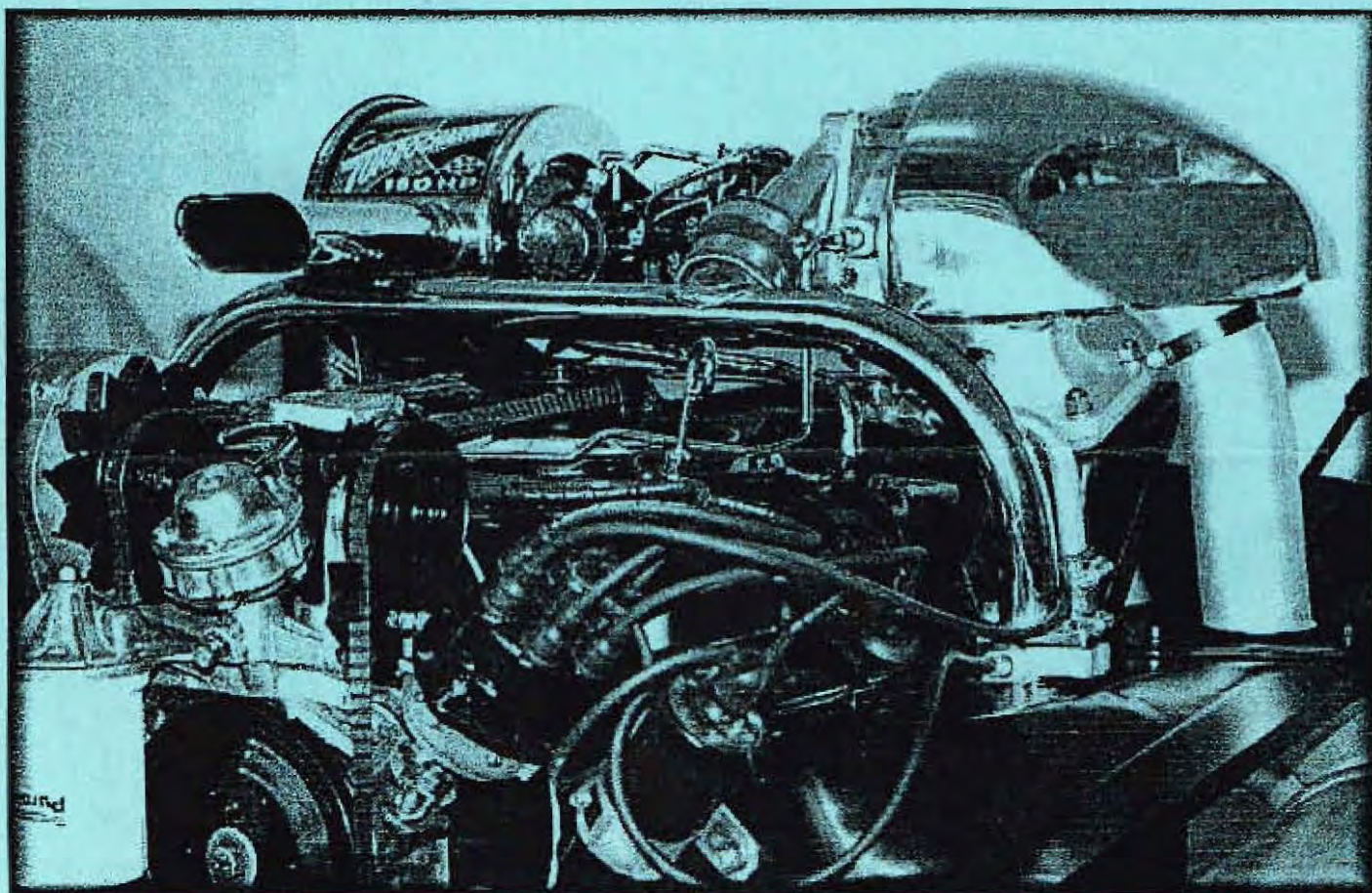


Corvairisation

Tucson Corvair Association
Volume 25, Number 10

Tucson, Arizona
December 1999



*If you could have 180 things for Christmas,
what would they be??*

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 (COSA), Chapter 857.

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

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

COSA Membership Dues are \$27 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 more 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 Corvairsation Editor.

