

Corvairation

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

TUCSON, ARIZONA

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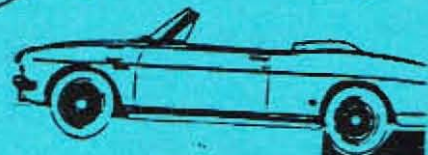
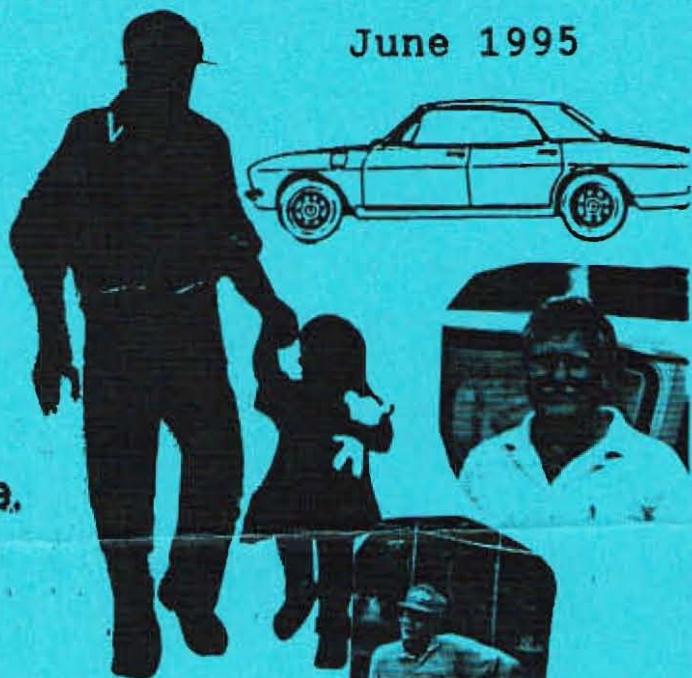
June 1995

FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

by Ruth Lommalzsch

Now and then it's time to say
Something in a special way,
And so to fathers everywhere;
May God grant you His special care.

Give you health and happiness
And all your families richly bless,
Not just while Father's Day is here,
But on each day of every year!



TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

EST. 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 (COSA\857).

MONTHLY MEETINGS are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month except December. One technical/social event is planned for each month with the exception of July and August.

MEMBERSHIP DUES: Initial dues are \$ 15.00 (includes name tag), renewable for \$ 12.00 per year and payable to the TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION through the Membership Chairperson.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chairperson. Do not report such changes to the Editor.

COSA MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$25 per year and include a subscription to the COSA Communique, a monthly publication. COSA membership is not required for membership in TCA but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer For information.

CLASSIFIED ADS are free to members and \$2.50 per 4-line ad to all others.

DEADLINE for all materials submitted for publication in the Corvairsation is the 10th for that month's issue. Mail or deliver all materials to the Editor.

BUSINESS MAILING ADDRESS: 4072 E. 22nd St. #197- Tucson, Az. 85711

B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S

PRESIDENT

Ron J. Bloom
4072 E. 22nd St.S-197
Tucson, Az. 85711
(520) 747-4842

BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Randy Griffith
12700 W. Rudasil
Tucson, Az. 85743
(520) 682-8298

CORVAIRSATION ADVISOR

Van Pershing
4842W Pas De Las Colinas
Tucson, Az. 85745
(520) 743-9185

VICE-PRESIDENT

Barry Cunningham
3725 E. 32nd St.
Tucson, Az. 85713
(520) 747-9028

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Ruth Griffith
1302 W. Ajo # 333
Tucson, Az. 85711
(520) 889-7516

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Ruth Griffith
1302 W. Ajo # 333
Tucson, Az. 85746
(520) 889-7516

