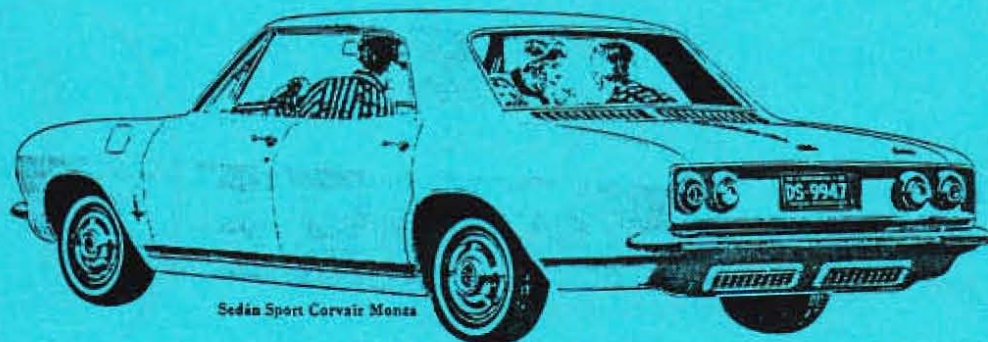


Corvairnation

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 13 NUMBER 6

TUCSON, ARIZONA
SEPTEMBER 1987

El nuevo Corvair de 1965



Sedan Sport Corvair Monza

Nunca hubo otro Corvair, ni ningún otro automóvil, como éste.

Este Corvair de 1965 es total y absolutamente nuevo de un extremo a otro. Jamás tuvo aspecto tan deportivo como ahora gracias a su bien definido estilo de automóvil sin postes centrales. En su interior es más espacioso y más lujoso, con elegante tapizado enteramente de vinilo, nuevo tablero de instrumentos y ventanas laterales de vidrios curvos sin marco. El Corvair siempre ha tenido fama por lo fácil de manejar, pero cuando conduzca el de 1965 quedará sorprendido de su maniobrabilidad. Es más amplia la selección de motores traseros, hasta

de 180 HP en la nueva y elegante serie Corsa; hasta de 140 HP en las series Monza y 500. La dirección responde ahora con mayor presteza, los frenos, de ajuste automático, son más seguros y grandes. La nueva suspensión independiente, unida al mayor ancho de vía actual, proporciona mayor firmeza y estabilidad de marcha. En una

cosa no ha cambiado el Corvair — sigue siendo el automóvil de familia que más placer da conducir, como usted podrá comprobar cuando se siente tras el volante. Visítenos hoy mismo para que pruebe el Corvair de 1965.

CHEVROLET

THANKS TO VALVE CLATTER, GIRCLE CITY CORVAIRS

Double Issue

NOMBRE Y DIRECCION DEL DISTRIBUIDOR



TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

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. The Tucson Corvair association is a chartered member of the CORVAIR SOCIETY OF AMERICA (COSA).

MONTHLY MEETINGS are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month except December. One technical/social event is planned for every month except July and August.

MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$10 per year and are payable to the TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION through the Membership Chairman.

COSA MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$25 per year and include a subscription to the COSA Communique, a monthly publication. See a TCA Officer for a membership application.

CLASSIFIED ADS are FREE to a TCA Members and \$1.00 per line to all others. The deadline for materials submitted for publication is the 10th of the month for that month's issue. Mail or deliver all materials to the Corvairsation Editor. Articles are welcome for publication.

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Robinson, Carole Sanford,
and the Corvairsation Editor



NON-MEMBERS:

We would like to invite you to join the Tucson Corvair Association. We will send you three complimentary issues of the Corvairsation and welcome you to attend all of our activities. This is a great chance to get to know us. No matter what your Corvair interests are, you'll find lots of good folks with similar interests in the Tucson Corvair Association. If you decide to join us, the dues are only \$10 per year.

From the President.....

You're probably wondering why the Corvairsation is a little early this month. Well, if you've looked at your calendar you know we're in September. This means the resumption of our mid-month activities. For a change we'll be holding this mid-month activity, which is a tour to Kitt Peak, at mid-month. Thus the early release of the newsletter.

I'm ashamed to admit this, but I've lived in Southern Arizona all my life and have never been to Kitt Peak. I've never been to the Grand Canyon either, but that's another story. Last year I was hoping to go with the TCA tour but was unable to go. So this year I'm really looking forward to it and I hope you are too. Also, I've heard only good things about last year's tour. Some of the things we'll see are not shown to the regular public. Alan Atwood is again hosting this event. His instructions for the tour can be found elsewhere in this Corvairsation. Let's see some TCA pride and have a good turn out for this event!

If you were at last month's meeting you heard me make the announcement that Carole Sanford was stepping down as membership chairperson. It's a position she's held for over three years. Carole, I want to thank you for the fine job you've done and all the time you've given to TCA. I and all the TCA members appreciate what you've done for us. Now for some good news. Shortly after announcing the vacancy of Membership Chairman, Vic Howard came up to me and said he'd be willing to fill that position. So the TCA didn't have to go very long without a membership chairman. My TCA cap is off to you, Vic. Thanks for stepping up to volunteer. I hope your action serves as an example to other club members and will encourage them to serve TCA in the future.

Finally, remember the Casa de los Niños Car Show on October 11 and the CHVA Swap Meet and Show on the 24th & 25th. More information on these and other events at the September meeting. Oh, by the way, thanks to Rosie, we'll be taking a tour of the GM Desert Proving Ground real soon!! Stay in touch for details.

See you at Kitt Peak!!

Al Rivas

The regular monthly meeting of the Tucson Corvair Association was called to order at 7:40pm by President Al Rivas on August 26, 1987 at the Picadilly Cafeteria, 6767 E. Broadway, Tucson, Arizona.

The minutes of the previous meeting were ammended to delete participation at the Toros baseball game.

Under old business, it was reported that our guest speaker in June, Ken Abbott, said that the average "ball park" figure for stripping a car was \$300.00. The historic racer was unable to run at Project Monterey because the oil temperature was too high. Gordon Cauble drove his red Corvair to San Jose to attend the Golden Gate Convention.

New business was opened with the announcement that Carole Sanford, who has been the membership chairman for over three years, is resigning from that position and a replacement is being looked for. Advertising is being considered to seek new members. The Kitt Peak picnic will be in September. The Casa de los Niños Car Show will be October 11 and in November will be the Great Western Fan Belt Toss. The Christmas Party is tentatively scheduled for December 13th at El Corral on River Road.

Guests included Randy Nelson, Ron & Ann Allen, Harry Hall and Don Reed, who owns an Ultra Van.

License plate numbers were called, E61, SPD-972 and the prize went to Mark McKenna for M39. Other gifts went to Larry Dandridge, Dave Baker, Al Rivas and Ron Allen. Note: Even though Larry Dandridge had four winning tickets, he only accepted one gift and Al Rivas had two winners but only claimed one prize.

