

Dave Baker

Convairation

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

TUCSON, ARIZONA

DECEMBER 1984

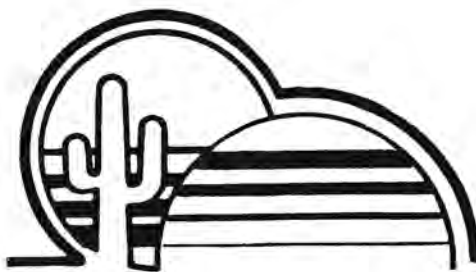
VOLUME 10 NUMBER 9



MERRY CHRISTMAS
& HAPPY NEW YEAR!

32-3218

885-6708



TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

CORVAIRSATION is a monthly publication of the TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION, which is dedicated to the preservation though restoration of the Corvair model of the Chevrolet Motor Division. The Tucson Corvair Association is a chartered member of the CORVAIR SOCIETY OF AMERICA (COSA).

MONTHLY MEETINGS are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month except December, and one technical/social event is planned for each month except July and August.

MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$10 per year payable to the TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION through the membership chairman.

COSA MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$22 per year and include a subscription to the COSA Communique, a monthly publication. Membership applications are available from either the Membership Chairman or the Treasurer.

CLASSIFIED ADS are FREE to all TCA members and are \$1.00 per line to others. The deadline for all materials submitted for publication is the 10th of the month. Mail or deliver all materials to the Corvairsation editor.

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Rally Point

TCA REGULAR MEETING - Wednesday November 28, 1984. The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Gay at 7:45 p.m. at Gusto Beer Distributors, 3635 E. 34th St.

Present: 46 Corvairs: 16

The minutes of the October 24, 1984 regular meeting were approved as published in the Corvairsation.

The TCA Christmas Party will be December 10 at El Corral Restaurant, 2201 E. River Rd. Meet at 6:30 for cocktails, dinner at 7:30 p.m. Reservations should be made no later than December 5.

President, Bob Gay, asked for volunteers to fill the positions of Recording Secretary and Can Chairman. Also Woody Wilkins would like someone to take over as Merchandise Chairman as he will be in New York City approximately 10 weeks.

The subject of banning leaded gas will be on the agenda at tonight's Tucson Council Meeting.

Show Chairman, Tom Mulligan of World of Wheels and Gerry Cross reported on the forthcoming World of Wheels Show at the Tucson Community Center February 1, 2 & 3, 1984. There will be approximately 147 cars shown and would like to have TCA participate in the show with some of their Corvairs. Frank McKenna volunteered to Chair this affair for TCA. The entrance fee is \$15.00 per car and applications were left for those who desired to show their car.

Only 4 attended the Malibu Grand Prix Race on November 17, 1984 at 4002 E. 22nd St.

Any ad's for the Corvairsation let Van Pershing know. Anything from cars for sale, parts, furniture, household items or whatever.

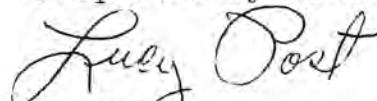
After break, door prizes were won by Ernie Alloy, Lucy Post, Mark McKenna, Don Bortle and Robert Burgetto. Prizes courtesy of TCA.

A thank you letter was read from Wynne Gibson, John North's sister, for the TCA lovely floral tribute in memory of John North who recently passed away. Announcement was made of the illness of Larry's mother, Ethel Moore who is at St. Mary's Rehabilitation Center, Rm. 4327, 1601 W. St. Mary's Rd, Tucson, AZ 85745.

Tech tips and for sale items were discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lucy Post
Recording Secretary

the old blue bike

by Joel R. Bryan

It was a Christmas when my three older sisters were 12, 10, and 7 just after my father, a young engineer, had accepted a transfer from Schenectady, New York, to Los Angeles, California. On Christmas Eve, my mother made preparations for the traditional Christmas dinner the

next afternoon. My sisters took turns trying to keep me and my three-year-old brother from playing baseball with the shining Christmas tree ornaments. Mother found time to tend our new baby sister.

Amid the bustle of the Christmas Eve excitement, my father was preoccupied. His

thoughts kept returning to the used bicycle hidden carefully in the garage rafters.

Next to it lay the boxes holding two brand-new, shining black, matching three-speed bikes which he had purchased for my two older sisters. The budget strains of Christmas had prevented Dad from buying a third black three-speed for Leanne. Instead, he set about restoring the old single-speed, fat-tired bike the older two no longer rode. Scouring pads and elbow grease made the rusty spokes shine. The inner tubes were patched, and a new coat of paint erased the battle scars of collisions and neglect. A replacement set of hand-grips made the handlebars look almost new.

