

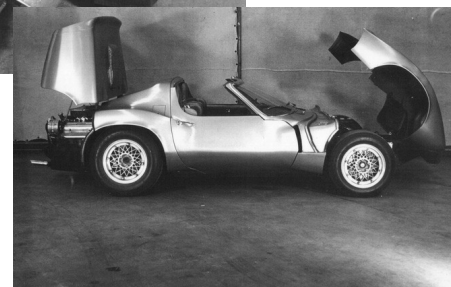
## EARLY CORVETTE PROTOTYPE TAKES LESSON FROM THE CORVAIR

Actually, the XP-819 was the result of a clash between Zora Arkus-Duntov and engineer Frank Winchell, who'd been involved with the Corvair project. Winchell contended that you could make a balanced, rear-engine, V-8 powered sports car by using an aluminum engine and larger tires on the rear to compensate for the rear weight bias. Duntov adamantly disagreed. A loose design was drawn that received some very unflattering comments from Duntov and Dave McLellan. Winchell asked designer Larry Shinoda if he could make something beautiful with the layout, to which Shinoda told him that a tape drawing could be shown after lunch. Shinoda and designer John Schinella sketched out the basic shape shown here. Duntov asked Shinoda, "Where did you cheat?" It didn't look "too bad", so a working prototype was ordered. Shinoda supervised the styling and Larry Nies' team of fabricators built the car. In only two months the XP-819 was on the test track.

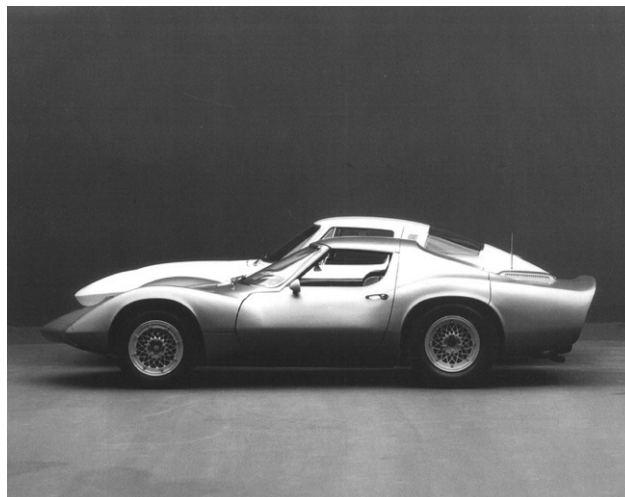
It turned out that Winchell's theory about rear-engine, V-8 cars didn't work out very well. However, Shinoda's design was well received. They were obviously into the "shark thing" and picked up styling points from the Chaparral cars. It even had wheels from a Chaparral.

This car was definitely a Corvette, even though the back end was big. Unfortunately, with all that weight behind the rear axle, it was only a matter of time before it crashed during a high-speed lane change test. Paul vanValkenberg crashed it because he put the same (standard) size Corvette rim on the car front and rear and then wet down the track and went out and lost it. He bounced it off the wall a couple of times and pretty well wrecked it. It was then sent off to Smokey Yunick, where it was later found. The chassis was cut in half and usable parts were removed. What was left was stored in an unused paint booth as just "old junk." Years later, a Corvette collector was buying some parts from Yunick and offered to buy the junked XP-819. So the pile of car scrap was rebuilt and finished as a streetable car, like a kit car. A cast-iron V-8 was used in place of the original all-aluminum engine. We're talking serious rear weight bias here. It's quick and now does awesome wheelies!

XP-819 now sits in the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green (KY). It is "on loan" from Ed McCabe, who runs his own advertising agency in New York. Ed bought the car in 1990 at an estate auction being run by Sothebys in Palm Beach.



**1964  
XP-819**



## 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 10th of the month.

Business Mailing Address: 4842 W Paseo de las Colinas, Tucson, Arizona 85745. Website address: [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org). Email address: [tucsoncorvairs@yahoo.com](mailto:tucsoncorvairs@yahoo.com)

**PRESIDENT**  
Lynn Marrs  
14020 N Geko Canyon Trail  
Tucson, AZ 85742  
520-297-8969  
[lareservemanager@yahoo.com](mailto:lareservemanager@yahoo.com)

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Bill Maynard  
3605 N Vine  
Tucson, AZ 85719  
520-325-8497  
[billmaynard@webtv.com](mailto:billmaynard@webtv.com)