The announcement was made that Sam and Harriet Angus will come from Michigan to attend the Christmas Party.

During the tech session, a report was given by Gordon Cauble, who attended the National Corvair Convention in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

For sale items were announced.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,



KITT PEAK TOUR & POTLUCK

**9:00AM, SEPTEMBER 19, 1987
MISSION & AJO**

We are again fortunate to be invited to have a tour and potluck on Kitt Peak. Our hosts will be Kurt and Audrey Cramer.

Kurt spends much of his free time working on his race car, which is powered by an air cooled engine. His personal transportation is via a small car using a rear-mounted 6 cylinder flat air-cooled engine. I think both the small car engine and the race engine were originally manufactured somewhere in Europe. In the past Kurt has owned Corvairs and has built Corvair-powered race cars. He also has a Corvette restoration project in progress.

Kurt wanted everybody to know that gas, oil and food are not readily available on the mountain. I suggest you fill up your tank before leaving Tucson and bring everything you will need. Things to bring:

- 1) Whatever you want to grill, such as steaks, hamburgers, etc.
- 2) A dish to share with others, such as a salad, vegetable, or desert with appropriate utensils.
- 3) Plates, silverware, condiments, etc. for everyone in your car.
- 4) A jacket. We expect the weather to be nice, but in Southern Arizona you never know!

TCA will provide, ice, charcoal, lighter fluid and SODAS for all.

We will meet in front of the Bosa Donut Shop on the northeast corner of Mission Road and Ajo Way at 9:00am on September 19th.

Alan Atwood
888-4433



STRUT ROD BUSHINGS

If you have a 1965 or newer Corvair and your rear wheels look as if they're reacting to a very heavy load (leaning in at the top), then you probably have severely misaligned rear wheels or failed strut rod bushings. The most common bushing failure seems to be caused by engine/drive train oil leaks on the inner bushing that weakens the rubber and causes ultimate collapse. Once this happens, not enough adjustment of the cam at the wheel end of the strut rod is available to compensate for the wheel lean.

Following this article is a tech article (from an unknown source) which illustrates a viable solution to the problem. In most instances, only the inner bushing will require replacement, because it is the end that gets the oil soaking from leaks. To date, I have never seen an outer bushing which had deteriorated enough to require replacement. In replacing the bushing, one point noted as being different from the description in the original article, is that the bushing will be more centered in the strut rod by the removal of almost all of the excess length of the rubber and center sleeve from the flanged end of the bushing, rather than as shown in the first article. The outer sleeve is slightly shorter than the width of the strut rod hole and the flange prevents centering the bushing exactly in the hole. Cutting the non-flanged end will cause the strut rod to be off-centered in the end mounting bracket. Although cutting the bushing as described does not cause the spacing to be exact, it is close enough to give satisfactory results.

When shortening the inner sleeve, you may want to cut slightly less than $\frac{1}{4}$ ", then remove the rest with a bench grinder to assure the snug fit of the mounting bracket to the bushing. I believe this repair will be as good as most other approaches, if not better.

Now, since you have gone to all the trouble of replacing the bushings, you may want to consider correcting the problem which caused the bushing failure in the first place: THE OIL LEAKS. Additionally, it will be necessary to get a rear wheel alignment, since the camber (lean of the wheel) has been disturbed. You can, however, get a rough adjustment by locating the car in as level a spot as you can find and use a carpenter's level against the side of the tire to see that it is plumb. If you find the bubble in the level is off-center, jack the car up and make the necessary adjustment of the cam at the outer end (wheel) of the strut rod to level the bubble. After each adjustment of the cam, re-tighten the cam nut, lower the car and roll it a few feet and back to the original spot to allow the wheel to seek the rolling position before re-measuring the camber. If the bubble is still not centered, repeat the above procedure until it is. This temporary wheel adjustment will get you to the shop for a precision alignment.

Good luck! It is not as difficult as it may sound and will make your car not only drive better, but will prevent your rear tires from wearing excessively on the inside. [Don't forget to read the companion article which follows.]



BOB BLISSARD, Corvair Houston

Knapp Chevrolet: \$4.75 each.) This is not the original Corvair bushing, but is used on many GM rear suspensions. When you get the new bushings, you will discover the rubber is enclosed in an outer steel sleeve with a flange. The dimension of the sleeve is exactly the same as the eye of the eye on the Corvair strut. The replacement bushing, however, is .25" longer than the old Corvair bushing.

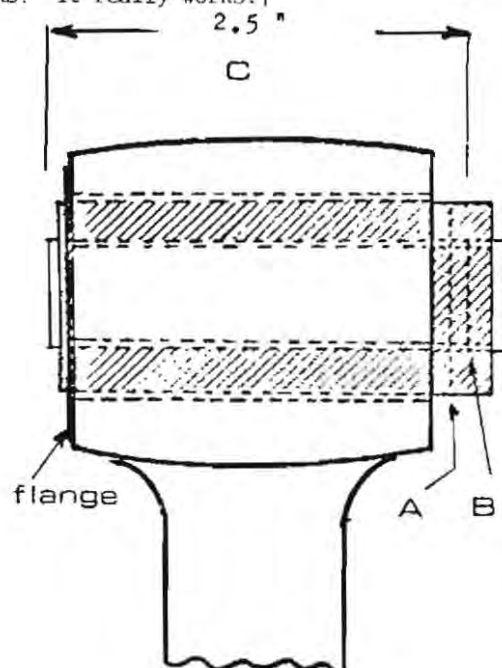
REMOVE THE OLD BUSHING. Retain the washers and bolts that came with the set-up. Clean the strut and eye. Installing the new bushing will be much easier if you use a hydraulic press. Lubricate the eye lightly and press in the bushing until the flange is firmly up against the edge of the eye.

[SEE VARIATIONS RECOMMENDED IN PRECEDING ARTICLE]

WITH A SHARP KNIFE cut through the protruding rubber of the new bushing at a point indicated as "A" on the diagram, and remove the surplus. Then, with a hacksaw cut off approximately .25" of the inner sleeve "B". Measure the length of the inner sleeve so it is exactly 2.5" long.

USE THE OLD END WASHERS and bolts that were removed when you removed the strut. Replace, check geometry specifications (they should not have changed) and your Corvair will be back in original shape at a cost of just a tad over \$20 and a little labor.

[This tip came from an unknown newsletter source. THANKS! It really works.]



from CORVAIR HOUSTON

LOWER STRUT ROD BUSHINGS CONE? Want an expensive, relatively easy way to fix the problem? If so, trot down to your favorite Chevy parts department and order the required number of replacement bushings, usually four, using the part number 3762012. [October 1986 price at



DEVIN

by Al Rivas
Tucson Corvair Association

Have you ever seen something that made you say right then and there, "Someday I'm going to own one just like that"? I can be anything that catches your eye. A house, clothes, jewelry, you name it. In my case it was a tiny sports car I saw in a junk yard years ago.