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The Presidential Christmas Greeting

Yes, greetings to all--- We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year from our family to your family. Best wishes for a prosperous year 2000 and great things and events for the Tucson Corvair Association. --- Watch out for the Y2K bug. I saw one the other day. It was a VW and happily not a Corvair, heaven forbid.

In my November Presidential Persiflage I predicted and described the tuneup clinic before it happened. Well, it happened as predicted and it was a grand success with Margaritas and hot dogs served to all. Several of the new members got tuneups, including valve adjustments, and diagnoses. The most fun and exciting event of all was when Gordon's '63 700 caught fire. Dave Lynch was in the driver's seat and Gordon was priming the carburetors. The prime caught fire and Dave Lynch sought to put it out with the car cover. Well, the car cover just went POOF!!!! and a huge mushroom cloud enveloped the neighborhood. I handed my son the shop fire extinguisher and he ran around the building and put out the fire. Both Gordon and Dave got singed but not seriously. We've never had that much fun at a Corvair Association event, before, to my knowledge. Tuneup clinics will become a standard event for the future, for sure.

More predictions--- The Christmas party will be a magnificent affair and the spirit, and maybe spirits, will be in all of us.

Hope you are making plans to enter or attend the annual Santa Cruz Car Nuts, Inc. 6th annual collector car show the Tubac Golf Resort 10:00 AM January 29th, 2000. Entry forms and info are in the Corvairsation. It's our January Mid-Month. See you there.

DAVE BAKER

bakerm21@Prodigy.net

Minutes of Membership Meeting 11-24-99

President Dave Baker called the meeting of the Tucson Corvair Association to order at 7:30 PM at Denny's restaurant. A small group was in attendance due to the Thanksgiving weekend but it was a jovial bunch and made for an enjoyable evening.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the Conversation.

Membership - Beverly Baker, announced that we are sending Corvairsations to a lot of people who have not joined the club. Since our dues just barely cover the cost of printing and postage, this practice will be stopped unless they do so. Also, she will be compiling a roster of members after the January dues are in. It will include names, addresses, telephone numbers {if so desired} and e-mail addresses {if so desired}. Please let her know if there are any corrections or additions to your address label.

Web Site - Paul Dunn brought his laptop PC and gave us a preview of what to expect when it is in operation. Very interesting and very professionally done and will be a big asset to the association.

The tune-up clinic was a big success in spite of the fire in Gordon Cauble's Corvair! It was the result of the engine back-firing and the spillage of some gasoline while he was priming the engine that caused it. It was agreed that a car cover does not put out a fire as well as a fire extinguisher.

Gordon announced that he had purchased all of parts that Ed Avery had left over. We are still looking for a home for the parts that Al Crispin has. Barry said that he had hopes of building a shed to accommodate those and some that he has.

It was agreed that the Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts, Inc. car show on January 29, 2000 will be the mid-month activity for January and that the one for February will be at the Franklin Museum of the 12th of that month. Beverly is looking into a picnic at Karchner Caverns in March. More information later.

The raffle was held over until January because only Dave and Barry remembered to bring gifts and the small attendance would not have been very profitable.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted



Beverly Baker Acting Recording Secretary

NOV/DEC 99 TREASURER'S REPORT

BEGINNING CASH ON HAND.....\$1707.53

INCOME: (ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE)

Ads.....	0.00
Badges/Pins.....	00.00
Raffle Tickets	9.00
Merchandise.....	00.00
Christmas dinner.....	225.00
Misc.....	34.00
Can Money.....	<u>38.84.00</u>
	306.84

DUES:

Andrew Steuart.....15.00

TOTAL INCOME (ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE).....\$321.84

EXPENSES: (ACCOUNTS PAYABLE)

Stamps.....	19.80
Toner.....	70.62
Copier paper.....	29.94
Name tags.....	4.20
Tune Up Clinic supplies.....	<u>25.00</u>

