

Ken Farr: a man for all Corvair seasons

It is with heavy heart that we report the news of the passing of our beloved Corvair brother, Ken Farr, this last November.



Ken and Heidi joined the Tucson Corvair Association in February 2009 and were the most enthusiastic Corvair lovers the Club had seen for many years. Ken jumped in with both feet and served as our President for 2010. Ken is a retired United States Marine and was as proud of his service to his country as he was of his Corvairs. He proudly fixed a USMC license plate to the front of their bright yellow '64 Monza convertible that was lovingly referred to as Tweety.

During his seven years as a member of TCA he and Heidi attended no less than 45 mid-month Club activities not including parades and Christmas parties. Their Corvairs were always the transportation of choice regardless of the weather. It didn't matter how far away the event was, the Corvair made the trip. A couple of events in Laughlin, Nevada; many to Sierra Vista, Benson

and Tombstone, and everywhere in between. If there was a parade, the Farris were there: veterans, homecomings, whatever. In last couple years the Lincoln had to step up for duty during the summer months because of the hot weather, but the Farris were always there.

Ken's shop was always full of Corvair projects with Ken personally doing the dirty work. The workmanship on these vehicles was always top drawer and Ken always paid the closest of attention to every detail—up to and including the powder coating of seat springs that would never be seen. They had to be perfect and better than factory or they would not see service in a Farr Corvair. We all teased Ken about his use of powder coating to protect the parts of his jewels, but it never phased him. His absence will surely effect the economy of the powder coating shops in the Tucson area.

Ken was the penultimate poster child for all things Corvair. Attending Corvair events was mandatory and there was rarely an excuse to miss one. He encouraged the rest of us to be more active in attending the many cars shows and parades and show off our Corvairs. He would often come to meeting and chastise us for not showing up. It was very rare for Ken and Heidi to miss any opportunity to show off one of their Corvairs.

Ken Farr will be sorely missed as a member of the Tucson Corvair Association. He is a good friend and we love him. Our deepest sympathy and best wishes go out to Heidi and the rest of the Farr family. Godspeed Ken Farr.





TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION
Established 1975

TCA 2016 Events at a Glance

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 one name tag). Make checks payable to the Tucson Corvair Association and mail to the TCA Treasurer.

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 Communiqué, 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

Jan 23, Sat

5th Annual Marana Winterfest, 10a—3pm. Marana Market Place, Orange Grove and River Road (next to Conn's). \$10 per car entry fee.

Jan 27, Wed

Regular Monthly Meeting. Parking Lot Bull Session at 6:30pm. Meeting starts at 7:00pm. Kettle Restaurant, 748 W Starr

Jan 30, Sat

22nd Annual Collector Car Show, Tubac Golf Resort, Tubac, Arizona. January 22 registration deadline. See website for details: www.carnuts.org/

Apr 30, Sat

31st Annual Chevy Showdown, Casino del Sol Resort, 5653 W Valencia Rd, Tucson, Arizona. 9am to 3pm. Go to www.corvairs.org for details and registration form.

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Money Saving Tip of the Week

With insurance costs on the rise and more and more teenage drivers on the road, one guy in South Africa designed a very high tech anti-accident system to lower expensive metal to metal altercations with fellow drivers. There are no expensive sensors that deploy airbags or sound avoidance alarms, just an old-fashioned system that has been used on boat docks ever since the used tire was introduced.



DUES ARE DUE

It's that time again. Your dues for 2016 are due this month. **Membership dues** are \$15 per year for individuals and \$18 for families. Please make checks payable to the Tucson Corvair Association (TCA) and mail to the TCA Treasurer, Allen Elvick, 4210 S Preston, Tucson, AZ 85735 or bring your check to the next meeting. You won't get a fancy notice in the mail; this is the only notice that you will receive.



The Master teaches the Grasshopper



Bill Maynard teaches FJ Trejo the finer points of removing a broken bolt.



President's Message

I come to you again with sadness in my heart. I just found out that Ken Farr has passed away. As I understand that he died in November. My deepest condolences go out to Heidi, their children and grand children. Ken and Heidi were always active members in the club. If there was an event taken place or a show going on, Ken and Heidi were there. They represented the club very well and sometimes they were the only club members presents there. Since Ken took ill, they have been missed at all club functions. Tweety, the brain child of Ken and Heidi, has become a legend in its own time. Ken and Tweety were always seen together buzzing around greater Tucson at any given time. Many of my customers when told that I was restoring a Corvair, would mention seeing a yellow convertible around town. Ken served this great country of ours by enlisting in the Marines. I was recently reminded that a retired Marine is not an ex Marine, but still a Marine. Godspeed Marine, Godspeed Ken.



As of this date, I do not have information on the club event for Jan., the Trolley Tour. I hope to have something lined up by this weekend. Will keep you posted.

