement.

Also, the Jetfire used a unique solution, "rocket fluid," which was a mix of water and ethanol, to avoid detonation that could potentially lead to engine knock. New owners felt this was a chore they couldn't keep up with.

The Corvair, on the other hand, kept the concept a little simpler. No rocket fluid was needed, the car was equipped with better brakes and handled very well.

"The Corvair Turbo had no wastegate at all. It was a very simple unit. While this thing has all sorts of diaphragms and impellers turning at 90,000 RPMs. It's really a nice piece. I think it's a fantastic car, and it's still unassuming in this body style," Leno said, cruising down the road.



In the end, the Jetfire was only in production for a couple of years and was not a great sales success because of the operating maintenance and the poor handling of the car. The turbocharged Corvair stayed in production for 5 years and outsold the Jetfire 5 to 1. Today there are only a handful of Jetfires on the road and most of us have never seen one, but there remain hundreds of Spyderys and Turbo Corsas around and can be readily seen at car shows and cruising around town.

TOTAL PRODUCTION

Jetfire **9,607** (1962-1963)

Spyder/Turbo Corsa: **48,965** 1962-1966)



TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION
Established 1975

The **Corvairsation** is a quarterly 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 (CORSA) as Chapter 357.

Membership dues are \$25 per year for individuals. Make checks payable to the Tucson Corvair Association and mail to the TCA Treasurer.

Change of Address: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chair or email changes to tucsoncorvairs@yahoo.com

CORSA membership dues are \$45 per year (\$90 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the CORSA Communiqué, a monthly publication. Rates are \$37 per year and \$74 for 26 months for a "virtual" membership. CORSA memberships is not required for membership in the Tucson Corvair Association, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

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TCA 2023 Events at a Glance

**4th Thur of
each month**

Monthly Meetings: 7:00pm, Franklin Auto Museum, 1405 E Kleindale Tucson, Arizona

NEW MEETING PLACE FOR MARCH: Barnfire Mesquite Grill, 8310 N Thornydale

**Sat, April 1,
2023**

Chevy Showdown, 9a-3p. Desert Diamond Casino, Pima Mine Road, Sahuarita, Arizona.

**Sat, April
29, 2023**

Marana High School Auto Club Car Show, 8a-12p, Kohl's west parking lot, 5850 W Arizona Pavilions Dr, Marana, Arizona

Arizona Challenge update

CORRECTION:

The Challenge *did not* end in a tie, the Slow Drags were never completed, and a certain member of the Cactus Club declared themselves winners of the event. Supposedly at that point the score was tied. Base on the points awarded to first, second, third and forth place and the fifteen points we receive from winning the trivia event, it was mathematically impossible to have a tie. We were still ahead on points, even if they claimed a victory in an event that was never completed. We basically got ripped off!!!!!!

As reported by Mike Lake



35th Annual Chevy Showdown

On April 1, 2023, the TCA participated in the annual Chevy Showdown which was held at the Desert Diamond Casino south of Tucson and sponsored by the [Classic Chevy Club of Tucson](#). It was a great event and several TCA members helped with judging and parking. The weather was beautiful. There were about 169 cars this year 6 of which were Corvairs including 1 from the Cactus Club down from the Phoenix area.

Dave and Cathy Winzlick of the Cactus Club took the first place ribbon in the Corvair division their beautiful '65 4-door. There was no second place awarded since the other Corvair owner are members of the Classic Chevy Club and were ineligible to be judged.



From left to right: Quaid Comaduran, Van Pershing, Jan Bennett, Ron Bloom, Mike Dalton, Frank Pella, Pat Croan, and Tony Warren.



First place in the Corvair division was Dave and Cathy Wenzlick's '65 four-door.



