

# Corvairisation

TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION  
VOLUME 16 NUMBER 1

TUCSON, ARIZONA  
APRIL 1990



See the December 1987 issue of the CORSA Communique for details on this beautiful Greenbrier and others.



# TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

**CORVAIRSATION** is a monthly publication of the **TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION**, which is dedicated to the preservation of the Corvaire model of the Chevrolet Motor Division. The Tucson Corvaire 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 Corvaire Editor. Articles are welcome for publication.

**BUSINESS MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 50401, Tucson, Arizona 85703.

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### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Current TCA Officer  
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Don Robinson  
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Fellow Corvair Fans (or is it Fanatics?),

I have not heard much from anyone about their suggestions for mid-month activities. I (we, Board Members) have been thinking about more fun rallies or possibly serious rallies. I had fun at the miniture golf mid-month for this month. It would have been much better if more members had shown up.

Pretty soon it will be summer vacation time, which means that there will be no meetings or mid-month activities for a couple of months. I hope that I will have the time and the money to start getting my coupe in a more presentable condition by fall. It seems that I have too much week left at the end of my pay.

Some thought has been given to the possibility of a membership drive. How do you fell about advertising activities in the local newspapers? I have a point of contact with an organization that can produce plaques with our logo for awards to our various activities. If anyone has information on matters such as this, please contact Steve Estabrook or me.

AND WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Respectfully,

  
Ron Allen

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Corvairs 19 Cars 4 Vans Present ?

The regular monthly meeting of the Tucson Corvair Association was called to order at 7:45 pm on March 28, 1990 at the Picadilly Cafeteria, 6767 E. Broadway, Tucson, AZ.

Due to a Picadilly scheduling error, our meeting area was reserved for another event, confining the meeting to the S.E. corner of the banquet room.

Motions were made to amend the March minutes to include the election of new officers and to correct the spelling of Esther Alex.

Old Business: Club jackets with the logo on the back were presented by Don Robinson.

New Business: Don Robinson presented Dave Baker with an official Corsa Certificate of Appreciation for his year of service as Club President.

Jerry Lewis gave a report on a local UltraVan.

Nine Corvairs attended the Fun Rally, March 18 at Colossal Cave.

The meeting adjourned for break at 8:00 pm, and was called to order again at 8:18 pm.

Vernon Griffin had two guests in attendance, and Bob Schowengerdt, a former TCA member was present.

Ed Sanford and Gordon Cauble discussed several tech topics.

Steve Estabrook won the license plate drawing. Other raffle prizes were won by Bruce Robinson, Ron Allen and Gordon Cauble.

Gift volunteers for April are Don Schmitt, Gordon Cauble, Bill Vaughn, Vic Howard and Larry Dandridge.

Steve Estabrook discussed the April mid month activity at Magic Carpet Golf, Thursday April 12 at 7:00 pm.

The suggestion was made for a hayride in November.

Gordon Cauble, Steve Estabrook, Don Schmitt and Alan Atwood discussed items for sale.

Closing jokes were told by Jerry Lewis and Ed Sanford.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Marcy Tucker*  
Marcy Tucker



# ROCKY MOUNTAIN

## ROUND UP



**18-20 May 1990**

**Durango, Colorado**

SEE ALAN ATWOOD FOR DETAILS

host club  
**Rocky Mountain Corsa**

## CORVAIR TRUCKS

In the February 1990 issue of the Corvairsation, we ran an article we borrowed from another club's newsletter entitled "95's are not Corvairs" by Herb Karner. Within the month we received a packet, including a nice letter, from Bob Kirkman from Leonard, Michigan who is a member of the Corvanatics and was the engineer with responsibility for assembly plant engineering and was intimately involved with all aspects of the Corvair 95s (Greenbriers and pickups). Bob reported some inaccuracies that he found in Karner's article.

The exterior paint was not epoxy. The interior floor was one coat primer and finish coat epoxy. The sequence of event regard the rear door hinges was not correct (See Corvan Antics newsletter, Nov/Dec issue for details). Concerning seats, the only tobacco cloth came as a covering for cotton pads and all trim covers were specific for model years and were not installed indiscriminately.

Bob's package also included some great tech tips and information which we have republished on the following pages. We hope you enjoy the information.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Corvanatics, contact them at Box 68, McCordsville, IN 46055

Van

# TECH TECH TECH TECH TECH

MORE ON FC BODY BUILDING by Bob Kirkman

At the Chicago Convention Corvanatics Annual Meeting I went through some of the process of building the FC body. Part of that appeared in a recent issue of CORVAN ANTICS, but I'll add a bit here that could be new to all.

