

# The Denvair News

Volume 44, Issue 3

March 2018



## CORVAIR MEMORIES

*Kyle Nye Borrowed from Corvairs of New Mexico*

I am not a member of the Corvair Club, but my son-in-law, Joel Yelich, is a member and I thought the club might like a little article about my experiences as a Corvair owner many years ago. In my lifetime, which encompasses more years than I like to think about, I have owned just seven cars for my personal use (aside from the family sedans and RVs, which have really been family vehicles). Three of the seven were Corvairs, one was a 1974 Chevy Vega, and three more were Porsches, a 1982 924, a 1988 944 and my current 1994 968 cabriolet that I purchased in 1998. I bought my first Corvair in 1964. It was a 1962 Monza coupe with the standard engine and a "four on the floor" transmission. None of that two-speed automatic stuff for me! It was white with a red vinyl interior. If my memory is correct, I paid about \$1,200 at Ed Black's Chevrolet in Albuquerque. I "customized" it by installing seat belts, which were not standard equipment in 1962, gauges to monitor oil pressure and amperage, and a special oil filter that used a roll of toilet paper as the filtering element.

That car took me on dates with my future wife and took us on our honeymoon in 1966. In 1967 it took us on our first two-week vacation to California, where we visited Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, the San Diego Zoo and other points in the state, as well as Las Vegas, NV, and the Grand Canyon. In Yosemite National Park the

*Continued on page 2*

## Way back Machine

Cleaning, inspecting, and prepping old car stuff frees hours of mind time for rumination on various subjects. My thoughts frequently run to "Why am I doing this?", followed by the inevitable "Will it ever, ever, ever be finished?"

Project expectations have changed dramatically in the 50-plus elapsed years since I began abusing cars. Back in the day, you modified your car yourself, perhaps with the help of capable (or not!) friends, to improve or otherwise make the car more like the vision in your head. You might like customs, or drag racing. For me, it was those road race cars, lowered with big tires and a broad torque band. Always a 4-speed. Always.

That traumatized car served as your date car, your daily commuter car, your race car, and your economy car, because it was probably your ONLY car. When you changed a detail it was personal, and your relationship with the car became that much closer. Or, maybe it didn't work out the way you thought. In that case, you sucked it up and fixed it. Or maybe just tolerated, perhaps burned in a field, or even sold the thing. It was personal.

It's not much like that today. I have a truck, a sedan, and a Corvette that cover just about any driving need. The Corvair is simple nostalgia, rarely a daily driver. It's not an awesome investment, either. If I had a one-of-seventeen 1971 Hemi Barracuda with a Flux Capacitor

*Continued on page 3*

gas pump failed, but the park garage had a replacement in stock, so we were on our way after only about an hour's work by the garage mechanic. In 1968 it took us to the World's Fair in San Antonio. In about 1969 my father, who had purchased a 1965 Corvair (new, I think), wanted to get another car and suggested that I sell the '62, and give him the money from that sale in return for the '65, a pretty good bargain for me. I sold the '62 to my brother-in-law, who used it for several years to travel to school at ENMU in Portales, NM. I don't remember what he paid me for it.

I only kept the '65 a short period of time, because, although the 110-hp engine made it more responsive in acceleration than the 95-hp engine in the '62, the brakes were, in my opinion, very poor, to the extent that I did not really feel safe driving the car at, say, freeway speeds, because I was afraid that it might not stop quickly enough in an emergency. I didn't really care much for the more-sculpted styling, either.

So, I started looking for another car and, back at Ed Black's used car lot, I spotted what at the time was sort-of my dream car: a pale yellow, 1964 Monza Spyder coupe with the turbo-charged engine, black vinyl interior and "fake" wire wheel covers. The car had come from the factory with a white paint job, but a previous owner had opted to change to color to pale yellow. When I went back to look at the car again a few days later, it was no longer on the lot. I inquired what had become of the car and was told that they had "wholesaled" it to another dealer. I found that other dealer and was eventually able to purchase the car for, I think, about \$500.

I modestly "customized" that one, too, by adding wood trim around the instrument cluster, radio, and glove box, replacing the plastic shifter knob with a wooden one, and adding fancy floor mats. Shortly thereafter, the car was broken into while parked one evening at an event at Albuquerque's Civic Auditorium. Besides the broken window, the only damage to the car was that the fancy floor mats had been stolen! I was able to get the broken window fixed and the fancy floor mats replaced.