My father realized Leanne would probably recognize the old war horse, but he was sure she could be happy just having her own bike. And in a year or two, when she outgrew this one, he would be able to buy her a brand-new one. Leanne had already received a big share of hand-me-downs from her older sisters. Many of her clothes, toys, and books had been previously used.

This Christmas Eve, as my mother tucked all of us in bed, Dad commenced his marathon toy and bicycle assembly projects. When he finished the new, black bicycles, he placed them side by side near the Christmas tree. He then carefully rolled out and placed the rejuvenated old bike next to the new ones. The stark contrast of the old half-sized, blue, thick-tubed bike against the sleek, black beauties made the revamped two-wheeler suddenly look small and old-fashioned. Dad reconsidered. Had he made a mistake in trying to redo the old bike for Leanne? Would she feel slighted? Leanne was too young to understand the economics of family finances, but she would be quick

to spot this injustice perpetrated by Santa Claus: new bikes for her sisters, the old war horse for her.

A gradual panic swept over Dad as he realized he'd slipped up. Better run to the store and buy a matching bike, quick! But on Christmas Eve? It was already 11:30 P.M., and the stores would probably be closed. A few hurried telephone calls confirmed the worst. Everything was closed.

My grandmother, who was visiting for the holidays, tried to comfort Dad. "Don't worry, Ray. She'll love the bike. You've made it look just like new."

Dad was not comforted. He kept imagining the disappointed look on Leanne's face as she recognized the old hand-me-down. Though it was very late when he finished the last stocking and exhausted as he was from his assembly projects, Dad did not sleep well that night.

Early Christmas morning, we were poised in our annual positions in the hall—all in a row, youngest to the oldest. It was still dark outside, but we were already hopping with that special excitement of children on Christmas morning. Dad was in the living room making the movie camera and lights ready to record our grand entrance. Finally he yelled, "Okay, come on in," and we blazed through the doorway like a shot. In a matter of minutes, the beautiful array of packages and ornaments was transformed into a mountain of strewn boxes, wrappings, and ribbons. My older sisters spotted their black beauties, gave them the once over with due praise and admiration, and moved on to the Christmas tree to locate more presents. Amid the chaos and clutter, Leanne stood firmly next to the old blue bike. She was touching every part and talking aloud, "Look, it has new grips and new paint! A brand-new seat! Just look at those pedals, and it's my very own, my very own bike."

Leanne didn't seem to notice there were other presents for her under the tree. She stayed near the bike and repeated the same speech several times, though no one was listening, no one, that is, except my father. He stood silently on the other side of the room, oblivious to the rest of the children, the movie camera held low at his side, listening to Leanne. Tears of joy streamed down his face as he witnessed this perfect acceptance of his imperfect gift.

It has been a long time since the black beauties were worn out and discarded. Even the old war horse was sent to the glue factory years ago. But the image of my father's tear-streaked face on Christmas Day reminds me still of the warmth of a Christmas gift well given and well received. ■

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
ALL !!!

ENGINE SERIES NUMBER AND SUFFIX CHART

1960-62

CORVAIR

"145"—6 CYLINDER

Description	Type Designation	Description	Type Designation
Manual Trans.	YC	Automatic Trans.	ZB
Manual Trans. and High Performance	YN	Automatic Trans. and C.A.C.	ZD
Manual Trans.	YH	Automatic Trans. and High Performance	ZF
Manual Trans. and C.A.C.	YL	Automatic Trans., C.A.C. and High Performance	ZG
Manual Trans., C.A.C. and High Performance	YM	Automatic Trans.	ZH
Manual Trans. and High Performance	Y	Automatic Trans. and C.A.C.	ZJ
Turbo-Charged with 4-SPD.	YR	Automatic Trans. and High Performance	ZK
		Automatic Trans.	ZL

NOTE: Engines are stamped with a source, production date and type on serial pad.

NOTE: Corvair engine number stamped on top of engine block, forward of generator—oil filter adapter.