TREASURER

Allen Elvick
4210 S. Preston
Tucson, Az 85746
(520) 883-4337

CORVAIRSATION EDITOR

Lynn Bloom
4072 E.22st Suite 197
Tucson, Az. 85711
(520) 747-4842

LIBRARIAN

Beverly Baker
6110 E. 5th St. #227
Tucson Az. 85711
(520) 747-0840

RECORDING SECRETARY

Larry Dandridge
1710 S. Jefferson #10
Tucson, Az. 85711
(520) 571-9680

Previous President

Vernon Griffith
(520) 889-7516
Cecil Alex
(520) 293-4156

MERCHANDISE CHAIRMAN

Don Robinson
2044 W. Shalimar Way
Tucson, Az. 85704
(520) 297-1356



From the President _____

Well ! The picnic at Madera Cyn. was lots of fun , there were lots of good food cooked to perfection by Chefs Alan & Mary Ann Elvick, I'am going to ask if they would make that a Monthly event what do you think guys ? Ann Henn made GOOD potato salad I'am going to get that recipe ! Barry & Allison had a good run around the camp believe she out run him ! Some of our hikers took a little stroll everyone (almost) wrote a yard sale ad for a fun game, you need to ask Don Henn about to tight, Verne Cauble right handers need not apply, Alan Elvicks Mary Ann old and beautiful well he got that right! Ruth Griffith sold Vern for a \$ 125.00 pink chair. Eveyone had a few laughs and enjoyed them selves. For the ones who didn't show you missed out on a good time.

There were seven Corvairs and four water pumpers that made the trip, all in good shape, Don Henn's early open was a little warm as it was a good climb.

Our mid-month for July was to be here at our home for a pool party but due to Lynn's surgery don't believe she will be up to entertaining , we can discuss more as to who would be willing to open there home at the meeting.

On behalf of TCA I would like to thank Al Crispin and Mac Post for there donation towards the copyier. I spoke with Van and believe he has one spotted that they will let us do a trial run to make sure that is what we want.


Lynn needs all of you to get some articles in and input. In fact she would just about welcome most anything, how about it its your club, what you put in is what you get back !

If you need something cleaned I have a 2000 psi diesel fired steam cleaner, it sure makes for a clean eng.

Please don't forget everyone is welcome to the board meetings.

See ya at the meetin Wed.

With Warmest Regards;


Ron J. Bloom
President

P.C.A. Monthly Meeting
Picadilly Cafeteria
May 24, 1995

Members: 33

Cars: 12

Visitors: 2

The May Meeting of P.C.A. was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by our President, Ron Bloom.

The minutes from the April meeting were accepted as printed in the Constitution.

Visitors this month was Ryan Paschal and Larry Lewis.

The dryer purchase is still being thrashed out by Ron Bloom, Vand. Pershing. More news next month.

Mid-Month activity this month will be a picnic at Madonia Canyon. June 17, we will meet at Cactus Bowling Alley on Alvernon at 9:00 A.M.

License raffle was won by:

Bill Hindell. The regular raffle prizes were won by:

Ron Henn, Ann Hena, Cecil Alex, Randy Griffith, Ruth Griffith.

Next month prizes will be brought by:

Cecil Alex, Al Rivas, Lynn Bloom, Ron Henn, Joe Abate, Barry Greeninghouse.

Steve Libliner gave a brief tech talk about electrical trouble shooting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully
Larry Handridge

Treasurer's Report

Balance May 8, 1995.....\$ 1746.58

Income

Raffle	\$ 42.00
Dues	\$ 57.00
Merchandise sales & cans....	\$ 6.51
Advertisers.....	\$ 7.00
Parts.....	\$ 195.45
Flower Donations.....	\$
Name tags.....	\$
Misc.....	\$
Total Income	\$ 307.96

Expenses

Postage	\$ 32.00
Jackets & embroidery.....	\$
Mid-Month (Ice, Soda, Etc.)..	\$ 34.55
Flowers/card/misc.....	\$
Copier printing.....	\$
Name Tags.....	\$ 12.84
Parts.....	\$ 218.74
Bank Exp.....	\$
Az. Corp. Commission.....	\$ 10.00
Total Expenses.....	\$ 308.13

Balance June 7, 1995.....\$ 1746.41

Respectfully Submitted :

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSN
4072 E 22ND ST 197
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PLEASE PRINT MY AD IN YOUR NEWSLETTER, I AM A MEMBER OF VINTAGE
CHAPTER (ORANGE COUNTY CALIF)

I am interested in buying a Corvair, What I am looking for is a
car with bright paint and straight rust free body. This car would
have no engine or blown engine. If you have such a car for sale
please write or call.