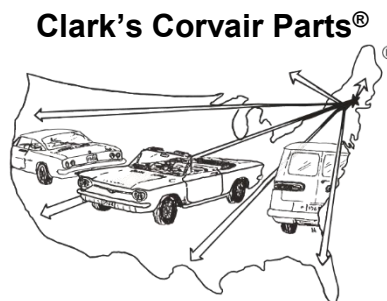
On hard acceleration there was a noticeable turbo lag. However, acceleration with the lag was really quite exhilarating, because the faster the car went, the faster it accelerated. I have been reminded of that factor whenever I have accelerated hard in my Porsches. Apparently, the German engineers like to have a somewhat uneven power band, where more torque is available at higher RPM, so, again, the faster one goes, the faster one seems to accelerate. A great feeling, however it is achieved!

During the early 1970s one could purchase fiberglass-belted radial tires, so I had a set installed on the Spyder. Big mistake! Unlike steel-belted radials, cheaper radials with fiberglass belts had a tendency to go flat on one side when parked for a while, so, not being able to finance the purchase of another set of new tires, from that time on I had a bumpy ride every time I started out after having parked the car for a few hours.

A growing family and problems with the Spyder, including seemingly inevitable, growing and somewhat massive oil leaks, eventually forced me to resort to other transportation, so in 1974 I purchased my "bright orange" Chevy Vega notchback. The saga of that poor little car is a whole 'nother story for some other time.

When I purchased the Vega in 1974, I sold the Spyder. Even though by that time the car was ten years old and had something like 100,000 miles on the odometer, the cachet of the Corvair had begun to catch on, so I was able to sell it to a Corvair enthusiast for the same \$500 that I had purchased it for five years earlier!

Would I trade my current ride to go back to any of those now-ancient Corvairs? I don't think so. More modern cars have safety features, handling characteristics and air conditioning that were just generally not available in the 1960s. No matter how lovingly the older cars have been updated or maintained, they still have those somewhat unfavorable 1960s characteristics. And I have really loved my three Porsches, especially the 968 that currently sits in my garage. But the memories of those "olden" days with pretty unique and interesting vehicles at the start of my driving experience are very important, and I will treasure those memories forever.



Our catalog lists over 15,000 parts for your Corvair. We carry engine parts, body panels, upholstery and much more! There are 1,000's of reproduced items available, pages of technical information and lots of other helpful hints. Check us out at [www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com) or call today to order a copy of our printed catalog. You will quickly see why we are the world's largest supplier of parts and all your other Corvair needs. Clark's - More than Parts!

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(413) 625-9776 [www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com) email: [clarks@corvair.com](mailto:clarks@corvair.com)

## March Dues

The Dues due list reflects the local club dues. CORSA notifies the member when national dues are due. John Dinsdale requests that you pay the local club dues to him and pay the national dues to CORSA by check or online. If your name appears on the overdue list and your dues are not paid by the following month you will be dropped from the roster.

<b>Overdue</b>	Mike Corbett John Donahue
<b>February</b>	George Evans Dexter Norris
<b>March</b>	Jerry Gertiesen John Green Paul Jarrett Joe White Jeff Sokol
<b>April</b>	Marc Miller Jim Reich Larry Yoder

overdrive, it would be worth investing in a ground-up restoration. In the case of a Corvair, it just has to be fun. And that's what it is: A Way Back Machine. Nothing else in the garage can go back in time. At the end of the day, that's why I keep turning back to the Corvair, and make the trip to the barn. It's just fun. Not the endless sanding, but the result. Not the pulled case studs or scarred lifters, but hearing the weird air-cooled flat six spool up. Excuse me now, I need to head out to the barn – spring is just around the corner, and I'll need a quick trip back to the late sixties any day now...  
Eric



Mike Pipers and Chris Kimberley's cars on Route 66 on the way to the Oklahoma Roundup.



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## Some cars from down under

Last fall John and Sandy Drage went on a tour of Australia and New Zealand. John was fascinated by the cars they saw there. Here are a few pictures of the cars they saw. Word has it that GM will discontinue production of the Holden in the near future. A pity.



## How To Find #1 Top Dead Center (TDC)

*Steve Goodman*

Over the course of 50+ years working on Corvairs, you not only learn a lot about the cars, but also develop some creative ways to deal with the most common challenges associated with these particular vehicles. In this year long series, Master Mechanic Steve Goodman will share some of his best kept secrets, and tips for how to most effectively keep your car on the road.

How To Find #1 TDC It can happen to any of us, remove the distributor and then the engine gets rotated, OR, it is forgotten at what position the rotor was pointing when the distributor was taken out. I get a panicked call about this every so often, and it just happened again a couple of weeks ago. It is not the worst of situations, and here is an easy way to find the correct position for dropping distributor back into #1 TDC again.