1963

CORVAIR

"145"—6 CYLINDER

Manual Trans.	YC	Automatic Trans.	ZH
Manual Trans. and High Performance	YN	Automatic Trans. and C.A.C.	ZD
Manual Trans. and C.A.C.	YL	Automatic Trans. and High Performance	ZF
Manual Trans., C.A.C. and High Performance	YM	Automatic Trans., C.A.C. and High Performance	ZG
Turbo-Charged with 4-SPD.	Y	Manual Trans. F.C.	V
Automatic Trans.	Z	Automatic Trans. F.C.	W

NOTE: Engines are stamped with a source, production date and type on serial pad.

NOTE: Corvair engine number stamped on top of block, forward of generator—oil filter adapter.

1964

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Manual Trans.	YC	Automatic Trans.	ZH
Manual Trans. and High Performance	YN	Automatic Trans. and C.A.C.	ZD
Manual Trans. and C.A.C.	YL	Automatic Trans. and High Performance	ZF
Manual Trans., C.A.C. and High Performance		Automatic Trans. C.A.C. and High Performance	ZG
Turbo-Charged with 4-SPD.	YM	Manual Trans. F.C.	V
Automatic Trans.	Z	Automatic Trans. F.C.	W

1965

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Manual Trans.	RA	Powerglide and Spec. High Performance	RN
Manual Trans.	RB	Turbocharger	RL
High Performance	RD	Manual Trans.	RS
Manual Trans. and Air Cond.	RE	Manual trans. and High Performance	RU
High Performance and Air Cond.	RF	Powerglide	RV
Powerglide	RG	Powerglide and High Performance	RX
Powerglide and High Performance	RH	Manual Trans. R-10, F.C.	RS
Powerglide and Air Cond.	RJ	Manual Trans. and High Performance R-10, F.C.	RU
Powerglide, High Performance and Air Cond.	RK	Powerglide R-10, F.C.	RV
Manual Trans. and Spec. High Performance	RM	Powerglide and High Performance R-10, F.C.	RX

ENGINE SERIES NUMBER AND SUFFIX CHART (Cont.)

1966

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Description	Type Designation	Description	Type Designation
Manual Trans.	RA	Spec. High Performance and A.I.R.	RQ
Manual Trans.	RB	Powerglide	RG
Turbocharger	RL	High Performance and Powerglide	RH
Spec. High Performance	RM	Spec. High Performance and Powerglide	RN
Air Cond.	RE	Powerglide and Air Cond.	RJ
Spec. High Performance and Air Cond.	RZ	High Performance, Powerglide and Air Cond.	RK
Air Cond.	RR	Special High Performance, Powerglide and Air Cond.	RY
High Performance and Air Cond.	RF	Special High Performance, Powerglide and A.I.R.	RX
A.I.R.	RS	Powerglide and A.I.R.	RV
A.I.R.	RT	High Performance and A.I.R.	RW
High Performance and A.I.R.	RU		

1967

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Manual	RA	High Performance and Powerglide	RH
High Performance	RD	Powerglide and Air Cond.	RJ
Air Cond.	RE	High Performance, Powerglide and Air Cond.	RK
High Performance and Air Cond.	RF	Powerglide and A.I.R.	RV
A.I.R.	RS	Powerglide, A.I.R. and Air Cond.	QO
A.I.R. and Air Cond.	QM	High Performance, Powerglide and A.I.R.	RW
High Performance and A.I.R.	RU	High Performance, Powerglide, A.I.R. and	
High Performance, A.I.R. and Air Cond.	QS	Air Cond.	QP
Powerglide	RG		

1968

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Manual Trans.	RS	High Performance and Powerglide	RW
High Performance	RU	Special High Performance	RY
Powerglide	RV	High Performance and Powerglide	RZ

1969

CORVAIR

"164"—6 CYLINDER

Manual Trans.	AC	High Performance Powerglide	AF
High Performance	AD	Special High Performance	AG
Powerglide	AE	High Performance Powerglide	AH

CHAPTER 12

MUSTANG, CAMARO, NADER AND PROFIT

Trying to outsell the Mustang was, for the Corvair, like trying to raise the TITANIC with an Erector set.

The Mustang was introduced to the world with an advertising blitz that made the initial Corvair introduction back in '59 look like a laryngitis sit-in at the old-folks home.

On the evening of April 16, 1964, Ford bought the 9:00 p.m. time slot on **all** three major networks, so 29,000,000 viewers got to see the Mustang's unveiling without leaving their living rooms.

The next morning 2,600 major newspapers carried announcements ads (and articles) for the Mustang. Some 150 auto editors had been invited, as Ford's guests, to the New York World's Fair (it opened that day in New York) and after wining and dining, were allowed the next day, to drive Mustangs from New York to Detroit. This paid off in glowing reports the following week.