Mark Lides
4691 Jeanean Lane
Yorba Linda, CA 92686
714 996-6773

6-2-95





CLUTCH CHATTER POSSIBILITY

by Fran Schmit

In the design of a cable assembly there is no such thing as "push", you can only pull on a cable. If the cable needs to pull something that is on a suspended assembly then you must first pull on the assembly and then when that has moved to its limit your cable can pull on its intended... That's not what you want so you put a sheath around the cable which theoretically gives the end of the sheath the appearance of "ground zero" to the cable, by "pushing" on the transmission crossmember at exactly the same time as the cable does its pulling. This appearance of "ground" should then transfer the pivot point of the clutch pedal assembly to the transmission crossmember... as a hydraulic master/slave would do.

In the case of our beloved FC's we have a small conundrum - the sheath is no longer fresh/virgin/new/tight and some of its wrapped wires have been pushed for years and have loosened up just a bit. These are very stiff wires and will spring back to full length when the load of the clutch is released. Unfortunately what I have just described is a movement of that "ground zero" position from 'load' to 'no-load' and it moves the engine position. If your engine has moved forward during clutch release, then as you let out the clutch, the engine torque turns the axle to move the FC forward... the

CORVANATICS

because they were also hardened. With that point, and flutes, and hardened, these things hardly needed threaded nuts (nuts welded into the body structure). They could be driven straight (as intended) or cross-threaded in all sorts of manners and make their own threads until finally tight. If you have "played" with your F.C. very much, you may have found some of these bolts looking very crooked, but tighter than all git-out.

Different Subject: The "top hat" screw was introduced on Corvairs. I'm not really certain if they moved to the F.C. or not. They were a hex (1/4 inch) head sheet metal screw, with a washer face, that was distinctive in that the hex was about 3 times taller than normal. They looked like very small top hats. Generally they were found around the engine compartment and the air heater unit. Intent was to improve assembly operation. A socket would hang onto them, and sockets did not round as quickly.

Different Subject: The F.C. has those dreaded clutch recess screws used in various places on the floor and rampdoor. It's often not easy to find a clutch bit for your wrench, and they are buggers to remove with anything. I assume they were used to accept more torque than a cross recess, and look neater than a hex. Now-a-days a torx recess would have been used, such as you find on modern seat belt installation.

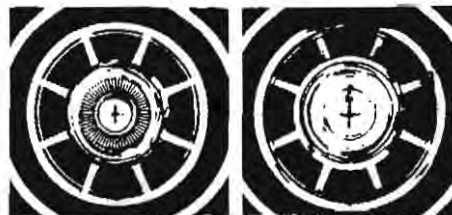
Different Subject: Fine thread series bolts were used in many places on the F.C.s. F.C. Engineers were truck engineers and the truck engineers used fine thread bolts and nuts. The science of bolt torque/tension blossomed after the F.C. was long gone. Lab data was slim at Chevy. I remember Don Gill was set up to get some standardization with fasteners, and a group developed that got into torque/tension work. Anyway the general "feeling" then was that a fine thread bolt would clamp something tighter at a given torque than a coarse thread fastener. The truckers used fine threads. They also used lots of those self threading, fine threaded tapping bolts. The first threads are a bit smaller, and the bolts are hardened.

OUT OF: CORVIR
Affair By: MIKE
KREPPER

"ONE HELL OF A CAR," 1966-1969



Although corporate neglect was rampant, when the 1966 models were introduced, they were nonetheless considered the best of the best of the Corvair line. And this Corvair convertible has a helluva lot to say to the Corvair at the time.



1966 Corvair wheel cover, left; 1966 Monza wheel cover, right.



Monza for 1966.



In 1967 the Corvair disappeared and the Monza—this is the four-door version—was again the leader. It was joined by a coupe and convertible version, and two plain Jane 500-series cars. But despite the corporate neglect, the '67 was still a solid little performer as reported by a Car Life road test.

But there's more. The padding on the dash was thickened and the knobs on the window cranks were covered with clear plastic. The handle on the dash-mounted automatic shift lever was changed from a T-shape to a plastic knob that matched the other dash controls. You can't tell by looking, but 1967 Corvairs also carried GM's first five-year warranty on engine and drive train. Identifying a 1967 is a case in Holmsten deduction.