TOTAL EXPENSES: (ACCOUNTS PAYABLE).....149.56

ENDING BALANCE: (CASH ON HAND).....\$1879.81

Respectfully Submitted,

Allen Elvick

*****Y2K DUES ARE DUE...DUE....DUE*****

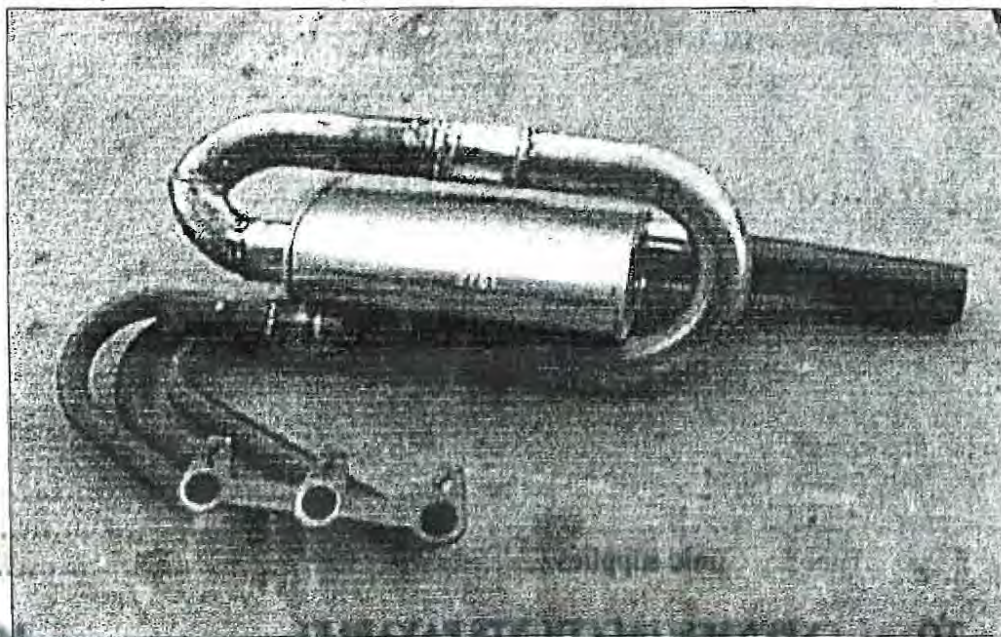
Exhaust Headers - Minus All* the Noise

Van Pershing

* okay, some of the noise!

I've always enjoyed the mellow sound of a Corvair with headers coupled with a nice set of turbo mufflers. I think I enjoyed it more in my youth than I do now because now after a short period of time behind the wheel the sound becomes noise and really gets on my nerves! But the extra power that a good exhaust system gives is truly incredible, and, if truth be known, that's what I really like.

So, my goal in life is to figure out how to have my cake and eat it too. How can you have the headers and not have so much of the noise? One of the big problems is that there are no long runs of exhaust pipe to soak up a little of the noise like front engine cars have. Inspired by Kent Sullivan's exhaust system (see photo elsewhere in this issue), I decided to fabricate a system that would give a few feet of pipe. From the header the pipe is routed to the rear of the car and then makes a 180° turn around the muffler. Another 180° turn routes the pipe back toward the rear of the car and into the inlet side of the muffler. A tail pipe is then added to the muffler to complete the system. This yields over 4 feet of pipe between the header and the muffler instead of none.



A view of the passenger's side exhaust system. The headers are a set of Otto Parts and mufflers are Dynaflow Super Turbos.

The collector on these particular headers is 2½" and so 2½" pipe was used throughout the system along with Dynaflow Super Turbo mufflers with 2½" inlets and outlets. Mandrel bent pipe in 180° sections was purchased from Don's Hot Rod Shop to avoid trips to the mufflers shop for bending. The bends come in 4" radii only but a tighter radius is needed where the pipe curves back into the inlet side of the muffler. A hack saw and a little welding produced the tighter radius. Even though it isn't perfect, it flows fine for the street usage it will see.

Now, how do we fit all this stuff into the little tiny place that it has to go? There are three spots that



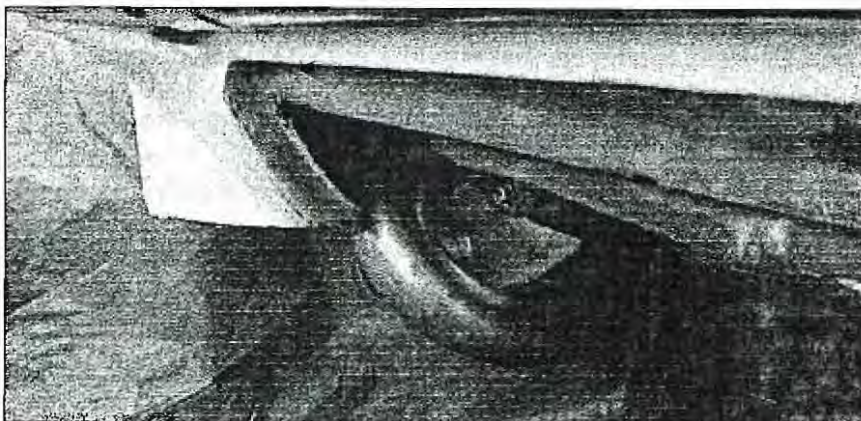
With the rear wheel removed, a good view of the clearance between piping and the shock absorber can be seen - there ain't much!