Mustangs were put on display in airport terminals, Holiday Inn lobbies, and, of course, dealers' showrooms all over the country. Everywhere, the car's price stood out boldly—\$2,368.

Concurrently, *Life*, *Look*, *Esquire*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and most business and automotive journals carried big articles on the Mustang.

And, of course, Chevy dealers were still selling '64's (or trying to) at the time. Sales of **all** Corvairs virtually stopped. Mustang sold 417,000, with only two models, the first year, more than Corvair had sold in **any** year (with, at one point, thirteen models). And, the totally new '65 did little to stop the the stampede.

Chevy published 'Dealer Aids' comparing the Mustang to Corvair, showing its price advantage (Monza was \$2,347) comparing Corvair's engineering superiority (bonded brakes, more square inches of effective lining, independent rear-suspension, better handling) even quoting glowing reports from journalists (*Car and Driver*):

"The basic Mustang without any performance equipment is a kind of bargain Thunderbird. It has no particular vices— but it has no great charm either . . . with the addition of a heavy-duty suspension and hotter engine it becomes very exciting to drive. Unfortunately, part of this excitement stems from Ford's antique Hotchkiss-drive rear-suspension (abandoned on the big Ford line this year) which allows the back end to slide at a furious rate . . ."

(Detect any 'arrowhead at the front reasoning' there?) But it was about as productive as shoveling horse manure into the wind. Mustang galloped on.

Then, there were new leaders at Chevy's controls now, and Corvair was just another car, and with its costly engine and those liability actions that were starting over the first series, not a very profitable one, at that. In fact, it has been stated by one of the lawyers who defended GM in several of the previously mentioned suits, that GM **lost** \$50 on each Corvair made. If that were the case, it's amazing the Corvair continued as long as it did.

Of course, there was R & D work going on. One of the engines in the Monza GT has been a truly remarkable engine, particularly from an American manufacturer. It had separate one-piece cylinder head and barrel-castings for each cylinder. With stock carburetion, it gave 125 hp at 5000 rpm and 144 ft/lbs of torque at 2800. With GM-built Weber-type three-barrel down-draft carbs and 176 cid, it ran like a bear.

And in the '67 Astro I show car, GM unveiled a flat-opposed six with cylinders cast in threes, steel-lined bores, SOHC per bank, driven by a cogged belt.

Output figures for his engine specified 240 bhp at 7200 rpm. It's other unique features included: a single centrifugal blower above each set of opposing cylinders, BMW-type valve gear, and inclined valves in hemi-heads. Its carburetion was similar to the GM-Weber type previously mentioned.

But this engine never propelled even the Astro I, and in fact was only beginning its first dyno-tests when all Corvair development was halted.

I saw the Astro I in St. Louis a few years back, on the same display stand with the then-new Monza 2+2. I photographed the outside from many angles, and was sad to see the condition this car was in. Rubber sealing hung down from the door, one tire was almost flat, and the engine inside wasn't even the one specified above, containing only a stock-looking Corvair motor. The description that went with the display made no mention of the Corvair, only that the car was powered by a six-cylinder, horizontal-opposed engine.

One of the other liabilities of the Corvair was, while it would handle with the best Europe had to offer, it was locked into that rear-engine, economy-sized as it was. Even latter day tinkerers have been able to open it up to only 183 cid, from 164 cid, and that with special cylinders, block finagling, and many dollars of machining.

If there had been money, and time, the standard engine could have been hopped up, but Americans are famous for wanting everything **now**, and Mustang had **power—now!!** (And **looked** as if it could **out-handle** the best Europe had to offer. It couldn't, as many Mustang owners found, as they scraped weeds from the radiator, after dicing with a Corvair over winding roads. But it would **go**—in a straight line!)

The factory put out a propaganda film for the dealers, showing a Mustang and a Corvair in drag race. The Corvair won, but it was using the turbo engine against the Mustang's lowest hp V-8. When the four-barrel or Cobra engine was used, the Corvair was left in the dust, even with the turbo (in standard form).

(As an aside, to give you some idea of what could have been done, I once had a '66 Corsa turbo that could beat the socks off many large V-8's. This car turned 0-80 in nine seconds flat. It was totally stock, engine and carb, with only a high performance exhaust housing, (Crown A/R ratio: 0.55, stock Corvair: 0.70), a TK-10 impeller and water-menthanol injection.) Granted, this required being careful of detonation, but if the factory had offered this with a similar guarantee as the Cobra engine in the Mustang (90-days) there might have been more Corvairs sold and fewer red faces on Corvair owners.