About 8 years ago I was in junk yard just off of Stone Avenue looking for MG parts. Towards the back of the lot I saw a small sports car which I didn't recognize. It looked like Ferrari sports racer from the 1950s. The car must have been sitting in the sun for years since the white paint was faded and areas of the fiberglass body has started to peel. Apparently someone had just left it parked there for it seemed to be complete. Under the hood was a Coventry-Climax engine with S-U carbs. By this time the owner of the yard came over to see what trouble I was getting into. He explained to me that the car was

a Devin body with a custom frame. It had raced in Tucson during the early 1960s. That was difficult to believe; a car this small with such a tiny engine going around a race track. The car seemed to be only slightly larger than a go-cart. Top speed would probably compare with a go-cart as well.

But in spite of all this I had fallen in love with the car. The body was gorgeous with long flowing lines and soft curves. I asked the owner if he would sell it, but it was not for sale. In fact, over the next several years I would stop in every so often to ask if he would sell me the car, but with no luck. Then one day he shocked me by saying that the the car was for sale. The news did not make me faint but the asking price sure did. It was so expensive that there was no way I could afford it. Shortly thereafter the car was sold and I lost track of it. But it was this car that made me vow that one day I would own a Devin.

Devin (continued)

Bill Devin must now be over 70 years old and he has done more in his lifetime than most people could accomplish in several lifetimes. Everything he's done seems to revolve around cars. He's been a race car driver, the owner of a couple of car dealerships and an inventor, having designed a rubber drive belt for camshafts. But back in the mid-1950s he started building fiberglass bodies for kit cars. Devin's body was made to fit chassis from 78 to 106 inch wheelbases and tread widths from 40 to 52 inches. In all, 27 different sizes were available. Soon there were others trying to imitate his fiberglass kit bodies. This led him to introduce the Devin SS.

The Devin SS was actually a collaboration between Bill Devin and Malcolm MacGregor. Devin supplied the body, MacGregor the chassis. This was powered by a Corvette engine in whatever state of tune the customer desired. When one car magazine road-tested the Devin SS in 1958, they got a zero to 60 time of 4.8 seconds and a zero to 100 time of 12 seconds. Although the cars were fast and well constructed, only 15 were built between the middle 1950s and the early 1960s.

Once the SS was developed, Devin has another idea: use a VW engine in a Devin. A whole new chassis was developed, one that employed major VW components such as front suspension, steering, drive train and brakes. A body similar to the SS was designed but with two major differences. It had no front grill opening and body was raised in the back to accommodate the VW engine. This car would become the Devin D.

Shortly after the development of the Devin D, Chevrolet introduced

the Corvair. Bill Devin saw this as an opportunity to increase the horsepower of the Devin D with only a small gain in the weight of the car. A Devin C has the following VW components: front suspension, gas tank, steering and pedal assembly. From the shifter back, the C is all Corvair: engine, transaxle and suspension. The four drum brakes are all rear drums from an early model Corvair. I don't have an accurate wheelbase figure but it is somewhere between 80 and 85 inches. Just to give you an idea how short the car is, the shifter rod is only 28 inches from end to end. And it's light: I've read that with a full tank of gas the car weighs 1348 lbs. Devin would sell you a kit for a C or sell you a finished car. Engine and horsepower were whatever the customer desired. The factory brochure claimed a 0 to 60 time of less than 4 seconds with a hot Corvair engine.

You're probably wondering how I came to own a Devin C. Well, my brother saw the car at the 1985 Casa de los Niños Car Show. I had spent the day in Phoenix watching the Indy cars racer at PIR. When I got home late Sunday afternoon he came by to tell me about the Devin he had seen at the car show. To make a long story short, I purchased the car from Oscar Avila later that week. The car had been neglected and was missing the original windshield and rear engine cover, but I snapped it up as I knew I would never see another one for sale. Bill Devin himself doesn't know how many Cs and Ds were built, but he thinks it was less than 50.

I drove the car home and parked it for several months. In February of 1986 I knocked on the door of Don and Betty Chastain to

Devin (continued)

ask for help with my Corvair engine. At the time Don and Betty lived just a few blocks away. I'd seen all their Corvairs parked under the carport and figured that if anyone could help me these people could. So that is how I became a TCA member and rose to power to become president. Don hasn't had to help me lately because the car is undergoing a complete restoration at Paradise Custom. They've just finished restoring a '65 Devin C for Laird McIntyre who is the original owner. In the future as work progresses, I'll report to you how things are coming along with my pride and joy.