The FC was built in two assembly plants: St. Louis, Missouri and Flint, Michigan. Most of my time at the assembly plants was at Flint, as it was only 60 miles away from Engineering in the Detroit area.

The assembly plant built the underbody from individual rails, crossmembers, reinforcements etc. All was fixtured, spot welded, arc welded and even riveted in a couple places. This underbody established location for front suspension, steering, rear suspension and powertrain. The completed underbody went through a wash and phosphate process to prepare it for paint. There was no "prime" coat applied. The charcoal color epoxy paint applied was was both prime and color coat. To the best of my recollection it was sprayed, not dipped.

A previous article explained that the Chevrolet Indianapolis Plant supplied complete side assemblies, front end, roof and doors to the assembly plant. These were bolted to the underbody and certain end joints were arc welded together. MIG (wire welding with CO<sub>2</sub> gas shield) was used rather than stick welding, as it left no slag. Openings in the assembled body were closed off to preserve the interior paint that Indianapolis had applied. The body exterior was wiped clean (Indianapolis applied the primer) and sanded. The exterior was painted and baked and the body went to Body Trim. In that department the instrument cluster, wiring, glove box, door glass and hardware, windshield, weatherstrips and all such stuff was installed.

The side cargo doors were fixture adjusted for up and down and in and out, but as you know there is no fore and aft adjustment to get the gaps proper and even. The assembly plant had a long bar with a device at the end to fit over the hinge to bend it (cold) to make the door fit. That's why the hinge pins are not always straight through.

Interior panels were always a problem to install. Not really the panels themselves, but the small screws that attach them. Those are the screws with the pancake heads and tiny, tiny Philips screwdriver slots, and machine screw threads. The body and the doors almost always had the nut threads coated with some paint. The Philips slots tended to chew out because the screws were difficult to drive. That's why so many of those screw heads are sharp from being all burred up. The Staff Engineer was not sympathetic to the problem and resisted a change from machine threads to the more tolerant "sheet metal" screw thread.

The body was now lifted overhead and work was done from below. This included steering gear, gas tank, front suspension, rear suspension, powertrain, heater, brake lines,

wiring harness, clutch cable, transmission controls, wheels and tires, etc.

The powertrain rested on a hydraulic lift that was mounted on a dolly that could be positioned under the body and the powertrain was jacked up into place and secured.

Engineering specifications called for shims to be used between the transmission and the transmission mount to control rear wheel toe-in. There was no way to measure toe-in at the time of shim assembly, so the process was to pattern shim; put in a certain amount all day and see if the completed vehicles were OK. If not, a different "pattern shim" group was used the next day. Willow Run had been into production of Corvairs for a year and shared their experience with Flint. I believe the shim pattern may have been set early at Flint and continued for years without change.

When all the underneath stuff was completed, the vehicle was lifted and dropped through a hole in the second story floor onto the moving truck assembly line on the first floor. Truck production was the main event on that side of the Flint plant (passenger cars on the other side). The trucks were scheduled for build from  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton to 2 ton, and certain spaces were left open so that an FC could be dropped into place.

Work continued on the FC on the first floor line. Seats were built on that level and installed. Perhaps the battery was added. Engine throttle cable and choke cables (1961) were attached to the engine. Hub caps and the front and rear floor mats were thrown in (rolled up, as I recall). Electrical and Mechanical inspections were performed and the headlamps were aimed. What a deal! When the vehicle was lowered to the assembly line, the rear suspension was hanging down, all tucked in. When placed on the line it stayed that way; tail end high, nose down, and you had to adjust headlamps! Obviously a correction factor was used since the vehicle could not be rolled to settle out the rear until the vehicle reached the end of the line. Water test was done outside of the assembly plant main building.

That was the general processing of the FC vehicle.

## BOOMERRANGS AND IDLER ARMS

Corvanatics had a small part in making rebuilt Boomerrangs available. John Dozsa advertized in the NOV 1986 CORSA COMMUNIQUE and so far has had very few orders. John is the only one able to rebuild using new, original design parts. You Corvanatics members were hurting because of worn out parts. Now is the time to take advantage of the rebuilding service available. John can also do rebuilds of idler arms, since they use the same new, original design parts.

Contact: John Dozsa  
4800 Old Washington Road  
Sykesville, MD 21784



# Tech Topics



DELUXE GREENBRIER SPARE TIRE COVER originally came in vinyl colors to match interior colors. Looked great when new, but quite rapidly the volatiles in the tire rubber compound turned the colors to a cruddy brown. This was especially true where the cover fit tightly against the rubber. Rather than continue with that situation, the cover was changed to a charcoal color for all deluxe models. It still stained but was less objectionable in appearance. I don't really recall if the other colors were actually used in production vehicles, but I believe they were for at least 1961 models.

