

September Tuneup Clinic

Bill Maynard hosted the September Tuneup Clinic at his chicken ranch on Sunday the 17th. The clinic was very productive with approximately six Corvairs present. Dave Baker brought his bright blue '66 coupe; the only late model car in attendance.

Bill kept things running smoothly with his usual gusto, jumping from car to car with his special wrench.

New member John Deeb came to pay a visit to his recently acquired '64 convertible at Bill's for a new clutch. Ryan Green's '64 convertible was pulling to the

continued on page 2



If only I had that special wrench, I'd be watching football by now!



Dave Lynch, John Deeb, and Barry Cunningham in front of Dave Baker's 1966 Monza talking with Ryan Green about the pudding girls video on www.corvairs.org



Barry and Ryan in back. Patrick and Cassidy in front.



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 (CORSA) chapter 857.

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

Membership Dues are \$15 for individuals and \$18 for families. Initial dues are \$19 for individuals and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to Tucson Corvair Association.

Change of Address: Report any changes of address or phone number to the Membership Chairperson. Do not report such changes to the Corvairsation Editor.

CORSA Membership Dues are \$35 per year (\$70 for 26 months) and include subscription to the CORSA Communique, a monthly publication. CORSA membership is not required for membership in the TCA, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

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

Business Mail Address: 1026 South 7th Avenue, Tucson, AZ, 85701-3010.

Web Site Address: www.corvairs.org

Tuneup at the Chicken Ranch *from page 1*

right when he applied the brakes. A careful look at the front brakes revealed an improperly adjusted set of shoes.

Allen installed a new electronic ignition system in his '64 convertible but could not get the car started. It was determined that a malfunctioning component in the new system was the reason.

The cars were being prepped and tuned for the upcoming October 8th tour with the Corvette clubs of Tucson. The Tucson Corvette Club, Sonoran Desert Corvettes, Southern Arizona Corvettes and the Tucson Corvair Association will meet and cruise to Desert Diamond Casino for an evening of dinner and games.

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Another Ford-Corvair connection

There's also a little-known connection between the Corvair and Ford's hugely successful assault on LeMans, Dan

Gurney and AJ Foyt were overall winners in 1967 driving a Ford GT40 MK IV. "They showed their taillights" to the world, beating Ferrari, Porsche, etc. at the most prestigious road race in the world. Take a close look at those taillights. Yep ... they're from an EM Corvair!



Corvair & Mustang History

by Kenneth J Anderson: <http://www.aviceda.com/cars/fleet.htm>

Don't know how many people have owned both a Corvair and a Mustang, but there's a little shared history behind these two nameplates. It's fun to have owned both, especially at the same time.

In the late 1950s, when General Motors ruled the automotive roost on a worldwide scale, they had immensely deep pockets and some innovative engineering groups. Ed Cole, who'd been the "father" of the Chevy small-block V8 in the mid-50s, was put in charge of a project to build a hi-tech small car, starting with a clean slate. In that era, they were the only auto company on earth with both the financial and technical means to do something of this scope. What evolved was a small but space-efficient car with a flat, six-cylinder, air-cooled engine, the Corvair. It shared nothing with other Chevrolet or GM models. It required an immense investment in tooling and production facilities because it was unique.

Originally aimed at the lower end of the market, the Corvair took off in a new direction with the introduction of the Monza Coupe, which put a lot of Americans into a sporty two-door with bucket seats and "four on the floor." This, coupled with their introduction of the first production turbocharger in 1962, pushed the Corvair into a new role as a performance-oriented vehicle. It was a hot seller, and left the rest of the industry flat-footed. But not for long.

Chevrolet undertook a major restyling of the vehicle for the 1965 model year, making it bigger, and to many eyes (including mine), more attractive. The truck and van models were dropped. The turbo was increased from 150 to 180 horsepower, and the car was intended to appeal to a bigger mainstream market as well as folks who were more inclined toward the kind of overall performance and handling then associated with European cars. Of course, in those days, the design cycle for a new model typically took two to three years. So work on this new model had begun probably sometime in 1962.

As they might say in Rome, "a funny thing happened on the way to the forum." The Corvair had ignited a fire under the ... um ... butts of some other very significant competitors, including some other GM divisions. One major competitor, whose pockets weren't quite as deep as GM's, went to the parts bin and designed a new model from existing pieces. The undercarriage, suspension, engine, transmission, and all the running gear was comprised of parts they already had in the production stream. Their biggest investment was a new and attractive body. It was introduced on April 17, 1964, as the Mustang. It was a clutch home run for Ford Motor Company; their North American operations were tremendously talented at losing money under Henry Ford II. The European operations and the Mustang were among their profit centers for many years.