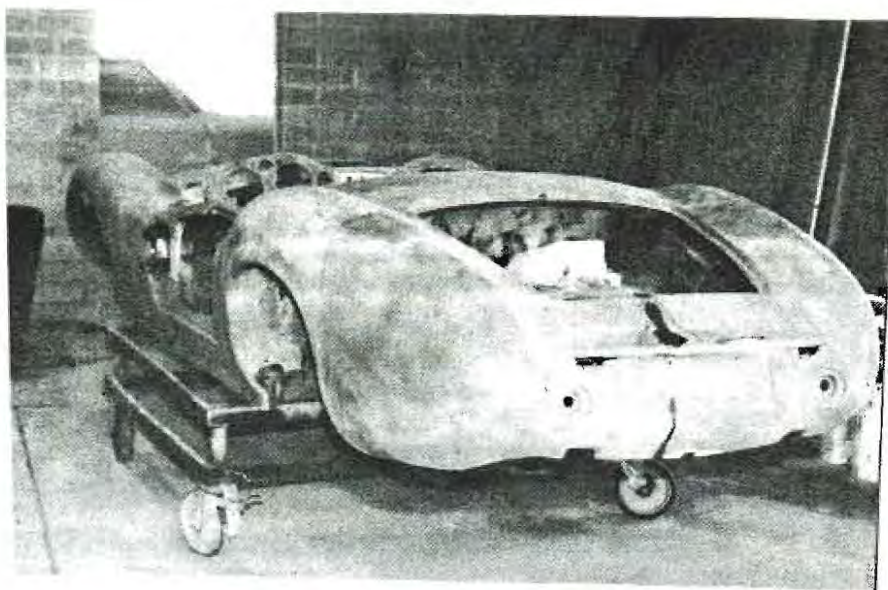


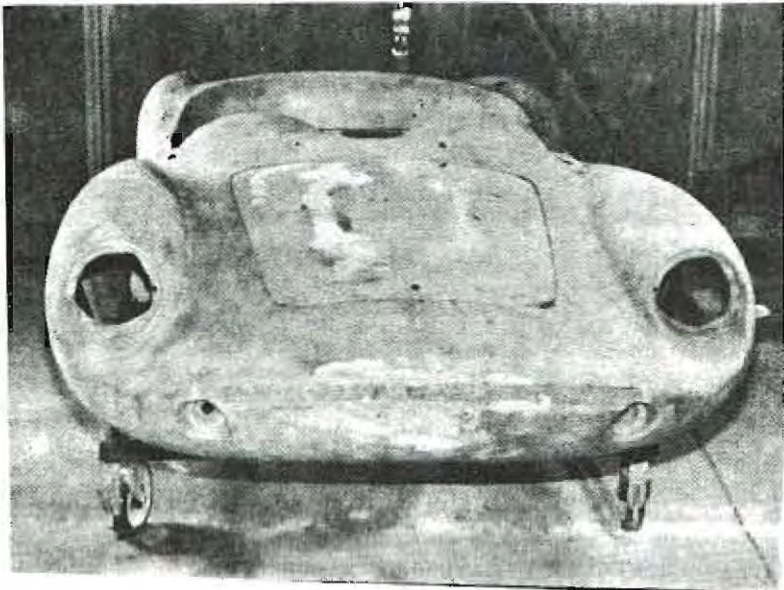
A previous owner installed an instrument panel on top of the dash. Once this was removed it left a gaping hole in the center of the dash. Have received a new center section from Bill Devin to repair it.



This is Laird's 1965 Devin C parked outside the paint shop. Rear end appears to be jacked up because the 140 hp engine and transaxle have been removed. Spare tire is mounted on the left rear.

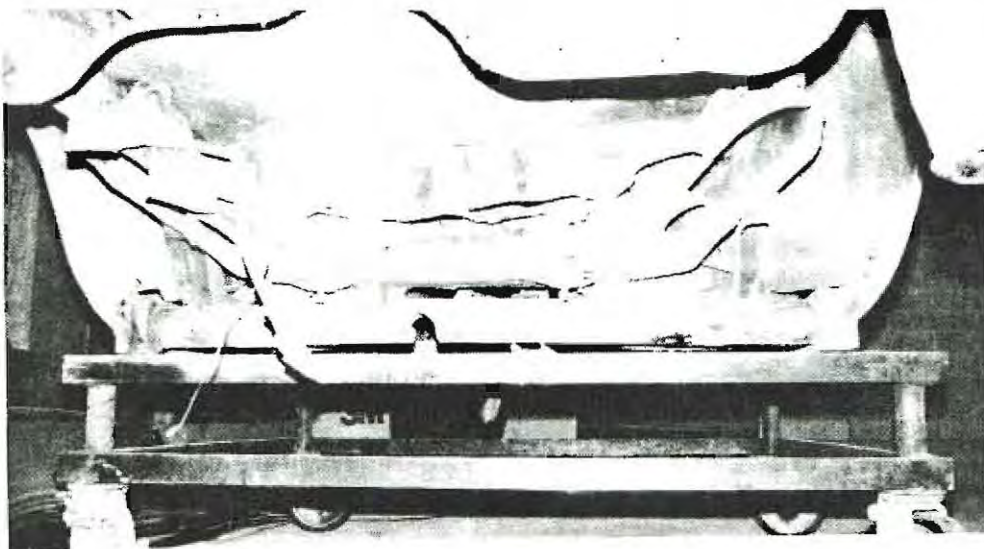
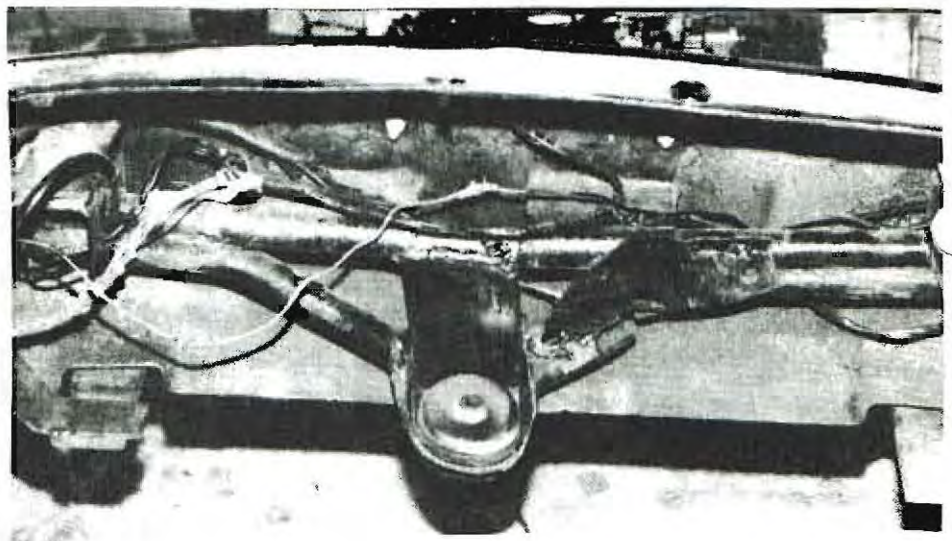
From this angle many people feel this car looks like a Shelby Cobra or a Ferrari. Oscar Avila, who sold me the car, loaned me the dolly the car is sitting on. One of the items missing from my car was the original engine cover.





My car is at Paradise Custom just having returned from Arizona Stripping Company. Light blotches on the hood and front end are bondo uncovered during the stripping process.

I don't know what happen here as the body had not been damaged, but the rear motor mount and chassis were a mess. Welder fixed this mess up with help from Don Chastain who also provided a late model motor mount.



It's hard to tell from this picture, but the Corvair cross-member has been narrowed. My guess is that the rear track is 4 or 5 inches narrower than a Corvair. Look closely and you'll see the front motor mounts in place. Tubes in the cross-member carry warm air through the chassis to footwells.

Looking back in history a few years, how did the Corvairs really do in the racing circuits and what did the auto writers really think of the orphan from Chevrolet? Here are the pages from a book entitled Modern Classics - American Sports Cars on our beloved Corvair. Read them and see what you think!

Corvair Sprint/Stinger

Since we're among friends, I can speak freely and tell you that if you don't have much money but like interesting cars, Corvairs are *the* answer. And none of that paternalistic, Nader-inspired crap about rear engines and swing axles. "If you can't drive it, Sonny, park it," as my great-aunt used to say. Moreover, the national Corsa Club is incredibly active, even doing things like helping sponsor an SCCA D-production, championship-quality Corvair Yenko Stinger. Corvairs are *still* competitive autocross and Solo II cars, and a network of firms like IECO and EMPI make more after-market Corvair stuff than you would imagine possible. No other fifteen-year-old car is as painless to own except a Volkswagen, and who the hell's collecting *them*?

Another nice thing about Corvairs is that they're so easily tweaked. And for the purist types who would never modify a collector car, there were demon tweaks available right from the *factory*, or better yet from bona fide car builders like Bill Thomas, Don Yenko, and John Fitch. You can justifiably collect Corvairs in everything from nine-passenger van to full-blown road-racing trim, and the most expensive street Corvair in the country is worth less than \$4,000. Aside from the Crosley Hot Shot, Corvairs are also about the only American collector cars that are spectacularly economical to run, easily averaging 20 to 25 miles per gallon. You won't get that from a Cobra, not that you'd care, but if you expect to *use* your collector car, good gas mileage can be a real boon in these troubled times. All things considered, a Corvair is such a sensible buy that it would make a reasonable *first* car, let alone playtoy.