really caused problems. The first (and these are in no particular order) is clearance for the shock absorber. The second was clearance for the rear edge of the body. And the third was clearance for the tire. This wouldn't be such a problem if I weren't running 215-60R14s. It was like working one of those Chinese puzzles to get thing to fit with sufficient clearance.

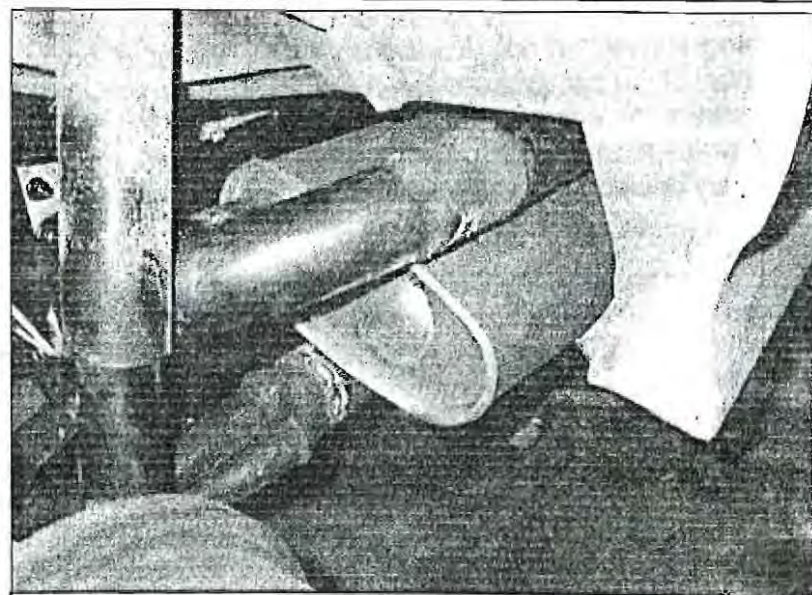
The exhaust piping and muffler pretty much fill all the space available. This is especially true on the driver's side because of the engine off-set. It would be very difficult to adjust the valves on the left back without removing the exhaust system. The passenger's side has plenty of room for adjusting the valves but there are still just as many clearance problems.

One of the things I was told by several people while researching the project was that the exhaust should run straight out the back of the car and the tail pipes should extend beyond the bodywork. This give the noise very little opportunity to find its way back into the passenger's compartment.

What about the sound vs. noise? Well, I borrowed digital sound meter and took some measurements and compared them on a couple of cars along with my Corsa with three different exhaust set-ups. Keep in mind that twice as loud is equal to 3 dBA and OSHA required hearing protection when levels average 90 dBA and over. We were able to reduce the noise level quite a bit over a standard header set up, but still twice as loud as a stock set up. Overall, I'm please with the results both in noise level and performance. The moral of the story is that if you want a quiet ride you'd better go for something newer like a Cadillac or even a Chevy Blazer. The stock Corsa exhaust system is also another good route, but the extra horses just aren't there.



Looking into rear of the car with the grill panel removed, you can see there is only about 1/2" clearance between the pipe and the bodywork.



As can be see in this view looking into the wheel well with the wheel removed, there isn't much room. The pipes and the muffler pretty much fill up the entire space.

	Idle *	WOT @ 60 mph *	60 mph- cruise*	Outside car **
'97 Cadillac Eldorado	49 dBA	72 dBA	64 dBA	57 dBA
'96 Chevrolet S-10 Blazer, 4-door	50 dBA	74 dBA	65 dBA	54 dBA
Corsa-stock dual exhausts	61 dBA	81 dBA	70 dBA	62 dBA
Corsa-header w/ Turbo mufflers	66 dBA	85 dBA	82 dBA	76 dBA
Corsa-as above w/ extra piping	65 dBA	82 dBA	74 dBA	75 dBA

* inside car (driver's seat)

**Outside car approximate 10' in back of tailpipe(s) @ idle

Is the Corvair Safe?