By the time Chevrolet rolled out the redesigned 1965 Corvair in the fall of 1964, too many of its potential buyers were on waiting lists for Mustangs at Ford dealerships. The Mustang's six-month head start in showrooms was insurmountable.

The Corvair's success had sown the seeds of its demise. Almost immediately, Chevrolet reassigned the Corvair design team to a new project, a Mustang-killer, which eventually was introduced as the first Camaro several years later. Like the Mustang, it was based on an existing bunch of hardware, wrapped in a new body. Take a close look at any late-model Corvair and early-model Camaro. The similarity in appearance, especially in the beltline and fender contours, is unmistakable. I believe the name of the chief designer on both cars was Henry Haga. But I digress ...

When the second-generation Corvair arrived on the scene, it was already a lame duck in GM's scheme of things. The horsepower war

was on, and muscle cars were beginning to emerge from every direction. Remember the '64 GTO? Due to their use of mainstream production running gear, cars like these, followed by the Mustang and Camaro, could be easily transformed into fire-breathers by bolting in bigger engines and other bits and pieces already in production.

The Corvair was limited in this respect by its unique engine built specifically for that car. To significantly upgrade its power would have meant not only developing a totally new powerplant, but probably making significant changes to the structure, suspension, brakes, and transmissions to cope with the additional power. With the Mustang and Camaro, as well as with the mid-sized muscle cars, these changes could be accomplished without new tooling. The unique Corvair couldn't be put on steroids without an immense investment. Even the low-volume Corvette shared high-production engines and transmissions with the rest of the Chevrolet line.

Oh, yeah ... Nader. Hmmmm. Lots of folks think he "did in" the Corvair. Sorry to disappoint. His book didn't appear until after the decision had been made to do no further work on Corvair development and let it fade away. By the way, his book "Unsafe at Any Speed" was NOT about the Corvair. It was about the entire auto industry, relating to the fact that cars could incorporate more safety features. He was neither the first nor the only voice for that point of view during that era.

However, Nader's first chapter featured the Corvair, and the typical reader has a one-chapter attention span. In that chapter he laid out his arguments against the Corvair, and the centerpiece of his logic was tied to the "swing-axle" rear suspension, which was a common design at the time the Corvair was introduced; in fact it was considered "state of the art." Such companies as Porsche and VW used swing axles in those years, and I believe Mercedes used that arrangement on its higher-end performance vehicles. The "tuck-under" effect Nader described is an illusion.

A major refinement, "trailing-arm" suspension, was incorporated on the 1963 Corvette, and a virtually identical suspension was a feature of the 1965 Corvair. This kind of rear suspension became commonplace in the sixties, and is still in widespread use today throughout the industry, especially in serious performance vehicles.

In 1973, after a lengthy investigation, the NHTSA issued a report that confirmed what auto-savvy people had known all along. There was no inherent design flaw in the Corvair's suspension. That study is entitled "Evaluation of the 1960-1963 Corvair Handling and Stability", U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration, July 1972, Report Number DOT HS-820198. It covered the years mentioned in the title, those included in Nader's argument. The 1964 model was similar. As mentioned above, the 1965-69 models had fully-independent rear suspension, which doesn't have the "flaw" Nader imagined. Get the report on microfiche from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) under catalog number PB-211015.

Why did Nader get taken seriously? First, he was David against Goliath. Second, most people don't know beans about automotive engineering, vehicle dynamics, performance or safety. He was as knowledgeable about automobiles as the average engineer is about the law. For all the lawyer jokes people make, some of 'em still take this guy seriously. You've gotta question his research methods, his logic, and his integrity (after 35 years, he still hasn't 'fessed up that he made a mistake on the topic that launched his improbable career).

But the key element is that the paranoid goofballs who comprised GM management then (and their history of management geniuses hasn't improved much in the last 35 years or so) decided to launch an investigation of Nader to "dig up dirt" to discredit him. When

TCA 2006 Events at a Glance

SEPT

27 WED **Regular Monthly Meeting** Micha's North, 1220 East Prince Road, 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.