Quaid Comaduran's 1963 Greenbrier



Pat Croan's 1962 Spyder convertible

Continued on page 4

2023 Chevy Showdown (continued from page 3)



*Van Pershing's 1966
Yenko Stinger*

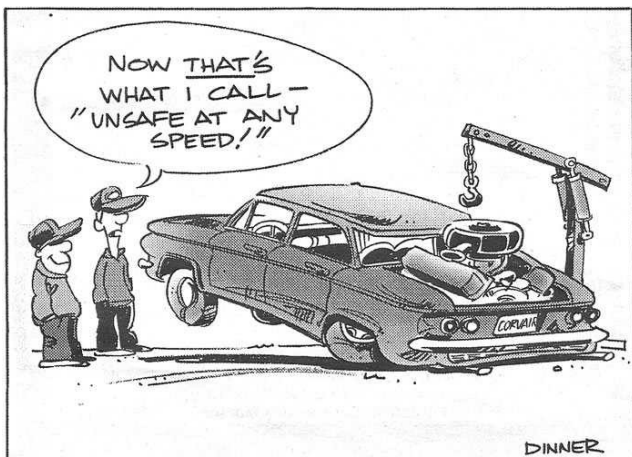


*Mike Dalton's 1965
Monza four-door*



*Frank Pella's 1968
Monza convertible*

Photos of all the entries at the 2023 Chevy Showdown may be seen at <http://corvairs.org/Events/Showdown2023/Showdown2023.html>



New! The GO-HOME

A Major Breakthrough in Vehicle Design and Construction

The GO-HOME is a self-propelled, high performance complete mobile home which the average person can afford to buy and to operate.



Large windshield incorporates Chevrolet step-van wrap-around sections.



View toward rear right. Bedroom at rear.



Kitchenette includes, oven, broiler, gas refrigerator.

FEATURES:

- Weighs under 3000 lbs., completely self-contained
- Costs less to buy and operate than car plus trailer
- Can be parked in most passenger car zones
- Gets light-passenger-car gas mileage
- Takes hills at passenger car speeds
- Drives like a car, rides like a car
- Cruises easily at 65 mph
- No special license, vehicle or driver

SPECIFICATIONS:

24 feet long, 8 feet wide, 6'4" headroom inside
 Over 900 cu. ft. volume
 Airliner type monocoque aluminum body construction
 Extremely low center of gravity—tanks under floor
 Corvair rear engine and transaxle with Power Glide
 Chevy II front end spindles and brakes
 Four abreast seating in front, with aisle
 Front seats reversible, to face living area
 Lavatory, flush toilet, hot shower (optional)
 Sleeps four
 Private rear bedroom with twin beds or double bed

The GO-HOME features aerodynamically engineered, streamlined design.



UltraVan* MANUFACTURING CO. 366 Eighth Ave. • Oakland 6, Calif.
 TEmplebar 6-0973

ADAPTABLE TO MANY COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS—INCLUDING:

- Light-duty, high-volume van
- Mobile business or accounting office
- Showroom
- Sales demonstration unit
- Medical/Dental offices
- Photo studio
- Laboratory
- Catering unit
- Radio/TV repair shop
- Construction headquarters
- Sales headquarters



Typical Floor Plan



Bill Maynard hard at work with Sam Pernu and Dave Lynch—circa 1917

OUR 50TH ANNIV -2023

Thanks to the support of 1,000's of Corvair owners over the last 50 years we continue to grow and reproduce more parts every year. We respect your trust and always put our customers first. We would also like to thank our 24 employees, 10 have been with us over 20 years and some as long as 46! Have a great year and enjoy our monthly sales and specials all year-Joan & Cal Clark

SPECIAL SALES EVERY MONTH- each month we'll send an email (if you have signed up) and also list in a special sale section on our Home page www.corvair.com

FREE 50th MEMENTO gifts with your first order in 2023

FREE CATALOG WITH AN ORDER- if you have not received a free 2019-2025 catalog yet, just ask for one.

LIST YOUR CORVAIR FOR SALE- NO CHARGE- sell your Corvair or a spare you just don't have time for! For all of 2023 we will list it on our website at **NO CHARGE-** check the website for details (Corvairs For Sale)

CLARK CAR SHOW & PARTS SALES- See our 2023 supplement or website for more details. We expect around 130 cars, and will offer tours of our buildings including the Upholstery Dept. Cal will be giving an old fashion "slide show" showing the building of our complex and history. Parts on sale! **SEPT 16, 2023 -rain or shine**

2023 SUPPLEMENT- On our website or as a hard copy -many new repros & updates.

INTERNATIONAL CORSA CONVENTION-Wisconsin- We will be there Tues, Wed & Thurs with lots of recent repros on display. Stop by and say hello. Convention dates June 19- June 24

CATALOG- over 450 pages, free with an order, \$8 postpaid in USA

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