From <http://personal.vallnet.com/oldcars/safe.html>

The year is 1964 and the Corvair is getting a tremendous amount of publicity across the states - unfortunately it was not the kind of publicity a car model would like to have. It was in 64 that an aggressive young lawyer by the name of Ralph Nader took on the automotive industry to show just how unsafe the cars we were buying and driving. (It is interesting to note that Mr. Nader did not even have a driver's license so we can only speculate on how well he was familiar with an automobile!) Determined to prove American cars were unsafe, he pointed to the Corvair as "proof" for his case and even published a book entitled *Unsafe at Any Speed*, in which he cited the Corvair as a prime example of Detroit knowingly building unsafe cars.

Any Validity to the Claim?

Was there any validity to his claims? Was the Corvair (and other cars) really that unsafe? Well to understand the story, we must look at some history related to these claims. In May 17, 1960, a young 16-year-old boy was driving his stepfather's Corvair on a winding, two-lane road. He lost control of the car, crossed the centerline into an oncoming car - killing him. Was this the fault of the car or the driver? Well unfortunately for Chevrolet, the young boy's stepfather was an malpractice attorney and a former law partner with a gentleman by the name of Don Harney. Mr. Harney decided to investigate the safety record of the radically new Corvair.

Investigation

During his investigation, Harney talked with a Los Angeles police officer who claimed there had been several accidents in the past several months where Corvairs had "flipped" over. After further investigation, Harney's law firm filed a lawsuit (filed in July 1961) against General Motors (and added two Chevrolet dealers in for good measure). which claimed that GM was negligent in the design of the Corvair and the dealers were liable for selling a defective product. To add fuel (and to collect needed evidence) to his suit, Mr. Harney placed advertisements in several law journals with hopes of organizing a class action like suit. IT WORKED !!

What Happens When You Get a bunch of Lawyers Together !!!

It wasn't long until the American Trial Lawyers Association (A.T.L.A.) became involved. (Their primary role is product reliability cases.) Among the lawyers involved was a young aggressive attorney by the name of Ralph Nader. Before the suit when to court, there were more than 30 additional cases involved - all citing GM as the primary target.

Their Day in Court

It was 1964 before the case got to court - and this was with a totally different plaintiff than originally identified. A lady (Ms. Perini) claimed her Corvair *suddenly, and for no apparent reason, left the road* and when she attempted to return the vehicle to the road from the shoulder, her car went *wildly and uncontrollably* across the highway striking an embankment, rolling over, and severing her arm.

GM attorneys felt the case was unbeatable (based mainly on their lack of preparation) settled the case out of court \$70,000 (the original suit was for \$300,000). This was perceived by the press as an admission of guilt by GM and brought much unwanted publicity for the company and the Corvair. Because of this settlement, GM was hit with 294 more cases related to "unsafe" cars built by the company.

Only the Beginning !!

If you were a young, aggressive attorney looking to make a name for yourself as a Consumer Advocate, this was the break you were looking for. Ralph Nader saw his chance and took it !! As the primary consultant to Senator Abraham Ribicoff, member of the subcommittee investigating automobile industry safety at the time, he was privy to most of the information that was being collected and as a result wrote his now famous book *Unsafe At Any Speed*. Released in 1965, it was quickly seen as an attack on General Motors more than the automobile community as a whole.

For some unknown reason, GM decided to have private investigators look into Nader's private life to see if there were ways to discredit him. This backfired on GM and their president, James Roche, was summoned to Senator Ribicoff's subcommittee to answer charges of harassment. Of course he denied any harassment but did admit that they had investigated Nader and publicly apologized. If there was not enough bad publicity for GM, this sure fueled the fire.