OCT

8 SUN **Corvairs and Corvettes Cruise to the Desert Diamond** Golden Pin Lanes at 5:15pm. Embark to Desert Diamond 5:30pm. Cocktails 6pm, Dinner at 6:30pm. Reservation deadline Sept.25. Info/Reserv call Dick at 975-3526 or e-mail dickienyaz@aol.com

11 WED **TCA Board Mtg.** Chuys Baja Broiler, 3100 E. Speedway at Country Club, 6:30pm

25 WED **Regular Monthly Meeting** Micha's North, 1220 East Prince Road, 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.

27-29 **Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet • Palm Springs CA** San Diego Corvair Club "The American Dream" at Sunrise Park in Palm Springs. New hotel: Quality Inn, 760/323-2775. Registration forms and raffle tickets for 1964 turbo Spyder convertible daily driver available at www.SDCorvair.com, 760/489-9321, or San Diego Corvair Club, P.O. Box 447, Poway CA 92074-0447.

28-29 **29th Annual CHVA Old Cars & Parts Swap Meet & Show** at PCC West Campus - 7am-5pm - Car Show Sunday only, 10am-3pm - Entry fee: \$10 with 3 cans of food for the Community Food Bank - 1986 & older vehicles only - Tucson - Info: Lou 520-293-3178 or Juanita 520-887-7767

CAR SHOWS

Little Anthony's Show Dates: 9/23, 10/7, 10/28, 11/11.
Run to the Pines, Flagstaff, AZ - Sept. 22-24 **SOLD OUT**
Cars in the Park, Sierra Vista, AZ, Oct. 14, 2006
www.carmuts.com Info: Leo Klein - 520-378-3096.
29th Annual CHVA Old Cars & Parts Swap Meet & Show
October 28, 29 PCC West Campus: Lou 520-293-3178.

that became known, it looked like they had something to hide, and gave him an aura of being some kind of white knight. They should have clobbered him with facts ... the same ones turned up eventually by the NHTSA!

So ... Ralph didn't "kill" the Corvair. In fact, there's a solid argument that the management of General Motors, knowing that Nader's central claims against the engineering of the Corvair were erroneous, kept the Corvair alive until 1969 to avoid the appearance of buckling under to a misinformed lawyer who didn't even drive a car. At least they got that right. Had it not been for Nader, 1967 would likely have been the last year of production for the Corvair. As it was, they wound up making more than ten million vehicles over ten years of production (1960-69), and created a new and huge market segment for a kind of performance and panache that exists to this day.

The Corvair's design philosophy has lived on. The Porsche 911 with its fully independent rear suspension, powered by an air-cooled rear-mounted flat six, appeared in 1966. It has represented that design philosophy quite admirably for many years in the Corvair's absence. Among the production classes in SCCA road racing, no design has been more successful in competition over the years. That's the supreme test of handling and stability, and provides ample evidence of a good fundamental design.

That's the Corvair story. Born in 1960, incorporated "sportiness" and real performance early in its life, created a dynamic new market segment in the U.S., and caused Ford to react by creating the Mustang, which in turn killed the Corvair and gave birth to its younger sibling, the Camaro. These cars had more typical American mechanicals for their day, and they still carry on that tradition ... V8, front-engine, rear-drive. There are lots of other kinds of performance cars today, many varieties of driveline layouts and suspension designs. But it can be argued that nothing since has been as totally revolutionary, as far removed from conventional automobiles in every respect as the Corvair was in its day. The Corvair was limited in this respect by its unique engine built specifically for that car. To significantly upgrade its power would have meant not only developing a totally new powerplant, but probably making significant changes to the structure, suspension, brakes, and transmissions to cope with the additional power. With the Mustang and Camaro, as well as with the mid-sized muscle cars, these changes could be accomplished without new tooling. The unique Corvair couldn't be put on steroids without an immense investment. Even the low-volume Corvette shared high-production engines and transmissions with the rest of the Chevrolet line.



Congratulations!

TCA member John Young attended the 2006 CORSA International Convention in Buffalo, NY with his 1961 700 coupe. His beautiful car scored 94.63 points in the Concours d'Elegance, with only one other modified EM scoring higher. He also managed to squeeze 31.69 mpg out of his car for 5th place in the automatic transmission category of the Economy Run. Way to go John and Amy!

Games Cars Food and Fun at Desert Diamond Casino October 8th

Mark your calendar on Sunday October 8th for a night of fun featuring members from Tucson's three Corvette clubs and members from Tucson's Corvair Association. The plan is to meet at the Golden Pin Lanes bowling alley on Miracle Mile (just west of Oracle) at 5:15pm. We will leave at 5:30pm sharp and should arrive at the casino about 6pm.

We will have private parking just outside our banquet room.