Even more than his landmark ohv Cadillac V-8 in '49 or his small-block Chevy V-8, the Corvair was Ed Cole's baby. Cole's sidekicks Harry Barr and Maurice Olley were the ones in actual charge of Corvair development, which started way back in 1955/'56 when GM felt the need to come up with something to counteract the incredible market penetration of the compact Rambler, Volkswagen, and lesser imported cars. It was something that

the Big Three all felt. Characteristically, though, Ford's Falcon and Chrysler's Valiant were scaled-down full-size American cars; Cole's Corvair was a scaled-up European car.

Bob Benzinger was pretty much in charge of Corvair engine development from the very beginning until 1969 when production stopped, though it was Cole's idea to try a flat six. According to legend, Cole's private plane, a Beechcraft Bonanza with an air-cooled Continental flat six, provided the inspiration. In September 1957 Red Curtice gave his blessing and the Corvair—air-cooled rear-engine, rear-wheel drive, unit body, all-independent suspension—was on its way. All these characteristics were unheard-of engineering innovations within GM at that point, and when the Corvair finally appeared in late '59 it was the first American production car with a rear engine, the first in years with air cooling, the first GM unit body, and the first high-volume all-independent suspension in the United States. Much of the development thinking (like unit-body construction) that went into the Corvair ended up in other GM cars—and even some things that wisely didn't make the Corvair (like an aluminum block without liners) were resurrected for Cole's ill-fated Vega a decade later. At Chevrolet they don't talk much about the Corvair these days, but many of the manufacturing techniques that are commonplace now were first developed for Nader's nemesis.

Corvair styling was handled by Ned Nickles for the first series and by Ron Hill for the second. Poor Nickles has, among other things, the dubious distinction of being the one who put the portholes on Buick fenders back in the late forties. Ron Hill had a lot to do with middle-period Cadillac Eldorados. But surprisingly enough, they both came up with good, smooth hodies for their first mini-car. The first-series Corvairs are pretty boxy, but that was what a rear-engine economy car was *supposed* to look like in 1957 when it was styled. By 1962 when Ron Hill started on the second series for '65, it was already pretty evident that the Corvair would never compete with the Falcon and Valiant but was going to be more of a mini-Corvette. So the second series is all-around smoother, cleaner, prettier, and better. In fact, it ranks right up there with the second Camaro as the cleanest of all Bill Mitchell-era GM cars. It's more flamboy-

ant than the first series designed by Nickles under Harley Earl, but both Nickles and Earl were near retirement and were designing a cheap transportation module. Ron Hill was still under thirty when he designed the Corsa for '65, and Mitchell has always been pretty young at heart. And, of course, they were designing a small sports car.

Built in a new addition to the huge Willow Run plant, with engines from the Tonawanda, New York, engine factory, the first Corvairs appeared October 2, 1959. They got a mixed reception at best, from public and experts alike. Although production totaled some 250,000 in 1960, rising to 329,000 in '61 and dropping off slowly to 207,000 in '64, those standard Corvairs were not really very good cars. They had poor weight distribution—like 40/60; worse with air conditioning—a front sway bar only as an option, 80 hp, rudimentary rear swing axles, slow steering, stiff rear springs, and a 3-speed transmission. But the basic package was right. By 1962 you could get a TRW-turbocharged 150-hp Spyder with 4-speed, Positraction, heavy-duty suspension, and metallic brakes right from the factory for less than \$2,500. With more than one horsepower per cubic inch in a 2,600-pound package, the Turbo Spyder ran 0 to 60 in under 10 seconds and would go about 110 mph, tops.

At this time John Fitch came up with his first Corvair Sprint. Now Fitch has nothing if not credentials. He looks for all the world like a tweedy Ivy League sociology professor but he's probably the most experienced American racing driver of them all. Fitch was a P-51 fighter pilot in World War II, a factory Mercedes driver in the Fangio/Moss era, the mainstay of Briggs Cunningham's teams in everything from Cadillacs to Jaguars, developer of the Corvette SS, designer and manager of Lime Rock Park, and just about the classiest person ever associated with automobiles on this side of the Atlantic.

In 1961 John Fitch took a Corvair Monza coupe back to Falls Village, Connecticut, and started making changes—*little* changes—that would make it go, stop, and, mostly, handle. Things like speeded-up steering, metallic brakes, a four-carburetor, 130-hp engine, air springs, and a rear camber compensator. He put on a distinctive appearance kit—vinyl roof, racing stripes, headlight stone shields, Lucas flame-thrower headlights, wood-rimmed steering wheel—and then he set it loose over the twisty little roads of western Connecticut. And at least in Fitch's expert

hands, the little Corvair Sprint, as he called it, would blow the doors off anything even near its modest price.

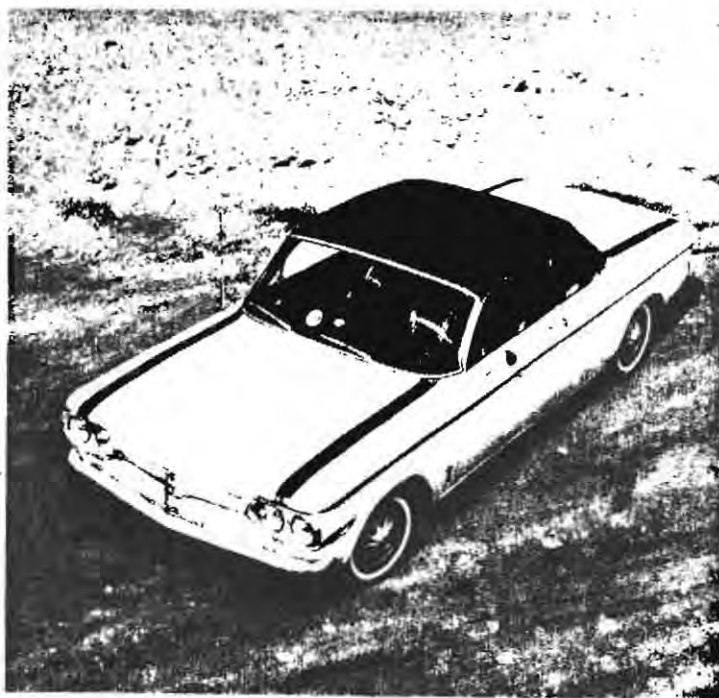
Eventually, Fitch had a dozen or so helpers packaging Sprints and Sprint kits for Corvair drivers all over the country. Thousands of unassuming Monzas were turned into Sprints by either Fitch or private owners, for though the package was never intended for racing, it was a dynamite street GT. With the Turbo Spyder, Chevrolet went Fitch one better in the horsepower department, though the Sprint was still a much better all-rounder. The nice thing is that the Sprint bits could be adapted to the turbocharged car if desired, or alternately you could turbocharge a Sprint with no trouble at all.