**RECODING SECRETARY**  
Ryan Green  
4233 East Lester  
Tucson, AZ 58712  
520-331-7949  
[rgreen@axiaappraisers.com](mailto:rgreen@axiaappraisers.com)

**TREASURER**  
Barry Cunningham  
362 Bull Run Drive  
520-733-7387  
Tucson, AZ 85748  
[cunningvairbair@juno.com](mailto:cunningvairbair@juno.com)

**MEMBER AT LARGE**  
Dave Lynch  
1228 N Roberts Way  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
325-0750  
[lynchmob@theriver.com](mailto:lynchmob@theriver.com)

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**  
Barry Cunningham

**CORVAIRSATION EDITOR/  
WEBMASTER**  
Van Pershing  
4842 W Paseo de las Colinas  
Tucson, AZ 85745  
520-743-9185  
[vpersh@yahoo.com](mailto:vpersh@yahoo.com)

**ASSITANT EDITOR**  
Chris Cunningham  
1026 S. 7th Avenue  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
520-670-9676  
[arizaim@hotmail.com](mailto:arizaim@hotmail.com)

**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**  
Bill L  
P.O. Box 85572  
Tucson, AZ 85754  
520-205-1777

**LIBRARIAN**  
Bill Maynard

**MECHANDISE CHAIRMAN**  
Don Robinson  
5044 Shaimar Way  
Tucson, AZ 85704  
520-297-1356  
[fourcorvairs@hotmail.com](mailto:fourcorvairs@hotmail.com)

# TCA 2009 Events at a Glance

- Wed, Nov 18** Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Golden Corral, 1st Ave and Wetmore.
- Fri, Dec 2** Meeting of the Board of Directors. 7:00pm at Bill Maynard's Last Chance Garage. Everyone welcome!
- Fri, Dec 11** Annual TCA Christmas Party; Cody's Beef 'n Beans, 2708 E Ft Lowell, 6:30pm. Bring some cans for the food bank and a gift to exchange.
- Wed, Jan 6** Meeting of the Board of Directors. 7:00pm at Bill Maynard's Last Chance Garage. Everyone welcome!
- Sat, Jan 23** Tubac Car Show. We'll meet and caravan to the show together. More details later.
- Wed, Jan 27** Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Golden Corral, 1st Ave and Wetmore.
- February** Renaissance Festival, Florence Junction, Arizona. More details to come.



# October Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the TCA Regular Meeting held October 28, 2009 at 715 E Wetmore, Tucson, Arizona.

Due to technical difficulties, the October meeting minutes will be distributed by email when they become available.

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## SAND 'VAIR

Here are a few pictures of a nice sand rail recently offered for sale on Craigslist. No other details were given.



## You Still Gotta Love Ralph

Over the years a lot has been written and spoken and many opinion expressed about the impact of Ralph Nader and his book, *Unsafe At Any Speed*, on the Corvair automobile. Roger, whose website, California Connection contains a very interesting article on the subject, The Nader Affair, ([http://www.calconnect.com/cars/nader\\_affair/nader\\_affair.htm](http://www.calconnect.com/cars/nader_affair/nader_affair.htm)), talks a little bit about the impact that good old Ralphy has had on us as Corvair owners. The conclusion of his article sums up the way a lot of feel about our little cars:

“Today, although over forty years have passed since Ralph Nader set his sights on the Corvair and drew blood, the Corvair and Nader are still linked. Despite the thorough exoneration of the Corvair by the NHTSA evaluation, Nader’s original attacks are still remembered by the general public; the exoneration is little noticed. That’s life.

A lot of time has passed since 1965, and time does cure most ills. The national Corvair society, CORSA, invited Ralph to speak at their annual convention in 1991 and he accepted. He even had his picture taken with a Corvair.

Today, I believe that the Nader Affair actually adds to the fun of owning Corvairs. Sure a Mustang owner can talk about cubic inches but Corvair collectors have a wealth of conversation material.

We can talk about the Corvair’s truly unique engineering. We can describe the suspension evolution that led to one of the best handling American cars ever produced. We can mention that General Motors led the industry with the first production use of automobile turbochargers in the Corvair and Oldsmobile. We can talk about how Yenko Stinger Corvairs triumphed on race courses. Best of all, when someone mentions Ralph Nader, we can smile and once again relive the sixties as we rise to defend our beloved car.”