Social time is from 6-6:30pm with dinner served at 6:30pm.

Reservations must be received no later than September 25, 2006. No refunds after September 25th.

Please send your check with your menu selection to:

Dick Holloway
39939 South Old Arena Drive
Tucson, AZ 85739-5915

Questions? Call Dick at 975-3526 or e-mail dickienyaz@aol.com

The Menu Selections

Entrees: Lemon Garlic & Rosemary Herb
Roasted Chicken w/Roasted Tomato Beurre
Blancs Sauce ... \$22.00
Grilled Top Sirloin, Teriyaki Sauce ... \$24.50
Vegetarian - Pasta ... \$22.00

All dinners include a garden salad, assorted dinner rolls & butter, medley of fresh seasoned vegetables, Chefs selection of potato, rice or pasta and for dessert a chocolate brownie sundae.

All prices include the tip. No sales tax is charged because of being on an Indian reservation.

A wine bar will be in the banquet room, no host and other beverages may be purchased at the main bar.



The Desert Diamond Casino is located on I-19 & Pima Mine Road, just minutes South of Tucson. Open 7 days a week, Desert Diamond Casino is owned and operated by the Tohono O'odham Nation and provides three exciting entertainment venues in Southern Arizona. It is open Monday through Friday from 9am to 4am and open 24 hours on Saturday and Sunday.

The Casino offers a complete entertainment destination offering 500 slot machines, live blackjack and keno. The critically acclaimed Agave Restaurant serves exquisite gourmet for every palette. Buffet your style? The casino offers an expansive lunch and dinner buffet 7 days a week starting at less than \$7! The casino also offers food on the go in its fast and fresh Diamond Grill.

Southern Arizona's premier entertainment destination is the host of top national acts performing live in the 2,400-seat Diamond Center, the Sports Bar offers live local entertainment 7 days a week, and the facility provides versatile meeting and banquet space for business, organization, and social events

Hit the Jackpot!



Speaking of entertainment, also on October 8th at the Casino, appearing live on stage: REO Speedwagon. Those of us who remember the musical version of REO that was popular in the 1970s will see mostly original members still in the band. No way man!

Those who remember the automotive version of the REO Speedwagon know the REO Motor Car Company was a Lansing, Michigan based company that produced automobiles and trucks from 1905 to 1975.

At one point the company also manufactured buses on its truck platforms.

REO was founded by Ransom E. Olds in August 1904 (the name of the founder also lived on in the Oldsmobile). Olds held 52 percent of the stock and the titles of president and general manager. To ensure a reliable supply of parts, he organized a number of subsidiary firms like the National Oil Company, the Michigan Screw Company, and the Atlas Drop Forge Company. The company's name was alternately spelled in all capitals as REO or with only an initial capital as Reo, and the company's own literature was inconsistent in this regard, with early advertising using all capitals and later advertising using the "Reo" capitalization.



Bruce



1917 REO Speedwagon

SDCC PRESENTS:
THE
AMERICAN
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WINNER NEED NOT BE PRESENT

Spares and Vairs



FOR SALE: 1960 Corvair 4-dr parts car. O'Reilly Chevrolet/Tucson car. Rough but complete. Call Allen 883-4337 or Chris at 670-9676.

FOR SALE: 1963 Conv. Same Tucson owner last 25 years. Rebuilt everything, including recent tires, brakes, clutch, elec. fuel pump, rear window. Ask Bill Maynard about this car. Needs radio and minor cosmetics. \$3900. 326-2701 Dave Martin.

FOR SALE: LM shrouds - powder coated black, complete upper and lower, was \$400, now \$350, Al Crispin: 722-9445.

WANTED: LM left & right rear panel trim pieces. Call John Frigolli: 312-3574.



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Email: clarks@corvair.com



**Monthly Newsletter September 2006 Vol. 31 No. 4
Corvair Society of America Chapter 857**

Regular Monthly Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month. November meeting is on the third Wednesday. The December meeting is an annual Holiday Party.



Meeting Place: Micha's North, 1220 East Prince Road, (formerly Mt View Restr.) Parking Lot Bull Session: 6pm. Optional dinner at 6:20, meeting starts at 7pm.

Upcoming Events:

October 8, Sunday
Deadline to reserve: Monday, Sept 25, see details inside.



Corvairs and Corvettes Cruise to the Desert Diamond
Meet at 5:15pm at the bowling alley on Miracle Mile to depart at 5:30pm. Social time 6pm. Dinner at 6:30pm.



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September 2006

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First Class Mail

