
The Denver News

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Almost Ready For Springtime!

- Rob Brereton

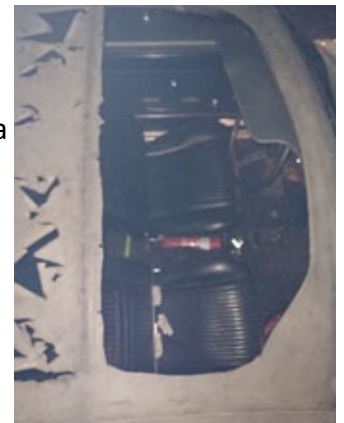
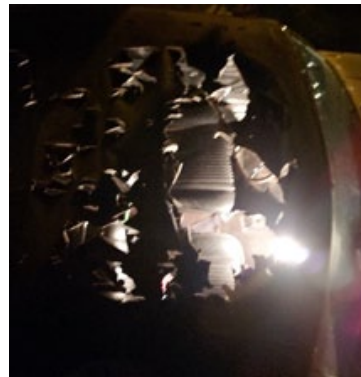


Our 1965 Corsa convertible came to us with a tired black top showing stitching coming out and a few small tears, a hazy and scratched back window, plus a boot that was a significant challenge to snap down. It was going to need replacement down the road. After dropping a valve seat, work was underway in our driveway when a monumental July hailstorm hit.

We had two newer cars damaged by hail and also replaced the house roof. But since the convertible was under a cover, I didn't realize for a week how badly the top was damaged. The body is fine with a few dings in the trim.

See below for a convertible with a sunroof! I was ready for a test drive shortly before the Wilshire picnic and I couldn't leave that shredded vinyl hanging down, so I got the scissors out. (First picture is with cage lamp inside.)

I asked around for references on where to take it. Mike Piper installs his own, which is a pretty monumental job. I didn't have an open garage space at the time and couldn't take on an all-day or multiday project with the car out in the open. Besides, I was worried about screwing up some expensive material! Downside, this is a lot of labor \$\$!



Rick Beets pointed me to Arthur, owner of Auto Trim Specialists on Dahlia and Evans in Denver. In business since 1974, my initial impression was that, like many classic car specialties, it was filled with, well, "experienced" workers who have a passion for what they do and have been there a long time. Nobody looked to be younger than me, and I'm not young. I appreciate the benefit of experience, as well as the no-nonsense approach. Arthur (not Art!) is knowledgeable, direct, open and honest and juggles a shop full of everything from

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Groundhogs aside, we'll probably have reasonably dependable springtime somewhere in the near future. Corvair adventures await! Maybe a road trip? How about attending the Tri-State, or the CORSA National Convention? Don't forget the hardy souls who still road race the things with RMVR, they (okay, WE) enjoy Corvair support at the tracks...



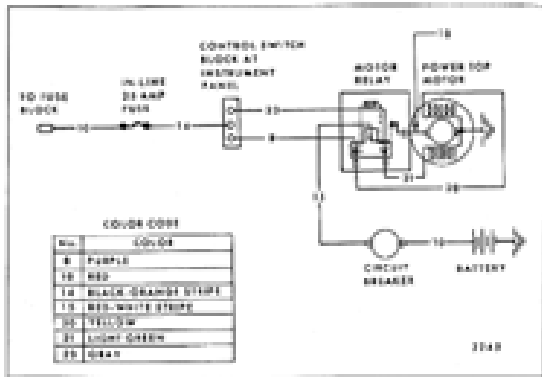


convertible tops to hot rod interiors to furniture upholstery to insurance work in a storefront business on Evans stacked with fabrics and vinyl on rolls, yet he seems to know where everything is. He isn't on the computer much but picks up the phone for all his business. The carbon copy invoices will be familiar to customers of our favorite Corvair shop and his logo appears to be the original 1974 design! Someone hosts a very nice site for them at autotrimspecialist.com.

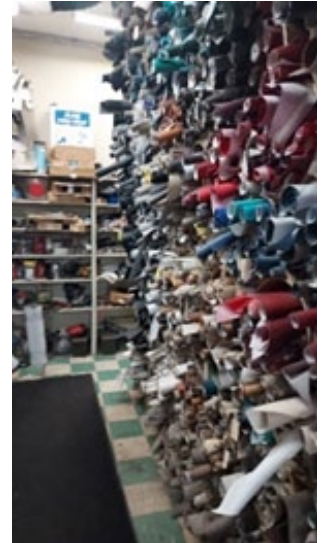
We met in September and got pricing and discussed which top to use. After looking at catalogs for the tops I went with E-Z On over Robbins. Arthur recommended either of these over Kee

or Clark's, and he has experience with all of them. In October I put 1/2 down via check, and Arthur ordered the top, well, and boot.