It was still possible to order a Corvair that had just about everything. A sport suspension package was on an option list that also included the now-familiar wide range of comfort and convenience options. Those few who made the decision to go Corvair in '67 happily drove away in a car that could show its brute to just about everything on the road, and do it in comfort and refinement.

1968

There was actually a printed road test of a 1968 Corvair. Why, one wonders, given the awful state of affairs. But nonetheless, Car Life made a last effort in its January '68 issue. Car magazines typically don't devote valuable editorial pages to cars that won't entice readers to plunk down their money at the corner overmarket. And certainly the 1968 Corvair wasn't about to generate even a blip on the January issue sales curve. But Car Life—the author was not identified—found a lot to like. "More Fun Per Dollar Than Any Other American Passenger Car." It headlined the test, and this from the lofty House of Bond, the house that Rood & Trunk built, the foot from which automotive wisdom has flowed for almost thirty-five years.

A sample of its report: "It's too much car to kill." And, "In its present form comes closer to being a real sports car than any of the current crop of ponycars."

The car tested was a Monza coupe with 140-hp engine, four-speed transmission and optional suspension. (The 140 was now officially back.) With a wide array of options, the car listed at \$2,862. Rereading the test is a bitter-sweet experience. Car magazines have the inside track to Detroit, and undoubtedly Car Life knew the Corvair had only a few months to live. Yet, it went about testing and reporting on the car as if the purchase decision of hundreds of thousands of buyers was hanging in the balance.

The magazine commented on the seats: insufficient adjustment for tall drivers. The gear shift: uncomfortably long throws for first and third. Starting and driveability with the air pump system: surprisingly good. And most sad, a comment on the four-carb throttle linkage, always too complicated with a tendency to get out of adjustment, which it criticized saying, "Surely Chevrolet could solve this perpetual problem, even if a couple of dollars need to be added to the sales price." A couple of dollars spent in refinement? That had been discontinued three years before. But on to the good stuff.

Steering response was excellent, despite a criticism about a too-slow ratio. (The year before, a 16:1 box had been introduced, probably the last significant mechanical improvement, but apparently Car Life didn't have it on its test car.) The magazine went on to laud the brakes, the mid-range power, the overall handling (understeer up to the limits where uncontrollable oversteer set in). The brakes were called superb, and said to set a standard for production brakes "not likely to be met for several years, if at all."

tra-cost options. The 500 received a plethora of standard features such as cigarette lighter, coat hooks, a lockable glovebox and interior lights. It also had upgraded upholstery, the best it had ever had. And rear seat belts were standard throughout the line. The Corvair and Monza got new pinstriped seats with metal buttons.

Every Corvair buyer had a choice of power teams. 500 and Monza models were available with the 95-hp engine and the new three-speed, up to the 140-hp engine with a four-speed. The 110 and 140 engines cost more, of course, as did the four-speed and Powerglide. The standard Corvair engine was again the 140, with the 180 turbo available only on the Corvair. A Sport Handling package was available that included stiffer-rate springs, heavy-duty shocks and quicker steering (10:1 and three turns lock-to-lock). A sports-style steering wheel in simulated wood was still available, as were three-pronged simulated wire wheel covers. The Post-traction rear axle was available in both 3.27:1 and 3.55:1 ratios. Three colors, Marine Blue, Lemonwood Yellow and Chateau Slate were available on the Monza and Corvair only.

The changes for 1966 were relatively minor, but they were improvements nonetheless. Good managed to get a little better.

However, the purse strings had drawn tightly closed on any significant visual changes. Chrome trim was modified slightly on the nose and a slightly modified—hiss instead of vee—triangle was placed in the center. This

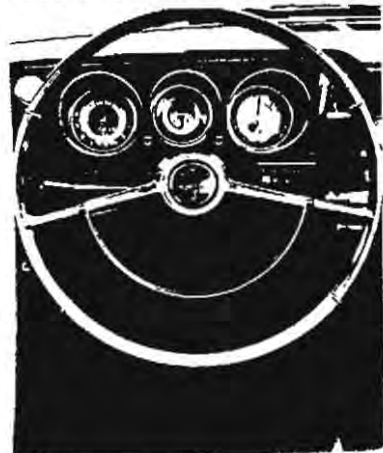
badge remained unchanged to the end. The Corvair script was moved from the left front edge of the hood to the left front portion of the nosepiece. There was less chrome on the taillights, and a decorative pinstripe that had appeared on the '65 Corvair was dropped. A few extra-cost options on the '65 Corvair became standard, and that was about it.



