

The Corvair Station Wagon

Some think the Corvair station wagon sums up the ambition *and* folly of the Chevrolet Corvair endeavor, and, according to some, the Corvair wagon was the low point. The wagon was called Lakewood in its 1961 debut and just Station Wagon in 1962, its second and last year. A very short run thanks to lack of sales.

A couple of internal things at Chevrolet helped the station wagon disappear from the Corvair line. The Chevy II was introduced to more directly compete with Falcon and Valiant. A Chevy II station wagon came along in the 1962, so now Chevrolet had two compact wagons to compete in the market place. And then there was the Corvair convertible. It was introduced in the mid-1962 and since the wagon was on the chopping block, this gave management sufficient production space to produce the convertible. So, the 1962 Corvair station wagon was totally gone by mid-1962.

The Corvair was not an effective competitor to Ford's very conventional Falcon and Chrysler's Valiant from the very beginning. By December of 1959, the decision to quickly develop the Chevy II was made, which really sealed the Corvair's fate as an outsider whose only real future would be the sporty Monza.

About 50,000 Falcon wagon were sold in the 1960 model year, and almost 100,000 in 1961. Even with its two cargo areas, the rear area plus a spacious trunk up front, Corvair only managed to sell 25,000 Lakewoods in 1961 and a mere 6,000 in 1962.

The front trunk was handy, to be sure, but with only 10 cubic feet of space, it wasn't any too big. The rear cargo area offered 58 cubic feet, for a combined total of 68. The Falcon had 76 cubic feet in the rear alone, and a longer and lower load floor.

If the Lakewood was to have any future, it would be as a sport wagon. In



Bill Maynard's 1961 Lakewood is about the only presentable example of the Corvair station wagon in the Club at the moment. This photo was taken at the 2008 CORSA National Convention.

The '61 Lakewood shown below belonged to Van Pershing and was driven by his oldest daughter in her Tucson High School days in the 1980s. It was affectionately known as the "Bananamobile" because of its bright yellow paint job.



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) for members of CORSA. Add \$3 per person for non-CORSA members. Make checks payable to the Tucson Corvair Association.

Change of Address: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chairperson.

CORSA membership dues are \$45 per year (\$90 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the CORSA Communique, a bi-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.

Business Mailing Address: 4842 W Paseo de las Colinas, Tucson, Arizona 85745. Website address: www.corvairs.org. Email address: tucsoncorvairs@yahoo.com

TCA 2013 Events at a Glance

Wed, Feb 27

Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Golden Corral, 6865 N Thornydale Road (just south of Ina).

Sat, Apr 27

28th Annual Chevy Showdown. 9:00am to 4:00pm, Home Depot Plaza, 4302 N. Oracle Road (Oracle and Limberlost).

The new Club admistration will take office on March 1st. The mid-month activities will be planned soon thereafter. Stay tuned for the exciting TCA events that will be coming your way in 2013!

Jul 16 - 20

CORSA National Convention, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

Lynn Marrs
14020 N Gecko Canyon Trail
Tucson, AZ 85755
520-297-8969
larservemanager@yahoo.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Charlie Evans
4081 W Massingale
Tucson, AZ 85741
520-572-3955
evanscorvair18@yahoo.com

RECORDING SECRETARY

Lynn Bloom
802 S Catalina Ave
Tucson, AZ 857
520-891-7542
lynnb316@msn.com

TREASURER

Allen Elvick
4210 S Preston
Tucson, AZ 85735
520-883-4437
amelvick@pcpeople.com

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Fred Nuñez
210 N Cuesta Ave
Tucson, AZ 85745
520-624-1098
abnunezjr71@gmail.com

Don Green
383 N Wilmot Road, #156B
Tucson, AZ
724-689-7413
prof6375@calu.edu

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Ron Bloom
802 S Catalina Ave
Tucson, AZ 857
520-891-7542
bloomaz@msn.com

EDITOR/WEBMASTER

Van Pershing
4842 W Paseo de las Colinas
Tucson, AZ 85745
520-743-9185
vpersh@yahoo.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Chris Cunningham
1026 S. 7th Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-670-9676
arizaim@hotmail.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENTS

Ron Bloom

Ken Farr
7267 E Badger Canyon Drive
Tucson, AZ 85756
520-663-5592
kfarr2004@msn.com

LIBRARIAN

Bill Maynard
3605 N Vine
Tucson, AZ 85719
520-325-8497
billaynard@webtv.com

MECHANDISE CHAIRMAN

Don Robinson
5044 Shaimar Way
Tucson, AZ 85704
520-297-1356
fourcorvairs@hotmail.com

Dues are Due

It's that time of the year again. Your annual dues for membership in the Tucson Corvair Association are due in January.

Dues for an individual are \$15 per year or for family membership \$18 per year.

Dues may be paid by mailing a check made payable to the Tucson Corvair Association (TCA) and mailed to Allen Elvick, 4210 S Preston, Tucson, AZ 85735 or paying at the regular club meeting.