So began the Camaro development program. Reasons? Besides the fact it could have as big an engine as could be shoe-horned in, it could use many parts from already-produced cars, namely the Chevy II. It didn't have a bad image, it could be just as fast as Mustang and, with its intitial production single-leaf rear spring, could handle much worse. And it was cheaper to build though it could sell for a higher price than Corvair because of anticipated demand and a longer option list.

Let the Corvair hang on for another year, (which it did, in almost exactly the same form as '65) 'cause the Mustang-beater would be out in the fall of '66, then the Corvair could just plain 'Go Hang!' Unfortunately (ever notice how that word keeps popping up in this story?) Ralph Nader's book, *Unsafe at Any Speed* was published in November, 1965, so Corvair had to hang on for just a tad longer. Until 1969, to be exact.

Of course, GM officials have denied it, but the consensus of many in the know says the only reason the Corvair wasn't dropped by GM as soon as the Camaro debuted, was because it would have looked as if GM were knuckling under to Nader and the ruckus he raised.

Nader called the Corvair, '... one of the greatest acts of industrial irresponsibility in the present century.' Not exactly good press.

Nader was only talking about the '60-'63 Corvair (on rare occasions in his book he specifies the '64) even using the '65 to show how the second-series had been improved, correcting the alleged 'faults' of the first series. Unfortunately (there it is again!) the name 'Corvair' doesn't differentiate between series, so readers, glancing over the first chapter, took it to mean **all** Corvairs. And he did such a good job of raking GM over the coals that by the time the reader finished that chapter, (and the only chapter dealing with Corvair) he was ready to go sue GM, on general principles.

So with all these coming together, it was just easier to let Corvair 'turn slowly, slowly in the wind.' Instead of infusing money, instead of letting the public know that the alleged problems had been fixed, GM chose to let the Corvair die of neglect.

They still advertised the car, even into 1967, but with the debut of Camaro, the Corsa, along with its 140 and 180 engine was dropped. The 140 was later reinstated, as special order option, but wasn't even included in the Owner's Manual or the Shop Manual supplement of 1967. The reasons for slowing down on Corvair were obvious to even the most casual observer. The Camaro cost less to build, and it didn't have to be defended in court. And why have competition between the higher-rated engines of the Corvair and the lower-rated ones of the Camaro?

But probably GM figured, as with any other headache, if you leave it alone, perhaps it will go away.

So from 237,000 produced in '65 to less than half that in '66 to 27,000 in '67 to 15,000 in '68 to a hand-built 6,000 in '69, the Corvair finally died.

The last Corvair, an Olympic Gold Coupe was completed at 1:30 p.m. on May 14, 1969. It carried a price tag of \$2,868. Something very peculiar happened before it left the plant. The Corvair ahead of it had back-fired and stopped when a worker tried to drive it off, to make way for the last one. It was pushed off the line.

Perhaps the reluctant Corvair was trying to tell us something, was trying to say, "Look, a small, economical, practical, imaginative car like me will be in a great demand in the '80's and forever after."

But by then, nobody was listening to anything the Corvair had to say.

It was a brave little car, a unique individual in today's world of boxy look-alikes. Sadly, we may never see its equal in America again. I wish it good luck.

Vairs 'n Spares

FOR SALE: AIR CONDITIONER, late model. Condenser, compressor & dash unit. \$175. Neil Clements, eves 298-9633.

FOR SALE: Viton "O" rings at \$9.50/set. Air & Oil filters, weather strips for trunk & engine lid. Early & late shocks. Other hard to find parts. Gordon Cauble 299-1122

WANTED: ROCKER PANEL for '63 Monza in good to excellent condition, passenger's side. Will buy or trade. Call Gordon Cauble 299-1122

WANTED TO TRADE: '64 CONVERTIBLE body & most all parts to make a complete car. Will trade for early model coupe w/ auto transmission. Call Jerry Bishop 748-1444

FOR SALE: 1961 LAKEWOOD, 95 engine, near cherry, automatic, John North's red Imron/ivory, \$2200 OBO Chester Bockstedt, 1301 W. Newton Dr., 297-5693

FOR SALE: 1963 GREENBRIER, 4-speed, excellent 110hp engine, bolted flywheel, new battery, equipped for camping, 12v refrigerator, drawers, port-a-pottie, foam bed, carpeting, radio & 8-track. \$1995 OBO. Call Alan Gray, 795-2639