Still, for all intents and purposes, it was as if nothing was wrong. Sales figures, however, indicated otherwise. Only 103,743 of the 1966-model Corvairs were sold. The public may not have gotten wind of the death dictum, but it was tearing away in droves. The Mustang, of course, was getting most of the action. But there was also stiff competition from Chevy's own Chevy II and Malibu, as well as the Buick, Pontiac and Olds intermediates. And although the lawsuit business had lost some steam, the damage had been done. This was the last year there would be any respectable semblance of Corvair business.

1967

Although Chevrolet paid lip service to the 1966 Corvair, even making a few laudible mechanical changes to improve the breed, for 1967 it was all over. The Corvair was abandoned, leaving only the two 500's and the familiar Monza trio. While the full lineup of engines from the 95 to the 180 had been available in '66, for 1967 that was initially pared down to just the 95 and 110. However, sometime after introduction there was enough of a demand (7) for the 140 that it was quietly reinstated. It's difficult to imagine how that "demand" could have actually been a factor in Chevrolet's plans since just 30,637 cars were sold that model year. One can only assume there were



1966 Monza wheel cover, left; 1966 Corvair wheel cover, right.

enough 140 engines or their parts available back at Willow Run that Chevy could easily make the amendment.

Even the most astute Corvair observer has trouble identifying the 1967 models. It's easy to imagine the trauma caused at Chevrolet with the realization that no changes meant no changes. There were always changes from one model year to another. Always. But budgets are budgets and for 1967 there was no budget for change.

However, old traditions are difficult to kill, and a few identifying changes were slipped in. Thin-back Astro bucket seats appeared, and were there until the end. Although the taillight lenses were also unchanged from 1966 through the final 1969 cars, in 1967 the chrome trim was slightly modified. In 1967 the taillights got a heavy chrome trim ring to replace the thin band on the 1966 cars. But wait. That isn't necessarily a give-away clue. The trim rings were actually changed on the late 1966 cars, so even that isn't proof positive you're face-to-face with a 1967. However, the steering wheel is the proof: three spokes instead of two identify a 1967. Thank GM for small favors.





1966 Corvair coupe with standard seat belt and shoulder harness.

"The Corvair," the magazine went on, "appeals to the driver who is a driver." It was a car in which one could "enjoy the application of skillful handling." It possessed qualities of "agility, maneuverability and cornering power that enable a good driver to cover stretches of twisting pavement rapidly, and with a feeling of satisfaction." But "the Corvair will be allowed to die... [it] deserves a much better fate."

There were a few cosmetic changes on the 1966 cars. Specifically and probably the best way of identifying a '66 from a '67 with a quick glance was the adoption of side-marker lights on all fenders. The markers on the front fenders had white lenses with amber bulbs, the rear-marker lights were red. As part of federally mandated safety improvements, all Corvairs got an extra dose of padding on the instrument panel, and even the windshield pillars got the padding treatment. There was a larger shift knob on the manual transmissions. Armrests were redesigned and padded top and bottom.

Interior vinyl material was changed, not necessarily for the better in quality, but it looked slightly different. And there were just three interior colors available: blue, black and gold. The backs of the Monza's bucket seats were again, as the previous year, plastic instead of painted metal, and in January shoulder belts became standard for front seat passengers, but were optional on the convertibles.

Air conditioning was dropped in '66 because with the air pump under-hood temperatures would have been excessive.



A 1966 Monza sport coupe like this one could be ordered with a 140-hp engine, four-speed transaxle, steel and sport suspension. With most basic mechanical options and a host of comfort and convenience items, it listed for just \$17,862.

And coupes and convertibles were it. The sedan was discontinued throughout the line, which is a little strange since the sedan had always outsold the convertible. But that was the decision, and in 1966 there was a single 500 coupe and a Monza coupe and convertible.

Finally, there were a couple of nice improvements in the convenience area: a hand-operated latch for the folding rear seat (previous versions had had a friction-fit latch) and a rear-window defroster.

