

The Stinger

by Van Pershing

It all started in 1967 one evening while I was manning my post at a Circle K in Scottsdale. As a college student working part-time, I couldn't afford the finer things in life so I was reduced to driving a '63

Spyder coupe and working nights. A young man about my age approached the counter



and complimented me on my choice of vehicles and then asked if I'd like to take a look at his "Corvair". I said I would and we walked outside. "I just drove it here from Pennsylvania," he said. There it was - a brand new Yenko Stinger with less than 4,000 miles on it. He gave me a 10-minute ride around the neighborhood and I have been in love ever since.

The years passed and the Spyder and our '57 Chevy were traded in on a new Buick Skylark for my wife to drive while I was in Vietnam. (One of the stupidest things we ever did, but that's another story.) Upon returning from 'Nam in 1970, I needed a car so, we started looking and ended up with a \$300 '65 Corsa. A little rough around the edges but loaded with potential. The Corsa and I spent 34 years together including several paint jobs, a couple of engine rebuilds, and a tons of miles. Then, tragedy struck. In June 2004 a careless driver caused the death of my old friend.

Now, what to do? My Corsa is smooshed beyond repair but the new engine, the nice interior, and many parts and pieces are unscathed. All I really need is

a body. The search was on. Finally after weeks of turning over every stone within a 300-mile radius, a rough '66 Monza turns up; a deal is struck and a trailer is loaded. Now the fun begins. But wait. I've always wanted a Stinger but was never able to afford one. Especially in this day and age. So, why not make one? Herb did. Lots of guys have. Settled. A Stinger it is!

The first order of business is the bodywork. This poor thing doesn't have a single straight panel on it. Hours and hours of metalworking and bodywork follow. A Stinger deck lid and sail panels arrived from SC Performance in California. Primer and guide coats - over and over. At last it was all done. Not perfect but plenty nice. A rented paint booth and a nice layer of '96 GM truck white basecoat with Nassau blue stripes and trim, three coats of clear on top and viola! The hard part is done.



Now for the transplant. The trusty old Corsa becomes the organ donor. All the running gear and interior are transferred over to the Stinger. New carpets, headliner, and paint for the interior. The back seat is removed and replaced with carpet-covered

continued on page 3

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 (COSA) 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.

COSA Membership Dues are \$35 per year (\$70 for 26 months) and include subscription to the COSA Communique, a monthly publication. COSA 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

Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts 12th Annual Collector Car Show

Saturday, January 21, 2006 10am-3pm

Rain Date: January 28th, 2006

Enjoy a fun-filled day for the entire family with more than 500 collector cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Awards will be presented at 3pm.

Take I-19 to exit 40. Exit and turn east, go to the frontage road and turn right. Go approximately 2 miles. Entrance to the resort is on the left side of the Frontage Road.

The Tucson Corvair Association will meet at the Cow Palace Restaurant in Amado at 8am for breakfast. After breakfast it's on to the show for some fun in the sun. See you there!

Board of Directors

President: Bill Maynard

3605 N. Vine, Tucson, AZ 85719, 520-325-8497
EMAIL: billfromtucson@webtv.net

Vice President: Barry Cunningham

362 Bull Run Drive, Tucson, AZ 85748, 520-733-7387
cel: 520-312-4514, wk: 520-887-1011
EMAIL: cunningvairbair@juno.com

Treasurer: Allen Elvick

4210 S. Preston, Tucson, AZ 85735, 520-883-4337
wk: 792-1450 x 1-6966,
EMAIL: allen-elvick@med.va.gov

Secretary: Lynn Marrs

14020 N. Gecko Canyon Tr., Tucson, AZ 85742,
520-297-8969
EMAIL: lmnightengale@juno.com

Board Member at Large: Dave Lynch

1228 N. Roberts Way Tucson, AZ 85712
520-325-0750
EMAIL: lynchmob@theriver.com

Membership Chairperson: Allen Elvick

Corvairsation Editor: Chris Cunningham

1026 South 7th Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701, 520-670-9676
EMAIL: arizaim@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President: Bill Maynard

Assistant Editor: Van Pershing

4842 West Paseo de las Colinas, Tucson, AZ 85745,
520-743-9185,
EMAIL: vpersh@yahoo.com

Librarian: Lance Gillingham

8741 Saddleback Dr. Tucson, AZ 85749, 520-749-4951

Webmaster: Paul Dunn

P.O. Box 867, Bisbee, AZ 85603, 520-432-5840
EMAIL: paul@corvairs.org

Merchandise Chairperson: Don Robinson

2044 Shalimar Way, Tucson, AZ 85704, 520-297-1356
EMAIL: fourcorvairs@hotmail.com

bill maynard@webtv.com

COSA

The Stinger *continued from page 1*

plywood. A compartment is fabricated for the package area to house the stereo speakers along with a console between the front seats just the right size to carry a few CDs. A completely new brake system with a dual master cylinder, wheels and tires from

the Corsa, some gas in the tank and she's ready to roll. I never actually realized how many parts went into an automobile!