Probably the ultimate pre-'65 Corvair would be a genuine assembled-by-John-Fitch-himself Sprint coupe with a little aftermarket engine work from the local Corvair specialist, but without the unreliable Turbo. With that combination you could easily get a reliable 150 hp in a chassis that can really make use of all that power. It's a better car than something like the contemporary MGB or Triumph TR-4 and just as ecologically sound and financially feasible. Compared with a 'Vette, it won't push your buttons very hard, but what performance it has is everyday, driving-to-the-A & P performance, not just once-a-year, stand-on-it-when-the-cops-aren't-looking performance. That has to count for something. The other nice thing about the Sprint—or indeed any early Corvair—is that they built well over a million basic Corvairs, so parts cars and run-of-the-mill spares are easy to come by. A good early Sprint shouldn't cost more than \$2,500 these days and is a very refined little bomb, indeed. If you're not into pavement-ripping, bellowing-V-8-type supercars, the Sprint's the answer.

In 1965 when Chevrolet changed to Ron Hill's larger, heavier, nicer Corvair to compete with the Mustang, all the aftermarket Corvair people jumped up and down and smiled a lot (except John Fitch; he's much too dignified for that). In factory trim, the new 164-cubic-inch Corsa put out 180 hp in turbocharged form, but since the new Corvair at 2,800 pounds weighed another 200, performance in a straight line changed almost not at all. Around corners, though, the Corsa was a whole new ball game. Zora Duntov got interested in the Corvair's swing axles and replaced them with a real fully independent rear suspension similar to the Corvette's. A U-joint at each end of the half-shaft kept the

tire perpendicular to the road over bumps and eliminated the tuck-under that had hard-driven early Corvairs cornering on the outside rear sidewalls instead of the tread. There was now enough room to stick a decent amount of tire under the fenders, and a suspension designed to use it. The cars still weren't racers, but with a few modifications they could be super-successful autocross and rally cars.

The interiors and exteriors of the '65-'69s were so good as they came from the factory that Fitch found little to improve. The second-edition Fitch Sprint used the four-carb factory engine altered to get 155 hp. The Turbo was giving 180 hp at this time, but it was also a nickel rocket. Fitch's was better. He was able to make the suspension work a lot smoother, tighten up the steering and shifter, make the interior a little more luxurious, and—with the addition of a fiberglass roof extension, pints of flat black paint, and some really pretty Hands cast-aluminum wheels—make the outside of the Sprint look really mean. Fitch's second-generation Sprint wasn't the quantum improvement on the factory car that his first had been, mostly because the factory had borrowed many of his ideas and put them into their cars already. For less than \$3,000 in 1965, though, Fitch would sell you a real European-style, built-in-Connecticut sports coupe that acted like a cheap Porsche. The price is still about the same for a good example today, and the performance hasn't dimmed a whit in the last decade.



John Fitch Corvair Sprint, still a bargain GT.

In 1966 Fitch and illustrator Coby Whitmore got together to come up with the Fitch Phoenix, a \$9,000 Corvair with a dramatically tense steel body welded up by Intermeccanica in Turin. It was intended to be a limited-production, high-class American sports coupe for refined types who thought Corvettes and Cobras too gauche. Unfortunately for Fitch, Americans absolutely *adore* gaucherie, and the expensive Phoenix never got to rise from the ashes of an introduction in Abercrombie & Fitch (no relation) among all the other expensive gadgets.

About the time GM corporate was deciding to abandon the Corvair in the face of government pressures and declining sales (fewer than 400,000 late-series cars were built in all, and only 9,000 of the 180-hp turbocharged Corsa engines in '65 and '66 before they were discontinued), Don Yenko decided to go Corvair racing. Yenko, the squire of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, is one of the biggest Chevy dealers in the country, Donna Mae Mims's boss, and one of the wildest-eyed racers who ever got behind the wheel of a Corvette. He won B-production twice in the early sixties, when it was just about the most competitive SCCA class. He also showed up at Sebring and Daytona and, well . . . everywhere, really, in a variety of big-bore machinery.

Anyway, in 1965 Yenko ordered 100 Corsa coupes (I told you he was a *big* Chevy dealer) and modified them into homologated D-production racers. The things were mostly fiberglass, with full-race suspensions and gutted interiors: the works. A Yenko Stinger is to a Corvair as a GT-350 is to a Mustang—lighter, faster, noisier, harsher, and tremendously more exciting. Yenko even gave them the same paint treatment—white with blue racing stripes—that the Shelby cars used. In order to get rid of the 100 Stingers he'd built, they were offered in 160-hp, 175-hp, and 190-hp versions, depending upon whether you just wanted to go fast around the block or were ready to tackle Bob Tullius, Jim Ditmore, and Jerry Titus in D-production.

Anyway, in 1966 Jerry Thompson and his buddies Dick Rutherford and Don Stoeckel of RST Engineering decided to go Stinger racing. Between RST and Yenko, the weight came down to 2,000 pounds and horsepower went up to 200+. Thompson qualified on the pole and won the first six races he entered but got beat in the ARRC by Jerry Titus in a Porsche 911. The next year, though, Thompson won the national championship. His car was later bought by Jim Reeve of Atlanta, who finished

near the top of D-production in '71-'78, winning second at Atlanta's ARRC in '73, fourth in '75, and leading in '76 before he broke.

Yenko, on the other hand, made fifty more Stingers in 1969 and then moved on into turbocharged Vegas and all sorts of weird concoctions. For Corvair racing freaks—those who want to go Solo II, for example—a Yenko Stinger is the only answer. Good Corvair engines will make damn near 300 hp these days, and the cars still weigh 2,000 pounds. Prices

are up to \$4,000 or so for an unraced street Stinger, a bit less for a tired racer, more for a truly competitive mount. Reeve offered his championship car for \$6,000 in 1976, but that's for a competitive D-production racer, not a collector car. In any case, it's just one more example of how versatile the basic Corvair concept really is. Particularly if you're a mini-hot-rodder at heart, the perfectly tweakable Corvair is the only answer. It's also the only true small-bore GT ever built in America.

Jerry Thompson winning the 1967 D-Production national championship in his Yenko Stinger.



HEADLIGHT SWITCH REMOVAL

By Bernie Paul, S.D.C.C.

An easier "NO PAINS" way to remove the headlight switch from the dash is: Ever try depressing that little light switch removal button, and, as usual, it doesn't come out on the first try? The more you push down, the sorer your finger gets. There is not enough room under the dash to get any type of tool into that small an area.