The agreement was that I ensure the electrical portion worked, while they would take care of the mechanical adjustments. The drive cables were disconnected as it had



always been balky and unreliable, and run with a cordless drill and helped along by hand. I prefer manual tops for simplicity but the power top is original on a highly optioned car so it was going to stay, besides there are top frame differences. I located the Fisher Body Service Manual for 1966 (Thanks, Corvair Center) for power convertible top info and followed the troubleshooting steps. I tested the electric alone and found that the 40A circuit breaker was faulty or weak, tripping easily and taking a while to cool down and operate again. So for the time being I bypassed it, connecting battery to

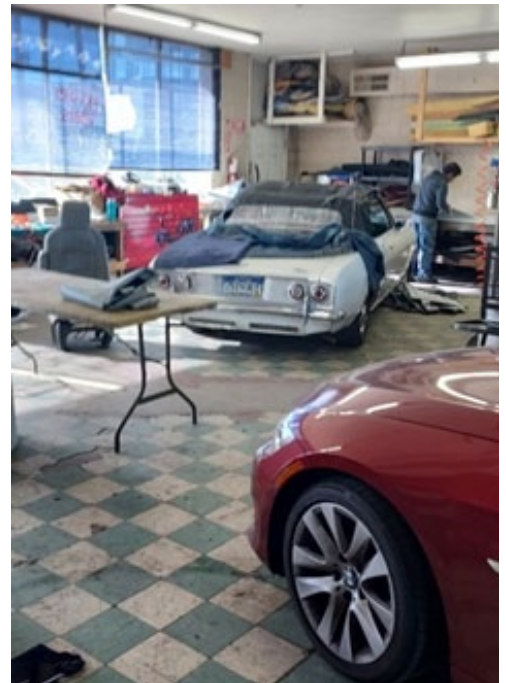


protected side. Operation was still intermittent, so the suspect was the switch. Like many automotive switches of the time I was able to work the housing open, clean the contacts, and reassemble it. I didn't think to take pictures at the time. Watch out for springs! After that, it worked like a charm every time. I was surprised that the power top circuit is hot all the time, no key is needed, so watch those connections when troubleshooting!

I polled the club for a working circuit breaker, not wanting to give it to installers without circuit protection. Our new member Tony Mueller had several used ones from his Camaro convertibles, where they live under the hood and provide power to the hydraulic pump. I borrowed a few but chose the one with the same 40A current rating despite a different shape. I used just one screw since the hole pattern was different. I later replaced it with a new Clark's exact replacement.

Soon after that the order arrived and on Wednesday, Nov 13, I took the car in and rode the bus home.

On Thursday, Arthur called to say the dry and brittle seals around the top would need to be replaced. There are 6 on the convertible top frame plus the front header seal that meets the windshield. His suppliers had them for \$965 for the set but Arthur was happy to let me order from Clark's where I could get the same set for under \$500. I did 2-day delivery to avoid tying up the shop and they arrived a day early on Sunday. He only charged labor for the header seal (only \$40), as the other seals had to come out anyway. I dropped the seals off over first thing Monday and got to see the car part-way through the job, with the new top laid out on the now-empty frame.



When I picked it up I realized that the boot had not been replaced due to an omission in ordering. Arthur ordered it and since it was not really top-down weather I said not to rush it. It arrived in mid-December, and



OOPS!

with holidays and then the cold snap and snow, I didn't get back over to have it installed until mid-January. Incidentally they also can make their own boots, but not in the factory style. The car is pretty original so I opted for the factory type.

When I arrived, there was a scramble to find it, because there was a bit more chaos than usual. A car had crashed into the corner of the building on New Year's Eve, requiring them to move everything out of the now-boarded-up corner room until a permanent repair could be made to the brick wall. Arthur said this was the 3rd corner hit since they opened there and the worst damage yet!



The boot was located and a space inside opened up. I drove in and a younger guy named Brandon installed it. I watched, assisted when asked, and took in the atmosphere of this amazing shop, standing by the signs that prohibit customers in these areas. There's material stored to the ceiling and worn checkered linoleum floors and someone's custom painted Spiderman tool cart, and everything from modern to vintage to custom rolling through. Later Arthur was heading out to an appointment and told me that his son would take care of me; it turns out Brandon is his son, who has been working there since he was 18. He's the youngest guy at 36 with "only" 18 years' experience under his belt. Hopefully he will carry on the tradition and keep this remarkable shop running for many years to come.

