

## The Right Tool for the Right Job

**Drill Press** A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, spattering it against that freshly stained heirloom piece you were drying.

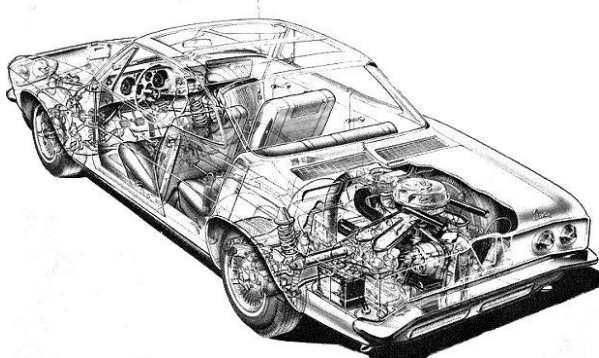
**Wire Wheel** Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard guitar calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, "YEOW!"

**Electric Hand Drill** Normally used for spinning pop rivets in their holes until you die of old age.

**Circular Saw** A portable cutting tool used to make studs too short.

**Pliers** Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters. The most often tool used by all women.

**Belt Sander** An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch up jobs into major refinishing jobs .



**Straight Screwdriver** A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screw into non-removable screws.

**Air Compressor** A machine that takes energy produced in a coal-burning power plant 500 miles away and transforms it into compressed air that travels by hose to a Chicago Pneumatic impact wrench that grips rusty bolts which were last over tightened 30 years ago by someone at Ford, can instantly round off their heads. Also used to quickly snap off lug nuts.

**Pry Bar** A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50 cent part.

**Hose Cutter** A tool used to make hoses too short.

**Hammer** Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent to the object we are trying to hit. Women primarily use it to make gaping holes in walls when hanging pictures.

**Dammit Tool** Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling DAMMIT at the top of your lungs. It is also most often the next tool that you will need.

from *Wayne Silzel*

# Tucson Corvair Association



Established 1975

The *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) as Chapter 357.

Membership dues are \$15 per year for individuals and \$18 for families. Initial dues are \$19 for individuals and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to the 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.

CORSA membership dues are \$38 per year (\$76 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the *CORSA Communique*, a monthly publication. CORSA memberships is not required for membership in the Tucson Corvair Association, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

Classified ads are free to members and \$3 per 4-line ad for non-members. Deadline for materials submitted for publication is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

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# TCA 2008 Events at a Glance

## NOV

5 WED

**TCA Board Meeting**, Franklin Museum, 3420 N Vine, Tucson, AZ. 6:30 pm. All comers welcome.

8/9 SA/SU

Mid Month Tech Session, Last Chance Garage, 3605 N Vine, Tucson, AZ. 9am to 5pm, both days.

19 WED

**TCA General Membership Meeting** Mimi's Café, 120 S Wilmot, Tucson, AZ. Parking lot bull session, 6:00pm. Optional dinner at 6:20pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm.

## DEC

3 WED

**TCA Board Meeting**, Franklin Museum, 3420 N Vine, Tucson, AZ. 6:30 pm. All comers welcome.

16 TUE

**TCA Annual Christmas Party**, Cody's Beef & Beans, 2708 E Ft Lowell, Tucson, AZ. 6:30pm.

## JAN

7 WED

**TCA Board Meeting**, Franklin Museum, 3420 N Vine, Tucson, AZ. 6:30 pm. All comers welcome.

24 WED

**TCA General Membership Meeting** Parking lot bull session, 6:00pm. Optional dinner at 6:20pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Location to be determined

# The 50 Worst Cars of All Time

## 1961 Corvair

*From the Time Magazine website we can find a list of the 50 worst cars of all time. The Corvair made the list in the 1960 to 1974 category in the company of just notable automobiles as the Amphicar, the Pinto and the Gremlin. The Vega, interestingly enough, did not make the list. This blurb is here for your entertainment only in hopes that you don't get too ill at the comments from Time Magazine. Ed.*

Rear-engine cars are fun to drive and even more fun to crash. While rear-engine packaging offers enormous advantages, putting the vehicle's heaviest component behind the rear axle gives cars a distinct tendency to spin out, sort of like an arrow weighted at the end. During World War II, Nazi officers in occupied Czechoslovakia were banned from driving the speedy rear-engined Tattras because so many had been killed behind the wheel. Chevrolet execs knew the Corvair — a lithe and lovely car with an air-cooled, flat-six in the back, a la the VW Beetle — was a handful, but they declined to spend the few dollars per car to make the swing-axle rear suspension more manageable. Ohhh, they came to regret that. Ralph Nader put the smackdown on GM in his book *Unsafe at Any Speed*, also noting that the Corvair's single-piece steering column could impale the driver in a front collision. Ouch! Meanwhile, the Corvair had other problems. It leaked oil like a derelict tanker. Its heating system tended to pump noxious fumes into the cabin. It was offered for a while with a gasoline-burner heater located in the front "trunk," a common but dangerously dumb accessory at the time. Even so, my family had a Corvair, white with red interior, and we loved it.