A quick trick is to use a dime and a band-aid (or tape). Just band-aid the dime to the tip of your finger. That way, you don't have to fool around with holding onto something while snaking your hands up under the dash, and there's nothing to drop either.

TECH STUFF

from
The Transaxle Telegraph
North Texas Corvair Association

Special Bent Wrench

If you are separating a transaxle from an engine at the bell housing, sheet metal has to be taken off to get at some of the bolts -- particularly the two side bolts at the 3 O'clock and 9 O'clock positions. To avoid otherwise unnecessary sheet metal disassembly, I made the bent wrench pictured below. This wrench gets behind the obstructing sheet metal and, using a pair of 10" Vice-Grips clamped to the end of the wrench, allows easy removal/installation of these bolts.

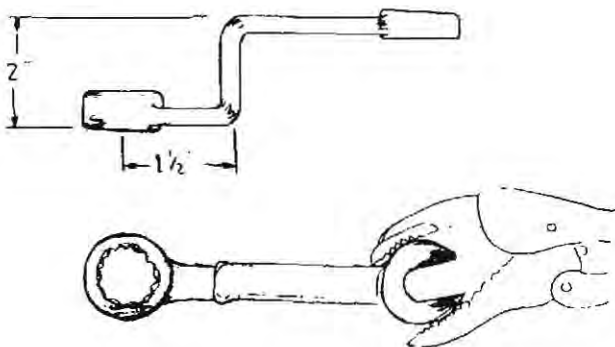
The wrench was made from the longest 9/16" box end wrench I could find. In this case it was a Plumb brand 6" long open end/box end. It was bent to the configuration shown by clamping it in a vise, heating the areas to be bent with a propane torch until red hot, and then doing a little "blacksmithing" with a hammer. (Keep the box end cool, Ed.)

The first bend, shown as 1-1/2" from the center of the box end, is close to being at the maximum useable length, and could be shorter by about 1/2". The second, 2" offset bend, is about the minimum length needed, and should be maintained within about 1/4" of the dimension shown.

If the wrench you use has the box end offset from its "handle", then bending the wrench as shown will provide a better bite on its "handle". Then, it doesn't matter which way it's bent.

(Helpful hint: (Remove the two bottom bell housing-to-differential bolts while the engine is still in the car and they are readily accessible)

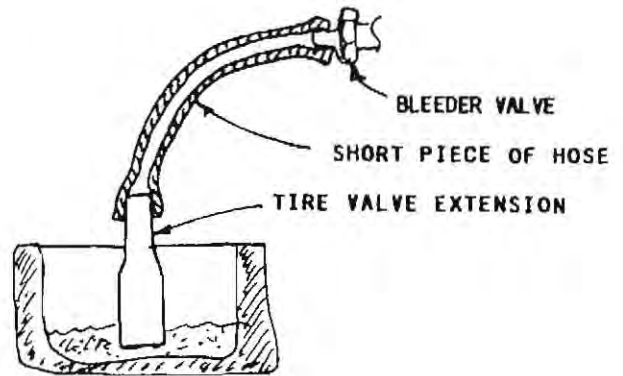
Clay Wispell



Easy Brake Bleeding

By using a tire valve extender, and a short piece of rubber hose, a brake cylinder can be bled while operating alone. Put the hose over the bleeder port and the tire valve extender as shown below. Open the bleeder port and pump fluid through until the air is out of the system. The Schrader valve acts as a check valve to prevent air re-entering the system as the brake pedal is released on each stroke.

Greg Hopewell



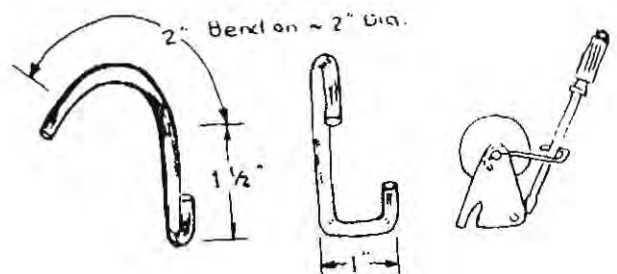
FAN BELT ADJUSTING HOOK

The hook pictured below was designed as an aid to tightening fan belts. With this tool, one avoids the need to pry against the top of the engine shroud when tightening the fan belt. The hook is easily made, and is small enough to store anywhere in your tool box -- at home or in your Corvair for emergency repairs on the road.

The hook is made from a 7" length of 3/16" welding rod. It was "bent to fit". Actual dimensions are not critical. Those that worked for me are shown in the sketch.

Some sort of a pry bar, such as a large screwdriver, is needed to actually pull back on the adjusting pulley. The adjusting pulley's pivot is used as the pry bar's fulcrum.

Clay Wispell



CARBURETOR SYNCHRONIZATION

By Les Huckins
CORSA West of L.A.

If you have a new Corvair, or N.O.S. engine carbs and linkage, the shop manual is all you need. If, however, you happen to have collection of used, and/or mismatched, you are going to need a Uni-Syn, and a different technique.

I know, of course, about Richard Finch doing it with a piece of hose stuck in his ear, but again, I'll bet his engine and set-up are much closer to ideal than most of us work with, so buy, beg borrow or steal a Uni-Syn, it's a must!

Set up the carbs per the shop manual, then adjust the mixture screw on each one, individually, for optimum performance. This is commonly done with a tachometer, backing the screw out a half a turn at a time, engine running, trying for the highest reading, then screwing it back in to where the RPMs drop, then backing to out a half a turn from that point.

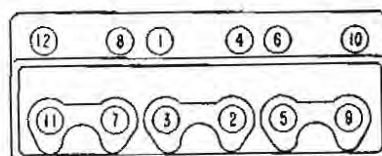
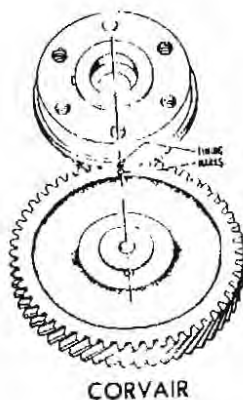
Don't count the turns, don't try to make both carbs alike, just set each one for maximum efficiency, and grab the Uni-Syn.

Leave the tach hooked up, so that you can monitor idle speed, keeping

it around 700 rpm for adjustment purposes. Starting with the right carb, check the air flow with the Uni-Syn, then move the Uni-Syn to the left carb and adjust the idle speed screw on the left carb until the air flow matches the right side. Both idle speed screws will have to be adjusted to change the basic idle speed.

Most mis-settings occur at the linkage due to the wear at the swivel points. Of course you could have the linkage rebuilt, but we are assuming you have old linkage. The right side stays as it is so we concentrate on the left. The number one most important point is that both throttle valves open at the same time, so adjust the accelerator rod on the left so that this happens. No measurements - just do it by eye. Watch to see at what point all slack is taken up and each throttle valve mechanism starts to move, and set the left to begin opening at the same time as the right.