I have a bit more to do to finish things, adjusting windows to fit correctly, and mounting the motor better. I need a better look at the worm drive on one side which still sounds a bit rough but works. I think it would have been ideal to do the top after body and paint but the hail rearranged my plans.

Still, it's great to have the new top on and I expect it to last many more years. Time to start using it!



auto trim specialists, inc.
 RUDY GONZALES
 4771 East Evans
 Denver, Colo. 80222
 Phone 757-9463

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A Posit...

- Ken Schiffner

It is the late 1950's and AI doesn't exist. Computers are rare, slide rules are common. Gasoline prices are rising. Veterans of recent wars are buying homes and starting or raising families on limited budgets. Incomes are strained and therefore buyers seek value in purchases, particularly big purchases like vehicles. Compact foreign cars are "invading" the US automotive market. The big US automakers need vehicles with which to compete.

It is a "can-do" era however. Folks with talent in entertainment, athletics, design, fashion get lots of attention and rewards for their skills. Firms hire scientists and engineers for their inventive skills, some talents of which were proven during the war years.

Ed Cole at Chevrolet responds. He forms teams with experience in vehicle dynamics, gasoline engine design, styling, and marketing. He has vehicle body designers submit designs that are marketable for the needs of the time. Human intelligence skills, talents, being applied.

Those minds then applied resources, cost estimates are produced, surveys are made, meetings are held as are presentations to upper management who apply their own experience and links to funding.

And a final decision is made to build it. The Corvair.

Now, assume Artificial Intelligence, AI, existed in that era. Question (a posit): would the Corvair have been built or even be considered?

A database search likely would have revealed that most potential buyers wanted front engine cars. Many did not know or care about "understeer" or "oversteer". Many thought longer, lower, wider meant better and safer. Data likely would show that though gasoline prices were rising, people were paying. Folks who already owned a "big" car might, perhaps want a second, smaller, one, but were not pressured to do so. What would AI reveal?

Corvair? I doubt it. Why? Because human brains and intelligence don't function like a database-linked computer. AI doesn't allow for serendipity, "gut feelings", chance, or the powerful timeless human desire to simply create.

The Corvair was built because creative humans of various experiences, skills, and training wanted to build it. Was there a chance of success? Sure. Chance of failure? Of course.

But did they still want to build the Corvair?

Posit-ively. And did.

The Very First Chevrolet Corvair...

No AI here! How many remember that the first Chevrolet to wear the Corvair name was a GT coupe prototype based on the newly-introduced Corvette, displayed as a potential 1955 model at the Motorama? Of course, as the image to the right confirms, it had to be painted RED for maximum visual impact...

Image below shows one of the original show cars under current restoration. Interviews with GM veterans of the era suggest that as many as five were built.

The first Corvette coupes were the split-window C2 versions, introduced as 1963 models. The Corvair name, of course, was by then already in widespread use elsewhere in Chevy's empire...



President's Letter, February 2025

Hi all!

I won't apologize this time, but our illustrious editor was again forced to shake me out of my stupor to take care of this "brain dump." As I've observed to some, this retirement business has caused me to dig into projects put off before with the excuse reason they would take time to complete. Yes, they do...

So, I've been retired for two months. The promise to myself was I'd spend about ½ of my time working on the "once blue car" and the other ½ trying to regain control of my basement. We did make a trip to Long Beach, CA for a celebration of life but that's not all of my "spare" time. My former employer has asked me to come back a day per week to watch over the building until they hire a new building manager. That will hopefully be temporary. There is a part time 'youngling" available, but he happened to be out the day I had the privilege of fixing a broken exterior door closer. There was about 60 minutes of my usefulness involved as a result. I chose not to sit in my old cubicle to avoid the notion I'm doing engineering, but I've had a lot of conversations in this higher traffic spot with lots of questions about what the near to retirement folks need to think about. At this point, no engineering related questions, but Medicare related. My car excuse is that I'd like to wait until it is above freezing before I spend time crawling under the blue car. I drove the red car in some less than dry conditions and I now had a 50-degree day to wash it so it looks better now. The stock show is over so now it has warmed up some, but I caution folks that warm days this time of year can lead to heavy snows and bad weather so stay alert. Fingers crossed... Whining switch moved to standby.

The 2025 Tri-State effort continues. The venue, caterer, lodging and menu have been worked out, there is a tee shirt design, and Dale has the website up again for registration. I am not the committee, but I think the car show and banquet venues are pretty good. The banquet venue is in a really interesting re-purposed historic building. I'm not sure of the vintage but several of the nearby buildings are also refurbished historic buildings. I have offered that anybody complaining about the venue will have to listen to me for at least 30 minutes talking about the interesting aspects I see... Please sign up as soon as possible to assist in getting a count of attendees for planning purposes. Paul is reaching out to the other Tri-State clubs, including Bonneville (Salt Lake). He is also in the process of getting an announcement in the CORSA Communique and letting other nearby clubs know who have attended in the past.