FOR SALE: Call Ed Dryden @ 883-5902 for the following items:

- 2 - 61 S/W SIDE WINDOW VENTS, COMPLETE
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- 1 - 63 REAR AIR GRILL, FAIR CONDITION
- 1 - 65 FRONT & REAR BUMPERS, GOOD
- 1 - 63 REAR BUMPER, GOOD
- 1 - 63 FRONT GRILL BAR
- 1 - 65 FRONT GRILL BAR
- 4 - 63 WHEEL COVERS
- 2 - 63 4-SPEED TRANSMISSIONS
- 1 - 63 4-SPEED TRANSAXLE
- 1 - 65 AUTO TRANSMISSION W/ TORQUE CONVERTER & DIFF
- 1 - 61 80HP S/W ENGINE COMPLETE, GENERATOR, STARTER, SHROUDS & DOUBLE AIR FILTERS
- 1 - 65 110HP ENGINE, RESEALED, REBUILT ALTERNATOR, SHROUDS & SINGLE AIR FILTER
- 2 - 65 ENGINE LIDS
- 1 - 65 COUPE DOORS, RIGHT & LEFT
- 1 - 65 4D DOORS, RIGHT, LEFT, FRONT & REAR
- 1 - 65 WHEEL WELL CHROME, 4-DOOR, COMPLETE SET
- 1 - 65 SEATS & DOOR PANELS, 4-DOOR, BLUE, ALL GOOD EXCEPT DRIVER'S SEAT - ALL SEAT PANELS GOOD

FOR SALE: 1974 VW Bus w/ Corvair engine, runs good, nice interior, separate oil cooler. \$1500 or offer. Call 792-4502 or 795-7554 Ask for Ed - leave a message.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance, November 1, 1984.....\$450.88

Income:

Dues.....\$30.00
Raffle Tickets..... 30.00
Merchandise sales.... 6.00
Clark's Tour deposit. 50.00
TCA Copy Service..... 6.00

Total Income.....122.00

Expenses:

Postage..... 20.00
Christmas Dinner.....161.81

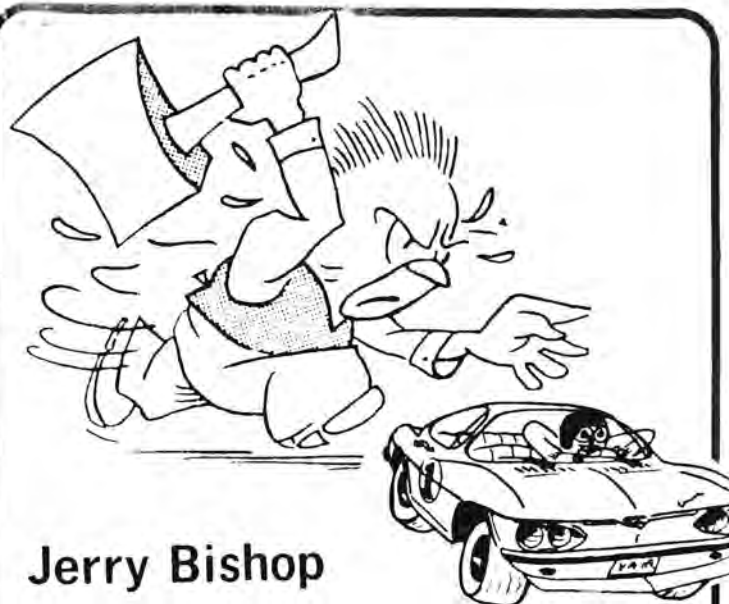
Total Expenses.....181.81

Balance, December 1, 1984.....\$391.07

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PROPRIETORS**

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Stroki's

- * THE TIME: 7:30PM, the forth Wednesday of each month
- * THE PLACE: Gusto Distributors, 3635 E. 34th Street

No food, but all the beer is free & Club will provide soft drinks

COMING
EVENTS

January 19, 1984: Tech Clinic - get that car ready
for World of Wheels and/or the
Park Mall Show OR just to drive to work!
Time and place to be announced.

February 1-3, 1985: World of Wheels - Contact Frank
McKenna (885-8571) if you wish to lend
a helping hand.

February 16-17, 1985: Park Mall Show - Call Dave Thompson
748-7105 for information.

The Tucson Corvair Association is a chartered
chapter of the Corvair Society of America
(CORSA).

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