One final step: Increase the RPM to the 1500 range and check again with the Uni-Syn. If they are not quite the same at that point, match them by turning the left swivel up or down and you have it made.



Make and Model	Cylinder Head	Connecting Rods	Main Bearings	Spark Plugs
CORVAIR				
1960-64	27-33	20-26	①	20-25
1965-67	40	25	①	20

①—No. caps. Torque crankcase halves to 50-55 ft. lbs.

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Tucson AZ 85718
299-1010 May88

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Tucson AZ 85716
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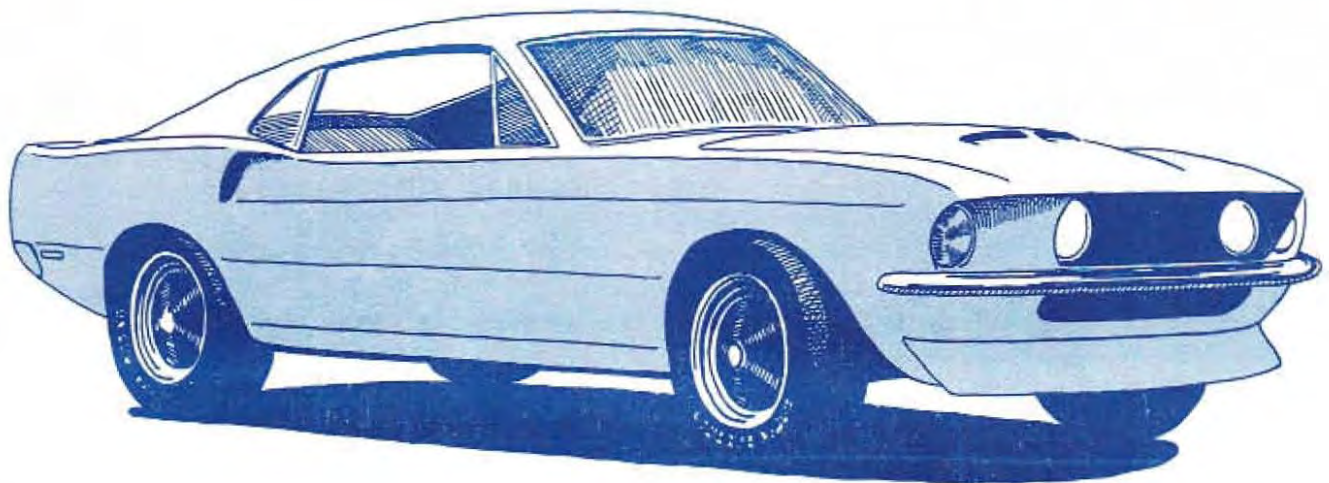
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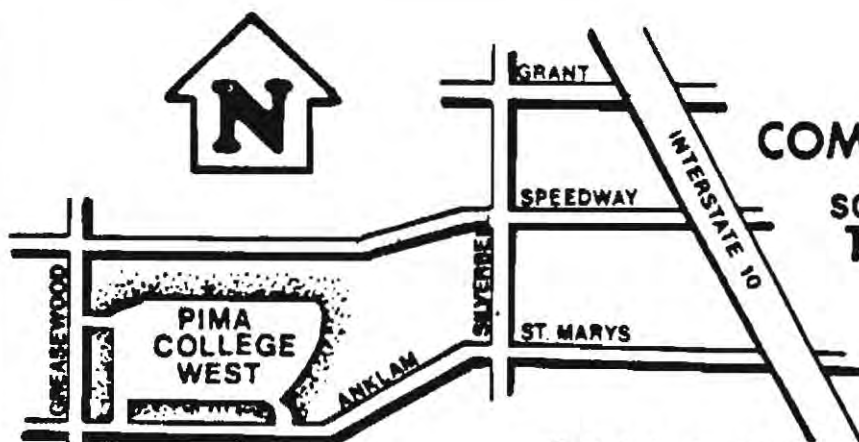
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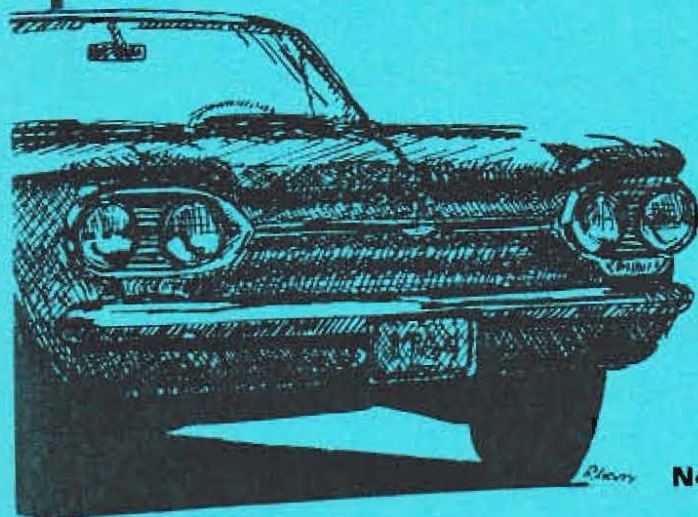
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7:40 pm: Meeting Starts

COMING EVENTS

Sept 19 : Kitt Peak Tour and Potluck. Details inside.

October 11 : Casa de los Niños Car Show at Reid Park.
See Al Rivas to enter your car.

October 24: General Motors Desert Proving Ground Tour

October 24 & 25: CHVA Old Cars & Parts Swap Meet and Show.
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Balance August 1, 1987.....\$1,477.28

Income

Dues.....50.00
Corvairsation ads.....108.00
Raffle tickets.....25.00
Merchandise sales.....13.00
Aluminum cans..... 5.81

Total Income.....\$201.81

Expenses

Corvairsation.....211.00
Raffle prizes.....36.61
Miscellaneous..... 1.92

Total Expenses.....\$249.53

Balance September 1, 1987.....\$1,429.56

Mike Hayden



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CORSA WEST of Los Angeles invites you to join us in
PALM SPRINGS for the Tenth Annual Great Western Fan Belt Toss
and Swap Meet, on **NOVEMBER 13, 14 & 15TH, 1987.**

AT ANGEL FIELD:

- People's Choice Car Show ▪ Swap Meet ▪ Games ▪ Raffles
- Fun ▪ Hot Dogs ▪ Bar-B-Qued Beef Sandwiches ▪ Soft
- Drinks ▪ Over-Night Camping for RVs, Campers & Trailers
- (no hook-ups) ▪

AT THE RODEWAY INN (formerly The Quality Inn):

- Discount Room Rates ▪ Pool ▪ Spa ▪ Patio ▪ Coffee Shop
- Lounge ▪ Friday Night Hospitality Hour ▪ Door Prizes ▪

For Additional Information write:

CORSA WEST
P.O. Box 5023
Mission Hills, CA 91345

-OR-

see Alan Atwood