The Corvair had become, in the estimation of one of the country's leading automotive magazines, one hell of a car. Not a road burner in the mother-bugs V-8 mode that was the current style, but as a small-displacement, responsive, good-handling, aesthetically appealing package that was more, much more European than anything spewing off the Detroit assembly line at the time. Obviously, that was its problem. Not that it was good Americans then and now can appreciate and buy Good. But it was, in the final accounting, terribly out of step with the times.

In fact, it had never been in step. When it was introduced the Corvair marched to a very different drummer, and unashamedly continued to do so throughout its life. Perhaps its early success was not unlike the success of any of the many fads that take this country by storm only to quickly die un-mourned. Had this fad been embraced by Ford and Chrysler and been challenged in the marketplace by their versions, it would have had a life that extended into the eighties. Certainly in the context of the eighties the Corvair seems nearly ideal. But that didn't happen. Ford and Chrysler called it a freak, and repeated that epithet so often, it came to be believed by first a

few, then by many. And freak it certainly became in a world suddenly dominated by horsepower and superficial pizzazz. It was dragged through our legal system, and although it was exonerated, a stigma remained. The Corvair was ahead of its time. It was a lesson no one wanted, or thought to be needed, to learn. It was the spawn of genius, Ed Cole and all the others. It had showed a moribund industry what could be done. It had demonstrated what American technology and ingenuity could do. It never had a chance.

1969

These are the salient facts about the 1969 Corvair:

A letter, dated May 12, was sent to all Chevrolet dealers announcing the discontinuance of Corvair production "in accordance with the long standing practice" of reviewing product offerings and their relation to the market. Buyers of '69 Corvairs would be offered a coupon good for \$150 against the purchase of any new 1969 through 1973 Chevrolet. Proper handling of the situation, the letter assured, would afford dealers "excellent merchandising possibilities."

A few days later a more succinct letter went out to 1969 Corvair buyers informing them of the \$150 bonus to make up for any monetary inconvenience they might suffer for having bought a car that would obviously take it to the car in resale value.

On May 14 the last Corvair, an Olympic Gold Monza, rolled off the Willow Run assembly line that jerked to a despondent halt behind it.

One of the real challenges for any Corvair enthusiast is to be able to identify a '69; there isn't much to go on. Those side-marker lights that first appeared in 1966 are a solid clue, unless, of course, they have been changed by an owner. The front lenses on the '69 are amber with a white bulb, just the opposite of the previous year. There are other indications: the door and ignition keys are larger, as is the rear-view mirror. Interior colors were black, blue and a medium green (green replaced the gold available in '68). Front shoulder belts were standard on all models, except the convertibles, and rear shoulder belts were optional on all models.

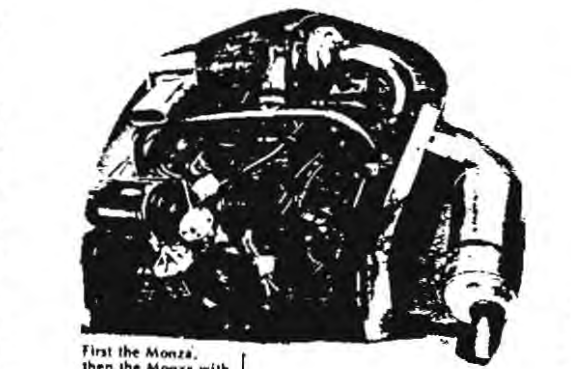
There were no changes in engine and transmission availability from 1966, and the heavy-duty suspension was still available.

That last Corvair, the Olympic Gold Monza (the last six digits of its serial number were 708000) was driven off the assembly line and duly photographed by the assembled news media, but not before it was slightly damaged by the lifting cradle. After the photo session with the Monza in front of the railroad car that was ostensibly to carry it to its assigned dealership, the car was driven away. To this day no one knows its whereabouts, other, perhaps, than GM—and GM isn't saying.