THE CARDBOARD PANELS IN THE REAR CORNERS, rearward of the quarter windows had a tendency to buckle and pucker between screw attachments due to humidity. A running change was made in their material and also in the heavy "cardboard" backing of all the side and door trim panels to improve their stability with respect to humidity. This probably happened around 1962 models. The trim panels were made by, as I recall, Mitchell-Bentley Co., up in the western part of Michigan's lower peninsula. M/B was also big (at least back then) with Corvette trim for Chevrolet.

ALL SEAT TRIM was cut and sewn by Chevrolet Indianapolis (Indiana). Otherwise Chevrolet Indianapolis was a sheet metal stamping plant. Chevrolet Engineering had an experimental "trim shop" that made patterns for all the seat trim. These went to Indianapolis and they, in turn, re-did them. I think there were always some hard feelings between those two groups. Indianapolis felt Engineering didn't know how to properly make sewing allowances, and lay out for minimum material usage, etc. Indianapolis sent sewn seat trim to the assembly plants, who in turn did their own thing concerning how tight or loose or crooked the trim and padding were installed to the framework. I couldn't see it at the time, and certainly the engineers and staff at Chevrolet could not see that the product would have been MUCH better if the trim design and construction and control would have been the Fisher Body type. It wasn't, because the FC people were "truck" people, and trucks were not done like passenger cars. Truck and FC seat trim had raw edges that could be wrapped  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch, or 1 inch, or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches around the frame wires and secured with clips or hog rings. This affected tightness and the feel of the seat. Fisher Body Trim had "envelopes" (I don't know the proper term) sewn into the edge ends of the trim, and some form of a "wire" slipped into it. This then was attached by hog rings to the seat frame. You couldn't do too much or too little, as there was only one place where it fit. The seat trim didn't kill the FC, but in retrospect I wish we had instigated a move toward the Fisher Body style of design.

Bob Kirkman

## A SHIFTY SUBJECT

I have been asked in the past about FC manual transmission shifters and always replied that the ones we know of on our vehicles were the only ones. There was the under-the-seat-shift-up & down type of 1961-62-63, and the floor shifter of 1963-64-65. Of course! But what's that FLOOR SHIFTER doing in the 1961 Shop Manual back in the Body Section? A copy of the illustration is included here for most of our members that do not have a shop manual. Did someone just set "something" down on the floor for an early picture? How could there be such a thing? 'Cause there never was a floor shifter that early. Or was there? The 1961 Shop Manual picture was a mystery just asking for a solution.

I obtained shift lever drawings for both the systems we know about, and from them obtained reference to the original design layout drawings, and then obtained them. The floor shifter layout had recorded that the design work was STARTED on 7-23-62 and completed on 8-16-62. This, then, proved it had nothing to do with the 1961 Shop Manual picture (which really can be seen to not have the same appearance). Then the under-seat layout was observed and it recorded that the design work was started 5-9-60. What?!! 5-9-60? The 1961 model went into production in late summer/early fall of 1960. Do you mean the under-the-seat shifter was STARTED in design only 4-5 months before production started? Talk about a rush job to complete design - test - tooling. Well if all that was as stated, what was used in the prototype vehicles before that time? The under-the-floor design layout also had several references to other, earlier layouts. So, out came those from Archives and, wonder of wonders, there was the early floor shifter as seen in the 1961 Shop Manual. Seems it was designed, some parts made, photographed, tested and rejected before production began. This early floor shifter design was started in January of 1960 by my friend Dan Crawford, who is still with CPC Engineering (previously of Chevrolet Engineering). He was later design engineer on many chassis components for modern Corvettes and continues to be a manager in CPC's Chassis Technology Center. His dad, by the way, lives up in the thumb area of Michigan, and owns two Rampsides and a Corvan. One rampside he is rebuilding and the other is kind of going back to nature. But back to the subject. There is no further reference to any yet earlier shifters. Although it seems something must have been used in the early prototypes. Whatever, that trail is stone cold.

Looking at the early floor shifter design it's easy to see why it was abandoned. The shift tube was under the gas tank (not through it) and there was another long wiggle/woggle part to connect it to the floor shifter lever, machined guides, castings, grease fittings, boots, forks and roll pins. Quite a piece of machinery. I believe tolerances, deflections, dirt and water did it in.

So I believe the mystery is solved; put to bed. We end our shifty story.