The finishing touch: a set of embossed Stinger appliques. Sweet!!



Van Pershing, a frequent contributor to the *Corvairsation*, is the Assistant Editor and a candidate for Webmaster of Tucson Corvair Association's Web site: www.corvairs.org

Specifications:



Engine:

164 cid bored .030 +
140 hp heads,
mildly ported
Otto headers w/ special exhaust system
All four carburetors modified by Bob Coffin
w/ cut-out tubes and venturi work.
Individual washable air cleaners.
Allison electronic ignition

Suspension:

Stock Corsa w/ quick steering arms
Gas shocks

Tires/Wheels:

4" x 7" Pontiac Rallye w/ 215/60R14 BFG
TAs

Body:

Stinger decklid and sail panels from SC
Performance
Trunk emblem removed
Stock air front air dam

TCA Board Members Wanted

It is that time of year again when the Club encourages members to step up and become candidates for the Board. President Bill Maynard would like to see a changing of the guard for the following positions: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chairperson, Board Member at Large, Merchandise Chairperson, and Webmaster.

Current Directors are listed on page 2. If you are interested, don't wait for the covert selection committee to come knocking on your door. Because you can't resist the committee.

Volunteer at the January regular meeting on Wednesday the 22nd or contact Barry at 733-7387 to enlist.

February is election month.

New Directors are voted into office at the February meeting. Term periods start in March and are for one year with a one year renewal option.

A Starter Car for First-time Collectors

When Detroit's Big Three decided to go compact in 1960 the contrast between each of their offerings was remarkable. Ford's Falcon was absolutely conventional, Chrysler's Valiant had European overtones, and Chevrolet's Corvair took a completely fresh and radical approach. Sales figures for the three cars finished in the same order, which tells you something about the average North American consumer's taste.

The Corvair began with a completely blank sheet of paper, unusual in itself. It would even include an all-new engine and indeed, the car was created around the air-cooled, rear-mounted, flat-six, a complete reversal from the norm where engines must adapt to the chassis and outer skin. However this was a blessing, for it also dictated a fully-independent coil spring suspension system plus a flat floor in the passenger compartment.

Footroom would be increased and height decreased, making the Corvair a sporty yet practical package.

It was produced as a 4-door sedan, coupe, convertible, station wagon (briefly), plus a forward-cab 6-door Greenbrier wagon, delivery van, and pickup. Although initial sales were good, the Falcon (and the company's own, conventional, Chevy II) soon pushed the Corvair down the charts. There was, however, one bright exception: the Monza coupe, which came onto the market in 1960. Though the average driver shied away from Corvair's uniqueness, enthusiasts had taken to it and when the sporty-looking Monza appeared, people who enjoyed the art of driving were delighted.

Monza brought with it the option of a 4-speed transmission; until then all Corvairs came with 3-speed manuals and 2-speed Powerglide transmissions. I remember testing one of the latter for my radio show, expecting it to be a dog but in fact that wasn't the case. The 140 c.i. engine seemed to have enough low-down torque to cope with the 2-speeder and it made for a smooth package.

Still, it was the addition of performance and sports car-type features that made the Monza coupe, and follow-up convertible, such a delight. The Monza Spyder convertible came with a turbocharged engine,

the first use of a turbo in a production car. This raised power from 90 hp to a whopping 150 hp, and included a package with heavy-duty clutch, 4-speed transmission, and modified suspension.

One serious drawback was the engine's turbo-lag, resulting in a 2-second gap between flooring the accelerator and getting any action. For the unskilled, handling was also a problem, due to the excess weight in the rear. It might have been less so if the spare tire had been mounted under the hood as originally intended, instead of moving to the engine compartment to increase luggage space. To compensate, tire inflation was to be 15 psi at the front and 26 psi at the rear, but too few owners bothered to properly maintain tire pressure.

Knowledgeable enthusiasts would alter the rear wheel camber from positive to negative, making the car more stable in corners and all but eliminating wheel tuck-under caused by the swing axles. This, of course, affected tire wear, so tires needed to be rotated more frequently, again something the average owner wasn't prepared to do. Ralph Nader (who didn't have a driver's license) may have had a point when he charged the Corvair with being Unsafe at Any Speed but many of us believed the true fault lay with the incompetence of North American drivers. Nevertheless there were those who believed in the sporty Monza, especially after the second edition Corvair appeared in 1965.

The best known of various modification packages came from Don Yenko, who produced a small run of 240 hp, race-winning Yenko Stingers.