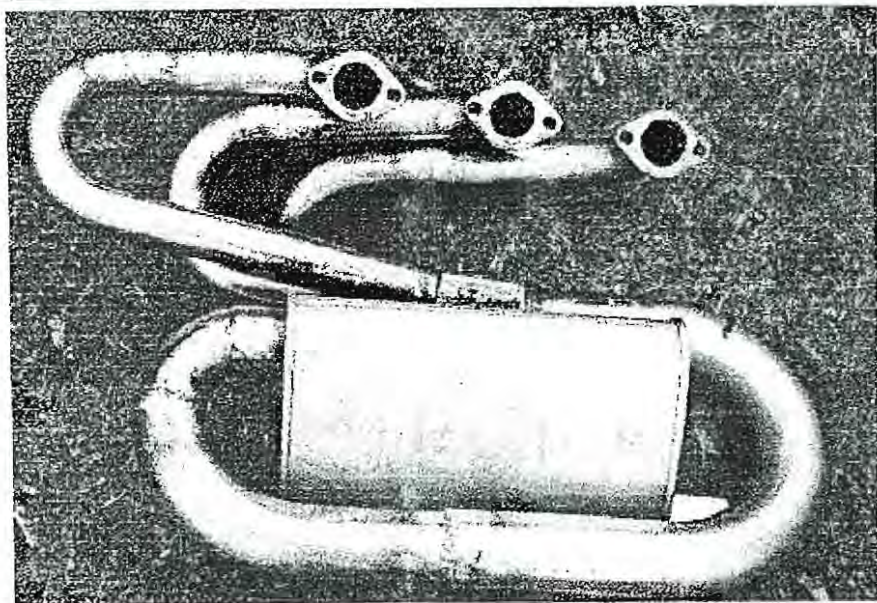
The Senate hearings on automobile safety continued and the 1960-63 Corvairs was often the center of the discussion. Learning from their lack of preparation in the Perini case, GM attorneys were better prepared this time and brought in expert witnesses such as Stirling Moss and Carroll Shelby among others.

In the end GM was not found negligent in it's design of the Corvair and that the vehicle was not unsafe as Nader and his group had claimed - unfortunately it was too late for the Corvair - the damage had been done.

Did This Kill the Corvair?

It is pretty much accepted today that the introduction of the Ford Mustang did more damage to sales of the Corvair than the bad publicity dished out by Nader; however, this type of publicity surely didn't help the product.

So why didn't Chevrolet just kill Corvair production? Many theories exist, but personally, I think they felt it would have been seen as an admission that the car was indeed unsafe and they surely did not need that kind of PR.



Kent Sullivan's exhaust system mentioned in the Headers article elsewhere in this issue. He has welded tubes with flanges in the heads, thus the flanges on the

from the editor.....

Happy Holidays! A joyful and rewarding new millennium. It seems as if we have been waiting for this time, or at least anticipating it, for a long time. Now what are we going to do with it?

Today I read about 25 newsletters from various Corvair Chapter Cubs and as usual I was impressed with all of the various activities of the Clubs. As with our Tucson Chapter, these activities take planning and in plans one of the most important factor is feedback from members. What's your pleasure?

I know we are going to get this millennium off to a great start. Last month we included a registration form for the Collector Car Show at the Tubac Golf Resort and I hope to see a lot of our really nice Corvairs there. This show has such a great variety of classic and rare cars I would hate to miss it.

Drive safely!

From the 1999 GWFBT&SM



Vairs and Spares

1961 4 door, New Interior, 1965 110 hp Engine, Auto Tran with external oil cooler, Air conditioned, (needs comp clutch), New generator, New Idler pulley and Fan Bearings, \$2200. Call Vernon Griffith (520) 889-7516.

1969 chevy 3/4-ton. 396, AT, Pwr Disc Brakes, PS, AC, Cruise, Stereo, Shell, Carpet, Air suspension, Custom seat, Dual spots, 3 tanks, Dual batteries, Telescoping bumper, HEI, CB wiring, Trailer brake controller, Manuals, Spare parts, Ugly paint. \$1/pound obo (That's \$5050, I'll start at \$4750). (520) 751-9500 eve, (520) 663-9122 day. (Note: This truck has been to seven CORSA National Conventions and has towed Corvairs to four of them.

For sale: Corvair parts—large outdoor yard full of great Corvair parts. Call Barry Cunningham at (520) 747-9028.

Paul H. Dunn
Executive Director

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pdunn@computerlandsss.com



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Member of Corsa and Tucson Corvair Association

Ads are free to TCA members. \$2.50 for up to four lines for non-members.

6:00 p.m: Parking Lot Bull Session
6:30 p.m: Dinner (optional)
7:30 p.m: Meeting starts

[illegible]