1969 Corvair sales totaled 6,000 units.

ADDENDUM

The Corvair passed from the American automotive scene with a pitiful whimper, a bearded child that had shown intimations of greatness, but it failed, mostly for reasons still not clearly understood. The car business is heartless: Make it or die. The Corvair didn't make it. I have looked on many of the reasons. But a mystery remains. And a curiosity: Why was the car abandoned by the men who had made it all happen? Ed Cole, when last we saw him, was still on that fast track to the top of General Motors. In 1961, as Chevy general manager, he had been named general executive in



First the Monza, then the Monza with turbocharging—150 hp in a true sports vehicle. The air cleaner is at the left, feeding the single carburetor in the middle. To the right of the carb is the compressor and turbine. The turbine, driven by exhaust gas, drives the compressor which forces the high-pressure charge into the engine via the narrow intake tube crossing the top of the engine, left to right.



Front suspension, an easily (relatively) removable unit. Upper A-arms, coil springs and shock absorbers are clearly visible. An anti-roll bar was not a part of the original package, although it had been on prototypes and was soon to appear in production.



1969 Corvair.

charge of all car and truck operations. That, you will recall, was when the Corvair was in its sales heyday. He was later (1963) made executive vice president of the corporation, and although a divorce and a remarriage seemed to block his ascendancy to the presidency, he was nonetheless given that position in 1967. So what happened to the single-minded Ed Cole who brought Marjorie Oley into his office and said, "Build me a car?" What happened to the Ed Cole who soon had the power to say, "Forget about all that other stuff, build me a rear-engine car?" And what happened to the Ed Cole who manipulated every GM brass hat in sight to push his Corvair project through?

No one has ever been able to pry out of General Motors who officially pulled the plug on the Corvair. It's a big company, and diligent inquirers can

easily find themselves wandering down dark paneled hallways that lead nowhere when the question is one the corporation doesn't want to answer. But the light at the end of the hallway seems, inevitably, to emanate from Ed Cole's office.

Consider this. He created a car. He made it happen. As general manager of Chevrolet he saw that it was already off and running. With his track record for getting what he wanted, it's difficult to believe that as executive vice president he didn't continue to control the Corvair's fate. And can we expect less of him as president of the corporation?

Ed Cole was a car person extraordinaire. He made the Corvair happen because he wanted it to happen, because it was a Good Thing. But Ed Cole was also a quintessential businessman. A man doesn't become president of General Motors because he has created one strange anomaly. And a man who is a businessman knows when it's time to cut and run. The same vision that prompted Ed Cole to create the Corvair let him see the necessity for letting it die. It was done, Father and executioner. I would like to be wrong. The romantic in me demands it. But the circumstantial evidence is too strong. We will never know who actually picked up the phone or wrote the memo that sealed the car's fate. But can there be any reasonable doubt who made the ultimate decision?



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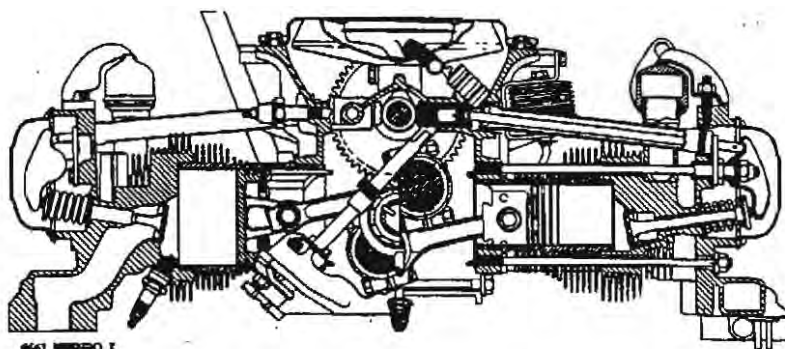
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FOR SALE: 62 two dr. 110 HP, PG, Red, New fuel pump, Reg, Battery, New brakes, New tires, Everything in good shape! \$ 2000.00
Call Merle Williamson 520- 290-6655

FOR SALE: CORVAIR PARTS. Large outdoor yard full of great Corvair parts. Call Barry Cunningham for information at 520- 747-9028.

FOR SALE: 6 ea. N.O.S. eng. cyl. and Piston units complete. GM p/n 3847843 (for 64 Corvair) \$400.00 Call Don Chastain 520- 886-1076

*****NOTE--- Ads in VAIRS & SPARES are free to TCA members. Non-members can place a four line ad for \$2.50. Send ads directly to Corvairsation editor*****

7:30 pm: Meeting starts

FIRST CLASS MAIL