I'll deal with the new generation Corvair in another article, for it is one of my favorites. I first owned a coupe, then a convertible, and coming from a Porsche background with a growing family, I found them to be a perfect compromise.

Meanwhile, the earlier generation Monza is the one I'm recommending here as a starter car, for

it's a relatively uncomplicated automobile and, lacking the V-8 performance credentials of other cars in that era, is not in high demand. On the other hand the Corvair Monza is more nimble and offers better driver control than its conventional competitors, which means that unless you're infatuated



TCA 2006 Events at a Glance

JAN 2006

- 11 WED TCA Board Mtg. Pollo Feliz 6:30pm.
21 SAT *Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts*
12th Annual Collector Car Show 10am-3pm, Tubac Golf Resort, Tubac, Arizona. I-19 south to Exit 40. Meet for breakfast at the Cow Palace in Amado at 8am.

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

FEB

- 8 WED TCA Board Mtg. Famous Dave's, 4565 N. Oracle Rd., 6:30pm.

- 19 SUN *Woody Woodsworth's Old Time Museum*, 11050 E. Pantano Trail, 298-2060. Details TBA.

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

MAR

- 8 WED TCA Board Mtg. Pescado Feliz, 840 E. Ft. Lowell Rd. 624-0459. 6:30pm.

- 19 SUN *The Arizona Renaissance Festival* meet at 9:30am at Wild Oats Market, 7133 N. Oracle Road. The Festival is situated 7 miles east of Apache Junction on US Highway 60.

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

APR

- 12 WED TCA Board Mtg. Location TBA. 6:30pm.

- 20-22 TH **AACA Western Spring Meet**, Tucson Hilton East, Hosted by AACA Tucson Region, Info: Ron Sotardi, 749-8659.

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

A Starter Car continued from page 4

with tire-burning acceleration, you can even purchase one of the humbler versions with stock engine and 3-speed manual or 2-speed Powerglide and still have a lot of fun.

With the convertibles, prices rise accordingly, even more when a turbocharger is fitted. And so does the cost of maintenance. Find a Yenke Stinger and you will, of course, be out of the starter price range entirely.

As a bottom line I would suggest that if you come upon a humble 4-door Corvair sedan in good shape, and coupe status is not important, go ahead and buy it. Even today any Corvair stands apart as an honest attempt by Chevrolet to build a car that drives to a different drummer.

From Philip Powell,
Your Guide to Classic Cars.

http://vintagecars.about.com/od/startercars/a/corvmonza_start.htm

Submitted by Van Pershing

Arizona Renaissance Festival March 19



Heads Up! Put your troubles aside and escape to the Arizona Renaissance Festival, a peaceful shire where pleasure and celebration are the only orders of the day as decreed by King Henry!

The Arizona Renaissance Festival is the destination for our March mid-month activity and is one of the largest of the Renaissance events in the nation because it is really five festivals all rolled into a giant, costumed fantasy village with:

12 Stages of continuous live entertainment
An Outdoor Circus

A Medieval Arts and Crafts Fair

A Jousting Tournament with 3 performances each day
A Day-Long Feast fit for Dave

Advance adult tickets are \$18, children cost \$6.

November 2005 General Membership Minutes

Note: There are no minutes taken at the December meeting. The December meeting is an annual holiday party.

November 16, 2005

Members Present: Bill Maynard, Lynn Marrs, Dave Lynch, Dave Baker, Barry Cunningham, Allen Elvick.

Mr. President, Bill Maynard, called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Approval of the Minutes for October, 2005: Lynn Marrs made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Allen Elvick seconded this. The motion passed.

Presidents Report: Bill Maynard reported on the trip to Agua Caliente Park for the Sunday picnic. Dave Baker, Dave and Patrick Lynch, Barry and Cassidy Cunningham, Allen and Marianne Elvick, Bill Maynard and Lynn Marrs were at the picnic. This is the time of year when bees are everywhere at that park, but no one got stung. Barry was chef and made the hamburgers and hot dogs. There was a lot of very good food and desserts. Good chatter and lots of laughter. Cassidy and Patrick had so much fun feeding the ducks. The museum house was very interesting with all the ranch history.

Vice-Presidents Report: Barry Cunningham noted that the club members had not been notified that the meeting was moved up a week since it was thanksgiving when the normal meeting would have been. Editor's note: notification can be found on the back side of the mailing panel of every *Corvair* newsletter.

Bryan Lynch Award: Discussion took place as to who should receive the award this year. Barry Cunningham made a motion to nominate Lance Gillingham, Bill Maynard seconded this motion and is passed unanimously.

Help: Please think of activities you would enjoy doing with the club and make a list. It is important for the club to do things as a group to keep the interest up and people participating. So, please help us.