We are still planning to meet with the leadership of the clubs to work out what we do for Tri-States in the future. I have not hit this lately, but I need to get more involved. As I've noted before, Bonneville is making an effort to revitalize their club and are interested in teaming in the Tri-Strate meets going forward. We actually don't have many RMC meetings to present ideas before the Tri-State, so I've procrastinated myself into a bit of a corner.

We had an RMC Board meeting where we made a strong effort to review some changes to the bylaws. We are not done yet but once we have another meeting to finish up, we'll present the revisions twice to the membership before a vote to make the changes will be called. So far, I'd characterize the changes as housecleaning and fixing some inconsistencies.

The club also has a request for a donation to national CORSA to assist with the increased costs for the convention. We'll discuss this at the meeting on February 7th. We need approval from the membership for the donation to national CORSA.

Also, as a club we need to work out a position paper to share with the other Tri-State Clubs before the Trinidad Tri-State meeting. I'll see what I can do, along with the board before we offer this to the membership for discussion.

There is ongoing research into national CORSA membership as a requirement for RMC membership. That has been put off until after the 2025 membership renewals are done to see where we stand.

I've managed to eat up more lines than I intended once again. There are starting to be some event dates coming in my email so once the weather warms up, we may be busy again. The National CORSA convention is coming up right before the Tri-State. I'm currently planning to go, probably driving the red car.

Our next scheduled RMC meeting is 7 February 2025 at Elway Chevrolet at the regular time of 19:00 hrs (7:00 PM). This notice may be after the meeting, so I hope all went well.

I hope I saw many of you at the RMC meeting. I also hope the new year is going well for you all. Please stay healthy and warm.

- Mike

Rocky Mountain Corsa Official BS & Contacts

Rocky Mountain Corsa (RMC) has been a chartered chapter (#802) of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA) since October 1974, and is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of Corvair automobiles.

The Denvair News is a monthly publication for members and affiliates of Rocky Mountain Corsa.

Editorial Contributions

We encourage your participation! Please forward stories, ideas, jokes, recipes, and/or photos to the Editor. Content must be received by the 20th of the month prior to the desired publication month. Electronic files are preferred, pictures are awesome, but please include descriptions!

Classified Ads

I don't recall RMC doing paid ads in this fine newsletter since the Reagan Administration. Should this section be updated or eliminated now that RMC has a well-maintained web site?

Business Advertising

Ditto Editor rant above - much the same applies.

RMC Mailing Address

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

RMC
PO Box 27058
Lakewood, CO 80227-0058

Membership & Dues

Rocky Mountain Corsa annual dues are \$25.00, due each year by February 28. Checks should be payable to RMC, mailed to **RMC, c/o John Dinsdale, 3240 Billings St., Aurora, CO 80011-2231**. Dues may also be paid online via PayPal at this link: www.rockymountaincorsa.org/dues

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 (above Parts Department).

RMC Officers & Appointees

President: Mike Piper

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RMC Corvair Happenings!

- Friday, February 7, 2025 — RMC Meeting, 7:00 pm at Elway Chevrolet
- May 20 - 23 — CORSA International Convention, San Luis Obispo, CA
- May 30 - June 1 — 2025 Tri-State Meet, Trinidad, CO. See RMC web site to register!
- Friday, March 7, 2025 — RMC Meeting, 7:00 pm at Elway Chevrolet



Rocky Mountain Corsa Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 3, 2025

Called to Order: 7:02 pm

Location: John Elway Chevrolet, Englewood CO **# Present:** 12 on site, 3 on Zoom.

Guests, long distance, new members:

- New members Tony Mueller and Joe DeCrescentis were in attendance.

Standard Business:

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes from November and December meeting were reviewed and approved. The December minutes captured only the election results from our 2-minute meeting.

It was reported that a new member name was listed incorrectly in the November minutes. The secretary heard "Glasgow" while our new member in November was Larry "Blasco."

Treasurer's Report: The end of December / end of year balance was \$7,142.66. Treasurer's Report was approved.

Mailbag: No other mail.