Don't forget, the meeting is on the 27th. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Mike

2016 TCA Officers to be determined.

Be sure and come to the February meeting and welcome the 2016 TCA officers into the new year.



One millionth Corvair leaves the production line.

Christmas for the Tucson Corvair Association

On the evening of December 9, 2015, members of TCA met at the Golden Corral on 22nd and Columbus for an evening of camaraderie and fun.

This year's Gordon Cawble Award went to John and Amy Young who were not able to attend the gala affair so Mike Lake accepted their award and will see that it gets into their hands.

A 2014-1/2 Gordon Cawble Award was presented to Bill Maynard. A year and a half late but Bill had a smile on his face!

White elephant gifts were shared and along with a silent auction.



Turbocharging Pioneer: Chevrolet Corvair

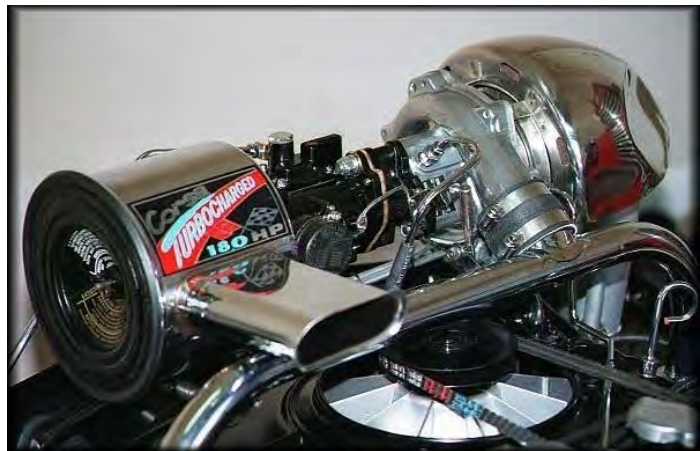
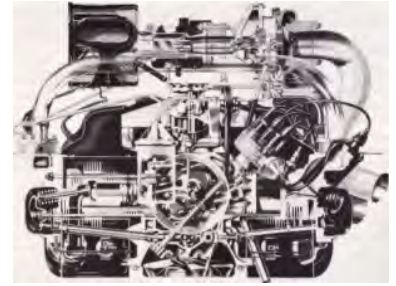
If we're going to cover cars which blazed a trail in the area of turbocharging, this is the only logical place to start. Though the Corvair would ultimately come to be remembered for its starring role in Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed*, the Corvair was also the world's first turbocharged production car, a fact which is sadly often forgotten. It would take until 1974 for Porsche to introduce a model with a turbocharged air-cooled flat-six mounted in the back, but Chevy had one in 1962.

The more you know about automotive history, the harder it is to believe that the Corvair was ever built in the first place. American car companies have never been big on air-cooled engines, or flat engines, yet here was a car which had just such an engine, and it was rear mounted too, another oddity. The Corvair would end up being an easy car to love, and one which sold quite well, at least at first. The project was started in 1956. Sales of big cars were still doing well at that time, but imported compact cars were also picking up momentum, and American carmakers recognized that they should do something about this.

In fact, although a station wagon body style joined the Corvair lineup in 1961, Chevy soon learned that Corvair buyers tended to be more attracted to the car's sporty nature than they were to its attempts at economy. So a new and more conventional compact car was dreamed up to go up against the Falcon and the Valiant, and the Corvair was given added sport emphasis. The sport line of Corvairs was known as the Monza, which was introduced toward the end of 1960. This would grow to become by far the most popular of Corvair models, with some 80 percent of Corvairs sold in 1963 coming from the Monza line.

However, the heavy lifting of the engineering work was done at Chevrolet. The sporty image was good for sales, with sales peaking at 337,371 units in 1961 and staying strong through 1965. *Motor Trend* had named it Car of the Year in 1960, and the second-generation Corvair, which debuted in 1965, received a shower of praise from none other than David E. Davis Jr., then of Car and Driver. The power figures might not have been amazing, but remember that the only Porsche available for sale in 1962 was the 356, which wasn't much lighter, offered less than half the horsepower of the Corsa engine, and was much, much more expensive.

Simply put, the Corvair was no more prone to crash than any of its contemporaries, but by then it was too late. Nader certainly didn't help, but the real undoing of the Corvair was the Ford Mustang. Debuting in mid-1964, the Mustang offered nearly 100 horsepower more than the top-end Corvair and for noticeably less money. Thus would begin the era of the pony car, as well as the muscle car, and there was no need for the expensive exoticism of turbochargers. The Corvair would hang on until 1969 before it was killed off, but sales slowed to a trickle from 1966 on.





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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:

Kettle Restaurant, 748 W Starr Pass (I-10 and 22nd), 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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