Treasurers Report: Allen Elvick reported that the bank account started at \$4177.69. Total income was \$8.00 from the raffle, \$160.85 was the total of expenses. The ending balance is \$4024.84.

No Raffle Tonight: Raffle gifts for our next meeting will be given by Allen Elvicks, Barry Cunningham, and Bill Maynard.

New Business: The Holiday Party will be December 14, 2005 at 7:00pm. at the Metro Grill on Oracle and Magee. Remember to bring a gift to the party in the \$10 range for an exchange of gifts with everyone, so you will need one gift for each of you. **ALSO BRING FOOD CANS FOR THE FOOD BANK, THEY ARE IN GREAT NEED THIS YEAR.**

Library: The library has been moved to the shop of Bill

Maynard at 3605 N, Vine St. in Tucson. The Corvair tow bar will be at Bill's place also.

Nominating Committee: No report at this time.

Corvair Talk: Discussion took place regarding the January mid-month activity that will probably be the Tubac Car Show or Woody's Old Time Car Museum.

The February mid-month activity might be a caravan of Corvairs to the Renaissance Festival. We need as many people to go as possible. It would be great fun to have ten cars. For those of you who have not been to the Festival it is a real treat, lots of fun arts, stages for plays and of course, jousting on horseback by finely trained stunt men and horses. The food is a great deal of fun. They also have a parade of the Royal Household all in costumes. Many of the visitors also dress in costume or you can rent a costume or normal street clothes are just fine. We would like to see as many people as possible for a great time.

Adjourn: A Motion to adjourn was made at 8pm. by Dave Lynch and seconded by Allen Elvick. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Marrs
Recording Secretary

Members in the News

If you missed our annual Holiday Party, too bad. It was a warm, fun gathering. The 2005 Bryan Lynch Award for outstanding achievements during the year went to **Lance Gillingham**. Congratulations Lance. Lance was our Librarian for several years, Vice President a couple years back, and currently owns a beautiful low-miles LM convertible that has been in his family since new. This award is given out only to those who give back to the Club in a big way. Lance, with the strong help from his wife Sherry, is recovering from two hip replacements, and a bout with cancer.

Kudos also go out to **Ms Lynn Marrs**. She instigated the whole thing at Metropolitan Grill and even performed the lead in the sing-a-long after dinner. Next year we will sell tickets just to hear her sing. **Dave Baker** entertained the partygoers with a few holiday stories and provided lyrics for the sing-a-long.

Lynn is already planning the details for the next annual end of the year celebration. Thanks Lynn. Thanks to *all* who helped make 2005 another great year for the Club.

Thanks for the generous contributions of non-perishable food items at the party; we were able to make a donation to the Casa Maria Soup Kitchen, a non-profit enterprise of the Catholic Diocese of Tucson.

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.

FOR SALE: '66 CORSA, 140/4, Black w/ black interior, factory A/C, Original paint, AZ car, no rust, needs weather stripping. Nice car. Call Mike, 603-5896

CORVAIR PARTS!

Since 1974 Corvair Underground has been selling parts and services to the Corvair community!

We offer new, used, rebuilt, NOS and reproduced parts as well as toy cars and collectibles.

Corvair Underground sells to every state in the Union plus all over Canada and the rest of the world. We accept all major credit cards and you can call, fax, mail or e mail your order.

Our giant 300 page mail order catalog, The Corvair Book, is just \$6.00 postpaid (USA). You can also get a subscription to our newsletter, The Corvair News, free. All we need is your name and address. Also, don't forget our online website www.corvairunderground.com. There you'll find our newsletter online, our GoVair performance and custom site and a whole lot more!



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Fax: (888) 625-8498

www.corvair.com

Email: clarks@corvair.com



Mark Drumheller
Paul Dunn

**The
Car Guys**

22 Hwy 92 - Bisbee, AZ 85603
(520) 432-5134 paul@corvairs.org



Monthly Newsletter January 2006 Vol. 30 No. 8 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.

Raffle gifts for our next meeting will be donated by Allen Elvick, Barry Cunningham, and Bill Maynard.

Upcoming Events:

January 21, Saturday

Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts 12th Annual Collector Car Show

10am-3pm Tubac Golf Resort, Tubac, Arizona.

Meet at the Cow Palace in Amado at 8am for breakfast.

February 19, Sunday

Woody Woodsworth's Old Time Car Museum

11050 E. Pantano Trail, 298-2060. Details TBA.



Tucson Corvair Association
1026 South 7th Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85701-3010



January 2006

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First Class Mail



On the edge in Tucson, Arizona. Van Pershing's latest creation is a beauty with muscle. See *The Stinger* page 1.

Van & Vickie Pershing
TCA Assistant Editor
4842 W. Paseo de los Colinas
Tucson, AZ 85745