Log on and read the entire article. You’ll enjoy it. vp





# Corvair Exhibit Helps Educate Museum Visitors on the Corvette

**NATIONAL CORVETTE MUSEUM** (Bowling Green, Kentucky). Katie Frassinelli, Marketing and Communications Manager, writes that October 2nd of this year marked the 50th anniversary of the unveiling of America's first mass produced rear engine, air-cooled automobile, the Corvair. In recognizing this special time in automotive history the National Corvette museum will host a 6000 square foot exhibit solely featuring the Chevrolet Corvair. Executive Director Wendell Strode said "We have found that often our non-Corvette exhibits bring in folks who may not have otherwise visited and in doing so are able to educate others on the Corvair." Corvette and Corvair history overlaps in many ways. Looking for a new and innovative design, designers used the new Corvette model as the basis for the new Corvair. Some called the car the "Corvette Corvair."

Former Chief Engineer for Chevrolet Ed Cole was key in the development and promotion of both, and former GM Design Chief Bill Mitchell designed the interior on certain years of the Corvair and was instrumental to Corvette's overall design from the late '50s through the early '90s. These common denominators were strong selling points for Corvair's temporary presence in the museum.

Besides the 1960 first year four-door sedan and two-door coupe, the Corvair fleet included a station wagon (Lakewood), pick-up truck (Rampside and Loadside), panel van (Corvan), passenger van (Greenbrier), Syder, Corsa and other specialty versions like the Fitch Sprint and the Yenko Stinger.

Visitors will see more than 80 Corvettes on display as well as some of the finest Corvairs in the country including a 1960 sedan, 1964 Spyder convertible, 1961 Lakewood, 1969 Monza convertible, 1966 Corsa coupe, 1966 Yenko Stinger, 1965 Fitch Sprint and more. The Corvair was produced from 1960 through 1969. The display, offering a chance to stroll down memory lane and learn about the rise and demise of the Corvair and its similarities to the Corvette, will be exhibited from October 2 through December 31, 2009. The National Corvette Museum is open daily from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. For more information phone 800-53-VETTE (83883) or visit the website at [www.corvettemuseum.org](http://www.corvettemuseum.org).

*-from NAAM News, National Assoc of Automobile Museums, Vol. 11 - Fall 2009*





# AN EBAY TREASURE

Chis Cunningham found this interesting car on ebay. It looks rather Corvaireque, don't you think? It is a 1964 Hillman Sunbeam Imp with the top chopped 6"



## 3rd Annual Tucson Classics Car Show



This year there were only four Corvairs attending the Tucson Classic Car Show at St. Gregory High School on October 17, 2009. Ken and Heidi Farr, Ron and Lynn Bloom, Bill Maynard and Allen Elvick were the loyal TCA members that showed up in force to represent the Corvair automobile.

## 2009 Great Western Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet.

This year's Great Western Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet held in Palm Springs, California was no disappointment. Ken and Heidi Farr, Ron and Lynn Bloom and Bill Maynard represented the Tucson Corvair Association and from all reports had a great time.

It seems that the trio of Corvairs caravanned from Tucson to Palm Springs for an enjoyable week end of fun and frivolity. The only casualty with the Farr's convertible had to limp into Palm Springs only to find the problem to be a couple of loose spark plug wires. A couple of sheet metal screws, some duct tape and few zip ties and they we back in business!!

We don't have any pictures to show but you can go to the links on the TCA website ([www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org)) and see a plethora of fine pictures.

## Gordon Cauble Update

Earlier this month Gordon Cauble was accompanied by his son, Tom, on a flight to Virginia Beach, Virginia where Gordon will stay with his family there. Gordon's deteriorating health has made it impossible for him to be a home by himself. His wife Suzanne was moved to an assisted living facility here in Tucson, choosing to remain in Tucson.

Gordon has been one of the stalwarts in the club since its inception. He supplied most of with the Corvair parts we needed for many years and has supported the club far beyond what could be considered reasonable.

We wish Gordon all the best in his new home and hope that is able to remain comfortable for the foreseeable future.





**Monthly Newsletter - November 2009 - Vol. 34, No. 5  
Corvair Society of America Chapter 857**



**Regular Monthly Meetings** are held on the Fourth Wednesday of every month with a bull session starting at 6:30pm with the meeting starting at 7:00pm.

The November meeting is held on the third Wednesday. The December meeting is our annual Christmas party with the time and place to be announced.

**Monthly Meeting Place:**

Golden Corral, 1st Avenue and Wetmore, Tucson, Arizona.



Tucson Corvair Association  
4842 W Paseo de las Colinas  
Tucson, AZ 85745

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1962 Chevrolet XP-785 Super Spyder