2013 Officer Slate

Election of officers will take place at the February meeting on February 27. A slate of officers has been made by the nominating committee for the 2013 year.

The officers on this year's slate are:

President: Mike Lake
Vice President: Lynn Bloom
Recording Secretary: Lynn Marrs
Treasurer: Allen Elvick
Board Member-at-Large: Fred Nuñez

Please join us at the next meeting and cast your vote of support for the 2013 Tucson Corvair Association officers.



Steve McQueen and Faye Dunaway in the 1968 version of "The Thomas Crown Affair". Corvair power, of course!

January Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the monthly meeting held January 23, 2013 at the Golden Corral Restaurant, 6865 N. Thornydale, Tucson, Arizona.

The meeting was called to order by President Lynn Marrs at 7:00pm. In attendance were Ron Bloom, Charlie Evans, Lynn Bloom, Lynn Marrs, Amy Young, Bill Maynard, John Young, Don Robinson, Mike Lake, Van Pershing, Fred Nuñez, and Allen Elvick.

Lynn went over the minutes from the Christmas party and called an approval. A motion was made by Don Robinson and seconded by Mike Lake. The motion carried.

Lynn talked about the outing to Hot Rods Restaurant. She and a few others went and had a wonderful time. They talked about watching them work on the cars and how interesting it was.

Vice President Charlie Evans had nothing to report. He has been under the weather having had his appendix removed during emergency surgery.

Allen Elvick gave the treasury report for the month of December. The month started with a balance of \$2,310.26 and ended with \$2,030.72. See Allen for details.

Don Robinson reported on the stock in the merchandise department. He said there are T-shirts and now there are oil filters.

Lynn Marrs gave Don Robinson his award since he was unable to attend the Christmas party.

The nominating committee announced the candidates for the 2013 ballot:

- President - Mike Lake
- Vice President - Lynn Bloom
- Treasurer - Allen Elvick
- Secretary - Lynn Marrs
- Membership Chairman - Ron Bloom
- Editor/webmaster - Van Pershing
- Board Member at large - Fred Nunez

Raffle: There was no raffle this time due to a lack of prizes. For the next meeting raffles gifts will be brought by Mike Lake, Allen Elvick, Ron Bloom, Don Robinson, and John Young.

Tech talk for the evening cetered around the new oil filters purchased by the club. Van inquired if the club owned a blower bearing greasing tool. We do have one and it is currently in the possession of Jim Mills. Fred asked about a clutch noise in his Rampside and a discussion followed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm. The motion was made by Ron Bloom and second by Amy Young.

Corvaire Oil Filters Now Available!

Why pay big prices and/or shipping cost for an oil filter for your Corvaire?

The price to Club members is \$6 each and includes a new washer for the mounting bolt. They will be made available at monthly Club meetings or by contacting Club Merchandise Chairman, Don Robinson directly, or Van Pershing.

President's Message

Greetings:

This has been a really good time this year and I want to thank all of you for making it that way! To have a fun club, everyone must participate as you do.

I want to say thank you for a great year and your support of the club.

I am sure next year will even out do this year. Its been fun to see many of you involved.

Proud to be your President!

Adios!

Lynn



Classic Chevy Club of Tucson



102ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHEVROLET

Roy Hester, President
(520) 444-3410
rednomad@msa.com

Home Depot Plaza
4302 N. Oracle at Limberlost

Ana Wojchowski, VP
(707) 775-2936
anawojchowski@yahoo.com

This is what the 2013 Chevy Showdown T-shirts are going to look like. You'll notice a bright yellow '64 Corvaire convertible on this year's shirt. It look's very similar to Ken's Tweetie!! Congratulations to Ken and Heidi for making the "Big Time"!

Corvair Wagons (continued)

1961, wagons were family haulers. In fact, the 1961 Lakewood was only offered in 500 and 700 trim. It was only in 1962 that a Monza wagon was offered and available with bucket seats and nicer trim packages to give it that sporty image it so desperately needed.

In 1961 the engine options were either the 80 hp base engine or the high performance 98 hp variation. A bit more compression, a cam change, and recalibrated carburetors gave the rather modestly powered base Corvair engine a little more zing, and in 1962, the 102 hp Turbo-Air engine was offered.

So for a year and a half the Corvair station wagon made its mark on Corvair history being a very unique little car that has great appeal in today's Corvair circles.

Van Pershing



This 1962 Monza Station Wagon is in queue to be restored later this year by Van Pershing. Its new home will be in Chandler, Arizona in the garage of his oldest daughter. To avoid the "Bananamobile" reputation, she has requested that it **not** be painted bright yellow.

A few print ads from 1961.

corvair

Club Coupe and sensible 4-Door Sedans, there are two 8-passenger Lakewood Station Wagons with loads of space inside for people and cargo plus a unique trunk compartment up front (where the engine usually is) for safely stowing valuables under lock and key. There are also two new Greenbrier Sports Wagons with 173.5 cubic feet of cargo space—almost twice as much as in other wagons. Add Corvair now gives you a spunky 143-cu-in. engine which teams up with a gas-saving new valve ratio in Sedans and Coupes for greater-than-ever economy.