Top Dead Center, or TDC" is a term to describe when you have the #1 piston in an engine at the farthest position from the crank shaft, the point which it changes from an upward to a downward stroke. Remove #1 spark plug. It would be nice to have one of the remote starter buttons, but having someone bump the starter with key will work. You can also use a piece of 12ga wire as a jumper between +(pos) battery post and the purple wire going to starter solenoid.

NOTE: ensure a standard shift car is in neutral.

Either use a compression gauge, or just stick your finger to the top of the spark plug hole and watch gauge needle begin to rise, OR, feel pressure begin against the end of your finger. At that point finish rotating the engine counter clockwise with a 3/4" wrench on crank pulley bolt or use the fan belt and rotate carefully to line up the notch in the crankshaft pulley with the "0" on the timing marks. If you have an engine with a harmonic balancer you should take this opportunity to check inner/outer parts to ensure the outer ring hasn't slipped. There are hash marks across the two pieces, easy to see. Now you have the engine positioned at #1. Hold the distributor at the engine and rotate until the rotor points at #1 plug wire on distributor cap.

IMPORTANT -ensure the gasket is in place on the body of the distributor before you drop into place. Using a light, look into the rear cover where the distributor belongs and compare the slot in the oil pump position with the spade end of distributor. If it appears very close to same then slide distributor down into the hole. If it does not line up well, use a long screwdriver to rotate the oil pump slightly. The distributor will fit nicely when everything is in correct alignment DO NOT FORCE IT, it will slip in easily. There can be a little aggravation of getting past the drive gear on the crank, but just a little slight rotation of rotor, and then stab into the hole again is the trick.

NOTE: you will have to re time the engine after attaching the tie down and snugging up the nut. Remember to tighten the nut a bit more after timing is finished.

Steve Goodman is owner of Rear Engine Specialists in Golden, Colorado



Ray Klomp at New Year's Brunch.



Laura Wilshire at Steve's anniversary party.

## News You Can Use March 2018

**March 2**---General meeting of RMC at Burt/Elway Chevrolet starting time 1900hrs. After meeting program will feature lady's crafts and hobbies. All ladies are invited to bring their favorite craft hobby of sewing/crochet/ceramics/photography etc. and show it off.

**March 3**---Golden Super Cruise if weather is decent.

No event scheduled for March yet. Watch your email however, if weather gives a break I will try the first CORVAIRS n CHEESEBURGERS of 2018. Time change occurs in mid-March too so that will allow for better afternoon plans.

**April 6**---General meeting of RMC at Burt/Elway Chevrolet starting time 1900hrs. After meeting program will be thoughts of past Tri-state Corvair Meets. Everyone is invited to share something that stood out as GREAT or just the experience of the weekend.

**Saturday, April 14th, 9am-1pm:** "25th Annual School of Mines E-Days Car Show Golden, CO. As we do every year, members of both the RMC and PPCC will gather together prior to the show at 8am in the Century Link parking lot at 19th and Jackson in Golden. From there, we'll roll all the Vairs into the event at the same time, so we're all lined up together. Registration begins at 8:30 AM and the show starts at 9:00 AM and will go till 1:00 PM. Registration includes 1 T-shirt. You can register multiple vehicles, just fill out the form for each vehicle you plan on showing.

**Late addition:** Tri-State tune up scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup>. More news later

**June 8 10 (Fri-Sun):** The 2018 Tri-State Meet at Crested Butte, CO. This year's event marks the 34th time the three host clubs (CNM, PPCC, and RMC) have gotten together. Here's a great opportunity for all of our newer members to get their cars out for a nice early summer road trip. This year, the event is being hosted by the Rocky Mountain Corsa club, with Rick Beets heading up the planning efforts. The host hotel has been confirmed as The Grand Lodge at Crested Butte, 6 Emmons Rd, Crested Butte, CO 81225. BOOK NOW!! Visit <http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org/2018> for more information on the event and to order your event T-shirt. Make those reservations now, rooms are going fast!

Remember too that if someone decides to attend a get together somewhere use the RMC list to alert others so maybe more than just one Corvair is present. Also drive your Corvairs every chance you get. It is not only fun but also good advertising for the club. There are a lot of Corvair owners in the Denver area that are not club members. If they see Corvairs being used maybe they will join us.



Tim and Lilly Shortle at the Taos Tri-State.



Linda and Bud Duncan at the club's annual picnic.

**Rocky Mountain Corsa** (RMC) has been a chartered chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA) since October 1974, and is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of Corvair automobiles.

**The Denver News** is a monthly publication for members and affiliates of Rocky Mountain Corsa. The Denver News is now available as a PDF by request to the Editor.