## Vern Griffith Passes

Former member of the Tucson Corvair Association, Vern Griffith passed away on October 23, 2008 of complications due to asthma. Vern and Ruth moved to Kentucky several years ago. Vern was 71. Ruth is currently in Alabama.

We are grateful to have known Vern for the years he was a member of TCA and wish Ruth the very best as she adjusts to life without her companion.



## World's Largest Corvair

The Ultra Van crowns itself as the world's largest production Corvair by way of an aluminum and fiberglass monocoque shell wrapped around a Corvair transaxle. As the Ultra Van itself was conceived by aircraft designer David Peterson, the biggest Corvair is more like an aluminum airplane wing in the round than a conventional body-on-frame RV. Only about 370 Ultra Vans were ever produced. 250 of them still roam the roads. The Ultra Van is affectionately known among club members as the whale. This nickname sprang from truckers overheard on a CB radio referring to a caravan of the World's Largest Corvairs as funny little white whales on wheels. Ultra Van, ahoy! Fudgie the whale is still hanging out at your participating Carvel ice cream store. — Mike Bumbeck



# Astro-1 Design Study

*Text and pictures borrowed from corvaircorsa.com. The full article can be seen there.*

While the Astro-1 was never intended for production, the design study served as a test bed for new and innovative approaches. It was the hit of the show at the New York International Auto Show in 1967, and it remains a striking example of advanced automotive art.

Astro-1 exists today and is stored by General Motors and featured at prestigious car shows such as the *Eyes On Design* show held in Warren, Michigan every summer.



The Astro-1 is the creation of Larry Shinoda who is remembered for his incredible talent and immense contribution to Corvette and Corvair design. He remained active in design until shortly before his death due to heart and kidney failure on November 13, 1997, at the age of 65.

The rear portion of the body, fenders and canopy pivoted from a point behind the rear wheels and was raised and lowered electrically using a jackscrew to allow cockpit entry and egress. The seats rose with the canopy, and lowered to a semi-reclining position as the canopy was closed. A mechanical release mechanism was provided for emergency exit.

The Astro-1 was equipped with this experimental Corvair engine, with a bore and stroke of 3.56 and 2.94 inches, displacing 176 cubic inches. It was air-cooled, but unlike the production engine, used three tandem centrifugal blowers on a common shaft above the engine to blow cooling air over the cylinder blocks. Designed as a high output unit, the engine produced 240 horsepower at 7200 RPM. Specific power was 1.4 horsepower per cubic inch!



Each side of the engine was fed air and fuel by using a Weber style 3-throat carburetor on a special light alloy head with a single overhead camshaft. The cylinder heads had nearly hemispherical combustion chambers and inclined valves. Camshafts were driven by Gilmer-style belts from the crankshaft.

According to SCCA racer, Seth Emerson, the engine's carburetors were not standard Weber. He quotes good sources who claim they were GM castings, completed with Weber parts. The modification of the carbs was necessary because of bore-to-bore differences. The throats on the Astro I carbs were much wider apart than the Weber 40IDA 3-barrels. The Corvair cylinders (hence the intake valves) were further part.



# Tucson Classics Car Show



The Tucson Classics Car Show held on October 18, 2008 had over 500 cars on display included a nice contingent of Corvairs. The photo on the top right shows a 1912 RHC and a 1908 Staver (on the right). The Staver, owned by Joe Whitney, won Best of Show in the pre-1950 category plus a check for \$1,000. *Photos by Chris Cunningham*



## BEN'S '63 SPYDER

This is the state of progress on Ben Maudlin's 1963 Spyder Convertible as of November 1.

Many of you will remember his ads in the Corvairation and the excellent salvage yard he used to own on East Illinois St.

This is his third Spyder convertible totally restored in 25 years and the second one in the last 24 months!

Number 2 was a surprise gift to his daughter who was in love with Number 1, which was sold. The amount of effort and care to detail will be clearly evident when you are able to see it in person this spring when Ben puts it on the street. More pictures can be seen on the website: [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org).





Monthly Newsletter • November 2008 • Vol. 33, No. 4  
Corvair Society of America Chapter 857



**Regular Monthly Meetings** are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month. The November meeting is held on the third Wednesday. The December meeting is our annual Christmas Party.

**Meeting Place for December:**

Meeting is the Annual TCA Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 16 at Cody's Beef and Beans, 2708 E Ft Lowell, Tucson. Contact any TCA Board Member for details.

## Try the New TCA Forum

Ask tech questions, get to know other club members, chat, or share your knowledge with others. Go to [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org) and click on TCA Forum.

Join in the fun!!!



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November 2008

Volume 33, Number 5