Corvair Lakewood 700 Station Wagon

1. Corvair Lakewood 700 Station Wagon
2. Greenbrier Sports Wagon
3. Corvair Monza 4-Door Sedan

For tight budgets and tall travelers!

You don't have to wear a tearful farewell to your budget just because you're going traveling, you know. Not if you've got a Corvair. Because Corvair goes easy on gas and breaks and tires and such, not to even mention its polished purchase price. And the happy thing is, you enjoy Corvair's special brand of driving pleasure—its light handling, its steadiest road, maximum tire traction. Make the drive as much fun as the destination, in fact. Talk it over with your Chevrolet dealer, okay? ... Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Detroit 2, Michigan.

1. Corvair Lakewood 700 Station Wagon holds up to the cubic feet of going-away gear, 10 of it under this lockable load.
2. Greenbrier Sports Wagon goes great with a sleeping trip.
3. Corvair Monza 4-Door—normal Corvair of all—offers you a chance to travel in style without spending a fortune. (Shaves, with trunk-to-parkinson, optional at extra cost.)

'61 CHEVY CORVAIR

MARCH 1961 51

LAKWOOD STATION WAGONS
ONLY WAGONS IN THE WORLD WITH PLENTY OF REAR AND FRONT CARGO SPACE

Corvair Lakewood Station Wagons offer the double convenience of plenty of rear cargo area and a concealed front luggage compartment with key lock. Both the 700 and 500 are 4-door wagons; roomy interiors seat six passengers comfortably; virtually flat floor gives extra foot room; second seat folds down. There's the strength and silence of Monostrut Body by Fisher... the smooth, soft ride of 4-wheel independent coil suspension. In all, Chevy's Corvair Lakewoods add up to the most ideal family wagons in the field.

LAKWOOD 500 4-DOOR STATION WAGON in Tuxedo Black. Lowest priced Corvair wagon offers front and rear carrying space along with proved rear-engine benefits.

LAKWOOD 700 4-DOOR STATION WAGON in Seafoam Green. Note the rear canopy shape... the perfect design for fresh outside styling.

1. Corvair Monza 4-Door Sedan
2. Lakewood 700 Station Wagon
3. Corvair Monza 4-Door Sedan

You couldn't be smarter... or look it!

We have a feeling you'd look fine in a Corvair. You'd feel fine, too, because you could think about how smart you were to save all that money (on gasoline and the accidents you don't have to pay and Corvair's shabby low price). We'll let you find out for yourself at your Chevrolet dealer's low remarkably toned Corvair's handling is in a lady's reach... Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Detroit 2, Michigan.

1. Monza—features light steering, heavy-duty reinforced braking, subcompact drive shaft and more.
2. Lakewood—the wagon comes close to it for handling, and it can hold up to 40 cubic feet of gear—without the need for a tie-down. (Tie-downs optional at extra cost.)
3. A finer sedan—practically the word for this one. (Tie-downs optional at extra cost.)

'61 CHEVY CORVAIR

MARCH 1961 51

The XP-819 Not a Corvair, but close!

The XP-819, developed in the mid-1960s, was an engineering exercise to test a rear engine concept for the Corvette. The body was designed by Larry Shinoda, designer of the Stingray.

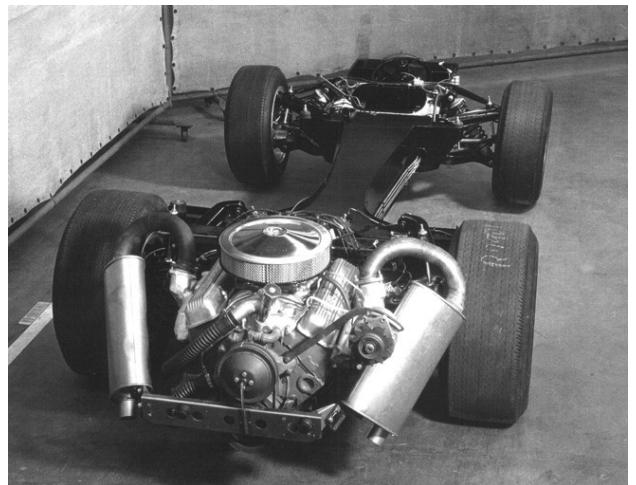
Actually, the XP-819 was the result of a clash between Zora Arkus-Duntov and engineer Frank Winchell, who'd been involved with the Corvair project. Winchell contended that you could make a balanced, rear-engine, V-8 powered sports car by using an aluminum engine and larger tires on the rear to compensate 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!

Completely restored to its original configuration, XP-819 now sits in the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green. 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.





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

MEETING PLACE:

Golden Corral, 6865 N Thornydale Road (just south of Ina), Tucson, Arizona.

Board of Director meetings are held at 5:30pm before the regular monthly meeting at the same location in the months of January, April, July and October . All members are welcome to attend.

This newsletter can also be accessed at www.corvairs.org



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Tucson, AZ 85745

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