Bob Kirkman

# TECH TECH TECH TECH TECH

## FC VENT WINDOW SEALS

While attending the Convention in Chicago, I was asked about someone (anyone!) that would repro the FC vent window seals. After that, I contacted a couple of places that seem to specialize in repro rubber for old cars. At the moment, the Lynn H. Steele Co. is interested and negotiations have started. They say it takes about six months from start to finish. It should be a joy to many of us to have live rubber again to seal the vent windows. (ed. note: I installed Lynn H. Steele vent window rubber seals in my '63 Monza Convertible. The quality was EXCELLENT and the repro was FLAWLESS. I know I'll be sending in my order as soon as the product becomes available!)

## DALE MFG. FC REAR AXLE BEARINGS

Those who attended the National Convention in Chicago may have seen the Dale Mfg. display of rear axle bearings. They have devised a substitute that has the capacity and articulation necessary for an FC. Internal construction is quite different. The price will be about like the ones you see now for scarce NOS bearings. The good points are:

- Greaseable

- adjustable

- Your FC does not have to become a museum piece when NOS and used bearings are gone.

The drawbacks (if you want to call them that) are:

- The bearings are not a direct replacement, in that it is a larger outside diameter. The hole in the brake backing plate and the hole in the control arm must be greatly enlarged for fit.

- The bearing has no "puller" for use in removal. If you twist the splines off an axle shaft, or mess up the flange, there is a bit of extra work involved to remove the bearing from the bad shaft to save the bearing.

I would believe Dale Mfg. will soon announce availability. They should be congratulated for working on the problem until they found a solution.

## REAR DOOR HINGES

Rear door hinges were reviewed briefly at the Chicago Convention, but for the members not attending, here's the story.

At start of 1961 production the body rear quarter had a rubber bumper on each side that the rear door would contact if it were opened fully; about 180 degrees. The door had a reinforcement patch inside to keep it from showing a dent or ding from contact with the bumper. The rear quarter panel had enough contour that it was supposed to be stiff enough to stand the strain.

The assembly plant was experiencing handling damage that dented the body. I don't recall if the door dented also or not. The plant showed "Engineering" that a wind-caught door

would bang the bumper hard enough to dent the body, so it was an "Engineering Problem" to be solved. The assembly plant, to protect their product, began welding a metal strap/bar across the hinge so that the hinge bottomed out upon itself before the door went far enough to touch the body bumpers. Edges were ground down a bit to take the coarse off this cobble fix. The hinge-on-hinge contact does crush through the paint and result in a rust line, but the body is not damaged. I believe Engineering had to officially authorize this hinge rework so somebody could get paid for the labor. The bumper, although now useless, continued to be used because there was a hole in the quarter panel that needed something to cover it. The quantity of rear quarter panels on hand continued the bumper use. Maybe someone can tell me if any Greenbrier/Corvair 95 ever appeared without the bumper. This was before J.I.T., you know!

The hinges came from Chevrolet Indianapolis and they probably got stuck with the rework. At any rate the Engineering Department there began work to find a more engineered solution. The end result was a hinge with a metal stop pawl in a midsection notch. The pawl was, I believe, made of powdered metal. This served the same function of the strap/bar, was more consistent in opening position, and reduced paint chip and rust potential.

So, the vehicle had three hinge styles during its lifetime. I have lost track of entry date of style #2 and #3. Maybe only the shadow, Da Newell, now knows. It does not really matter because whatever you have on your vehicle was proper for the time at which it was built.

## SIDE CARGO DOOR LATCH STRIKER PLATES

Side cargo doors seem to be just made to rattle around in the body opening. Those rubber wedges top and bottom are supposed to be shimmed to take up space so the door will close far enough to latch, but be tight enough so the door won't rattle up and down. If the wedges are adjusted too tightly, the door must be slammed hard and it will eventually crack along the belt line. What has this to do with the latch striker plates top and bottom of the body? When production started, the striker plates had one "notch" for the door lock pawl to enter. The door was either latched or it was not. Top could be latched or bottom not, or the reverse. If the latch pawl was adjusted to not stick out from the door very far, and if the wedges were adjusted a bit too loose, the door would jump up and down in the body opening on certain kind of bumps and unlatch and could swing open. This happened to the staff engineer in charge of the body and he assigned his door latch engineer to put in a safety position. What this amounted to was two notches in the latch striker plate. If things were adverse and the door pawl jumped out of the full closed notch, it was still in the safety notch. The semi-loose door should now make so much noise that you knew the door needed attention. I think the double notch striker plates went into production during the 1961 model run. Some of you early 1961 owners may still have the single notch type.