**Editorial Contributions** We encourage your participation! Please forward stories, ideas, jokes, recipes, and/or photos to the Editor. Content must be received by the 15th of the month prior to the desired publication month. Electronic files are *mucho* preferred.

**Classified Ads** Individual RMC member ads are free. Classified ads are limited to 25 words, and may include a photo. All ads will run for three issues. Non-members may advertise for \$10.00. Please submit ads to the Editor, with payment due in advance to the Treasurer. Please make checks out to RMC.

**Business Advertising** Commercial advertisers are welcome. The following per-issue rates apply:

Business card size – \$2.50

¼ page – \$5.00

½ page – \$10.00

Full page – \$20.00

### **RMC Merchandise**

Past event t-shirts, RMC name badges and other merchandise are available. Please contact Earl Nelson for a current list of goodies.

### **RMC Mailing Address**

Correspondence, ads, & articles may be snail-mailed to:

RMC

PO Box 27058

Lakewood, CO 80227-0058

**Web Site:** [www.rockymountaincorsa.org](http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org)

### **Membership & Dues**

Rocky Mountain Corsa annual dues are \$25.00, Corvair Society of America (CORSA) annual dues are \$45.00, which includes a subscription to the Corsa Communique, an award-winning monthly magazine. Combined dues are \$70.00 annually. Checks should be payable to RMC, mailed to: *RMC, c/o John Dinsdale, 3240 Billings St., Aurora, CO 80011-2231*

### **Monthly Meeting**

RMC holds meetings the 1st Friday of each month at our host dealership, Elway Chevrolet, 5200 South Broadway in Englewood. Join us at 7:00 PM in the upstairs meeting room.

### **RMC Officers**

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## Rocky Mountain CORSA Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** February 2, 2018

**Called to Order:** 7:00 pm

**Location:** Elway Chevrolet

**# Present:** Not recorded

Guests, long distance, and new members: None.

### Standard Business:

Minutes from past meeting: The January minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: End of January balance was \$5,507.83. The Treasurer's report was accepted. Mailing address for CORSA changed. PO Box 68 Maple Plain MN 55359.

### Mailbag:

Nothing to report.

### Old Business:

- Nametag update: Melissa and Natalie Brereton got badges, and Jeanne Olwine's badge will be sent shortly.
- Tri-State. Book your room. ½ of the reserved rooms are booked. T Shirt orders are working on website. Please register on our site for the Tri-State as well.

### New Business:

- It has been difficult to get a garage tour going so there is no event for March so far.
- Dates were filled in on the calendar section below.
- There was discussion of a location for the picnic in August. The consensus of those present is that the site worked well. Dusty Dodge will make the reservation for us.
- Eric Schakel discussed plans in the work for he and Linae to travel some or all of Route 66. He shared his enthusiasm and a very detailed book on Route 66. Eric suggested that some RMC members may want to join for a portion of the trip.
- Steve reminded us of the visit to an assisted living center in Feb 2016 to visit Ester, who had a Corvair in the past. You can find it on YouTube under "Corvair Lady". Steve showed a book on caregiving in which there is both an acknowledgement and a 2-page discussion of the event. A relative, Tim Renaud, bought a '62 Corvair but has not yet engaged with the club.
- John Dinsdale reported that the bill for the New Year's Brunch was higher than expected because some items like wine are not included. Gratuity was not included in the \$22 fee.

### Upcoming Events:

March 2 (Fri)	Next meeting, Elway Chevrolet, 7pm.
April 14	E Days Car Show, School of Mines
April or May	North Tech Session TBA
May 20 (Sun)	Tri-State Tune Up
June 8-10	Tri-State Corvair Meet, Crested Butte
July 23-28	CORSA Convention, Pittsburgh
August	Dale Wilshire Memorial Picnic
Sept/Oct	Fall Color tour
Dec	Holiday Party
Jan	New Year's Brunch

### Break Time:

Refreshments Tonight: Bruce Parizek      March: Dale Neilsen      April: Caron Wetter

**Entertainment:** Toy / literatures swap meet or just show it off.

John Dawson brought Road and Track magazines and Hot Rod to give away. Rob Brereton brought items to show, Chevy Spotter's guide, 1960 Popular Mechanics Corvair review issue, GM First 75 Years Anniversary book, and books on gas stations and train stations.

March Entertainment: Ladies crafts.

**50/50 Raffle:** Amount to Club: \$35

To Winner: \$35

Winner: Kory Levin

**Adjourned:** 8:38 pm

**Respectfully Submitted by:** Rob Brereton