Old Business:

- No snacks planned for tonight.
- Membership: Dues are due, and check your email info. New Badges were shown around, members can get one for \$10, new members get one free when joining.
- Thanks, Eric, for a great short newsletter on short notice. Please contribute your articles, with pictures.
- Rick Beets CCCC update: Bylaw updates for member clubs, need to adjust to allow smaller clubs to remain members.
 - Gave an overview for new members of what CCCC is and what it does as well as some events including the air / car show fundraiser and the Forney Museum dusting day
 - Dues are set at \$50 per club + \$4 / CO member, which was \$238 last year.
 - Dale noted that the CCCC webpage has a listing for our club but the link does not get to our site. Rick will address at next CCCC meeting or directly with the webmaster.
- Tri-State discussion took much of the meeting. The 3 basic entities needed are a motel / hotel, place for a car show, and a banquet. The first two are complete, while there was a proposed change of venue for banquet to Mt. Carmel Wellness Center. The Tri-State Committee will meet and confirm the path forward, taking into account impact to existing arrangements such as Commons use on the show day, catering, and street closure for show and whether deposit from original venue can be returned. The committee will vote on the course of action and will report to the club at next meeting.
- Officers were elected at the Holiday Party: President Mike Piper, VP John Dawson, Treasurer John Dinsdale, Secretary Rob Brereton, and Member at Large Tony Lawler.

New Business:

- Report from Holiday Party—36 in attendance, great fun on the gift exchange and a great Toys for Tots collection.
- Report from New Year's Brunch. 5 Corvairs, cold and windy. 20 or 21 were in attendance. The food and service were great as always.
- Several names on RMC-list needed updated, including Kevin Shipman. AOL addresses reject the list serv, so please add to safe senders list.
- Drive-by in Co Springs, 5 cars, ended up as a meet and greet than a ride or drive by.
- Discussion of other social activities, engagement for spouses.
- Board meeting to be planned.
- There was a discussion of renewed interest by Bonneville UT club of involvement in the Tri-State. They are a small club with 3-5 members. They have had a good showing at the more western Tri-States but have never hosted. They expressed interest in hosting or participating. Steve is gathering input from our club on Tri-State interests.
- Steve will conduct a phone survey to determine who is a CORSA member to add info to the roster.
- Bruce moved that the club pay for the Zoom membership we use to engage those who can't attend in person. Paul seconded, a vote was held and the motion passed. Mike will submit a receipt for reimbursement.

Activities:

- February 7 (Fri) Regular meeting, Elway Chevrolet
- Standing Shows:
 - Adam's Polishes Cars & Coffee: Lafayette, 1st Sats 7-10 at Flatirons Church, Thornton 3rd Sats 7-10 at Denver Premium Outlets.
 - Golden Super Cruise, first Saturday year-round (unofficially).
 - WeatherTech Cars, Tacos and Doggos on 2nd Sundays at WeatherTech Lot in Broomfield.

For Sale or Wanted, Recently Purchased, Projects

Given the late ending we didn't discuss much about projects. John Dinsdale asked if Dale still wanted telescoping column. Yes, he does.

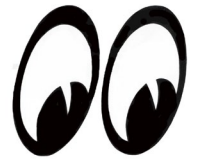
50/50 Raffle: \$25 Club \$25 member, winner Rob Brereton.

Meeting adjourned 8:47pm

Respectfully by Rob Brereton

Editorial Ramblings

- Eric Schakel



The Gray Season

I have three Corvair LM coupes. All three run, two are licensed and insured, and the remaining one will never again be street legal. And none of them are currently in comfortable, reliable street driving condition.

The Stinger, my vintage road race ride for the past 24 years, has all of the legal street equipment, but no heat or defrost, and an engine that is, mmm, fussy. And loud. Very loud as currently configured...

The Maroon Car (aka Joe Car, aka Pig) has a wonderful engine and drivetrain, good suspension, but no interior, no lights, no dash, but is equipped with a collection of rust vents that need to be addressed to assuage my fragile psyche. Did I mention the paint has faded off and that super-flexible engine leaks like an 1880 oil well?

And then there's the Ringer, the Vintage-Racer-In-Waiting. Waiting for me to wrap up the technical details and fab up the minimal lightweight wiring harness. The engine is absolutely fresh and has been bench-run, and the Yenko close ratio 4-speed and 3.27 4-spider posi axle are ready to rock and roll.

In some ways, it's a frustration of riches. I want the Stinger to be restored to full street functionality, I want the Ringer to be ready to be on the grid this spring, and I really want the Maroon car to be restored to reliable 'daily driver' status.

All I need is time and determination. The race car has to come first, as the clock is ticking on my ability to maintain my competition license. But the Stinger is so, so close... And the Maroon Car, well, you probably see where I'm going.

That's enough for this month, suddenly I'm feeling a strong urge to head out to my shop.