# Vairs 'n Spares

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**FOR SALE: '64 MONZA**, 2 door, automatic. Not running - complete. Call Del Light, 883-6794. 3/90

**FOR SALE: '65 MONZA**, 2 door, 4-speed. Rough but running. \$450. Dell Light 883-6794. 3/90

**FOR SALE: Complete 140HP engine**, \$400. '64 95HP engine, \$300. Call Gordon Cauble (602) 299-1122 2/90

**FOR SALE: '61 LAKEWOOD**, 110/automatic. Good condition all around. \$1050. Van Pershing. 743-5185. 2/90

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**FOR SALE: '78 CAL-CAMPER / Motorhome**, 12ft on a Toyota frame, sleeps 4, 3-burner stove, sink w/ running water, oven, furnace, double bunk over cab, dinette in rear, porta-potty, AM-FM cassette w/ 10-band booster, 4 new tires, very clean motor, new heavy duty clutch, 38,800 actual miles, 20R 4 cylinder w/ 4-speed, PB, PS, cruise air conditioning in dash, new swamp cooler on roof, clear title. \$5,000 or trade? Gerald (Jerry) Lewis 746-3485. 2/90

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**PARTING: '66 Corvair**, 2d, no motor. SELLING '63 van motor, 47K miles. Misc Corvair parts. Call Ted Christianson 887-9449

**FOR SALE: '61 LAKEWOOD 1/25** resin model kit, \$25. Built and painted, \$45. Bob Jones 298-3528. 9/89

**FOR SALE: '61 GREENBRIER**, 8-door. \$2,000. Call Tom at 327-6419. 8/89

**FOR SALE: New Items** Rebuilt flywheel for early or late, bolted and balanced, \$85; Good FC axles with packed bearings, \$80 ea. Call Gordon Cauble at 299-1122.

**FOR SALE: NEW and GOOD USED PARTS.** '65 Corsa wiring harnesses - main & engine compartment; new gas door guard, \$20; used early windshield w/ weather strip, \$60; re-coned Corvair speakers, early \$15, late \$19; Other new and good used parts. Call Gordon Cauble 299-1122. 6/89

**FOR THE DO-IT-YOURELFERS:** Mag ignition wires & long rotors, plus all regular ignition items. Wrapped fan belts, air & oil filters plus viton o-rings and oil cooler seals. Call Gordon Cauble 299-1122

**FOR SALE: '65 MONZA CONVERTIBLE**, 110/automatic, light blue w/ blue interior & white top, engine completely rebuilt & body ready to paint. New top installed. Good tires. Car is driveable. Asking \$2500. Call Gordon Cauble 299-1122. 6/89

**FOR SALE: '62 MONZA 2d, AT**, restore or use as parts car; 145 engine runs, all chrome, no rust. \$350 OBO. Call Jeff, 790-9450 12/89.

**FOR SALE: Set of headers w/ mufflers and chrome tail pipes**, \$50; Jerry Lewis 746-3485 2/90

# TREASURE'S REPORT

Balance March 1, 1990.....\$1109.29

## Income:

Dues.....\$ 80.00  
 Name Tags.....\$ 9.00  
 Merchandise.....\$ 14.00  
 Advertising.....\$ 30.00  
 Total Income..... \$133.00

## Expenses:

Raffle prizes.....\$ 7.29  
 Postage.....\$ 20.00  
 Past Pres certificate..\$ 17.64  
 Name tags.....\$ 4.48  
 Corp Commission fee....\$ 10.00  
 Soda & ice (rally)....\$ 25.49  
 Total Expenses.....\$ 84.70

Balance April 1, 1990.....\$1157.59

Vic Howard



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 Ben Meeks

APRIL:

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TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

FOURTH WEDNESDAY of each month

(except December)

Piccadilly Cafeteria, 6767 E. Broadway, Tucson

6:30 pm: Parking Lot Bull Session

7:00 pm: Dinner (Optional)

7:40 pm: Meeting Starts

COMING EVENTS

18 - 20 May: Rocky Mountain Round Up - Durango, Colorado

(See Alan Atwood for details)

25 - 27 May: Dallas '90 Mini-Convension, Dallas, Texas

(See Alan Atwood for details)

31 Jul-4 Aug: National CORSA Convension, Anaheim, California

Wednesday, Apr 25: Regular Monthly TCA Meeting

Wednesday, May 2: TCA Board Meeting 7:30 at JBs, Swan & Speedway

Tucson Corvair Association  
P.O. Box 50401  
Tucson Arizona 85703



FIRST CLASS MAIL