

NOV/DEC 94

THE PREZ SEZ

Thanks for a fun year gang! The pizza party and over night excursion to Ohio will be long remembered, not to mention the all wet national convention in Williamsburg. Hope you enjoyed the goodie bags on the Sharon and Grove City event. Dick Breier made the club a cool \$300 plus on the Hershey bus trip, and could have filled two buses!

Carole and I had to miss the Vintage Grand Prix, The Steel City Classics show, and the Hartwood Acres events this year, unfortunately. We'll try to arrange our schedules better in 1995. I did make the Don Baker rally in November, had a super time, but still got lost even with Pat Greenwald navigating. I guess I'm the problem on these darn rallies and not Carole!

Here's a big thank you to everyone who worked so hard to pull these events off, and a huge thank you to my fellow officers and board members. Everyone, please personally thank Wayne & Judy Jones and Dale & Ellen Smith for getting the Journals out despite Wayne's eye operations and long recovery period. Wayne has been saving us big bucks on printing charges. These savings along with no rent has grown the treasury to a comfortable \$1100 plus. The 1995 officers will have enough financial flexibility to plan some big events, parties, and perhaps projects such as club jackets, etc.

Mark Aug. 13 on your 1995 calender as soon as you get one: Ralph & Joanna Shearer will be leading us on a picnic & Pontoon boat adventure to Deep Creek Lake, Md. Are they super new members, or what? Carole & I will be taking you back to Titusville in May or June. Wayne & Judy are thinking October for an overnight outing to the Air Force Museum in Dayton, perhaps as a joint event with the Friends of Corvair Club.

Very new members Bob & Dorothy Radzevich are planning to take us to Conneaut Lake in 1996!!

The 95 officers may want to take us back toward where we were prior to this year. I sincerely hope that we don't go back to paying rent or burning out Vair Street Journal editors.

Top 10+ Reasons to own a Corvair!

By Bill Artzberger

The name Corvair seems to immediately stir up a relationship with Ralph Nader. Ask anyone about the Corvair and they will state unequivocally that "Nader was the one who killed the Corvair!"

So, let's begin to set the record straight. The Corvair entered the automotive world in September of 1959 as the 1960 model. The first series of look-alikes continued through 1964. Then, in the fall of 1964, the new series arrived as the 1965 model. It continued through 1969. The Corvair covered a span of 10 years with new models for each year... a total U.S. production of two million cars.

The early 1960 models, priced at \$1,869, were to compete with the ever-popular Volkswagen, the new Ford Falcon, the Plymouth Valiant, and the AMC Rambler. Although America was feeling the effects of a cyclic recession, an austere low-priced automobile was not what buyers were searching for.

The Corvair was outsold by "the other" more conventional and slightly more appealing compacts. But something happened in May of 1960. This milestone changed the way American autos would be built for years to come, and has endured to this day!

The Corvair Monza was born. The Monza was the sporty car with handsome, comfortable, colored vinyl front bucket seats, plush matching-colored carpeting, and quilted embossed vinyl door panels. The bright chrome-plated special door handles and window regulators were a compliment to the good looking armrests and flashed chrome trim. Further, the polished aluminum instrument panel and matching glove box door (with a Monza medallion) evoked a feeling of luxury. The thin, color-matched, deep-dished steering wheel with a chromed horn ring and Monza horn button added the finishing touches to the Monza sports car interior.

The exterior was equally pleasing. Stainless steel and bright anodized aluminum trim in eye-catching places, along with stainless steel full wheel covers gave the customers just what they wanted.

The Corvair Monza of mid-1960 was the automobile that set the trend for American car styling thereafter. General Motors sold approximately 12,000 in the next four months. As a follow-up, the Monza sold near 150,000 in 1961 and 220,000 in 1962.

But wait, if the Monza interior was not enough, another first was in store. To give car buyers the high performance and appearance they demanded, a new turbocharged engine was offered rated at 150 hp! This was christened the Monza Spyder. The Spyder included another special dashboard with a tachometer and a turbo boost gauge.

Our Top 10+ reasons to own a Corvair:

1. **Collectibility** A genuine "Milestone," "Special Interest," and one of today's most affordable collector cars.
2. **Engineering** A marvel of innovation and automotive engineering.
3. **Sportiness** Sporty Monza interiors and great looking convertibles.
4. **Raceable** Famous at sports car events, good autocross (gymkhana, pylon racing) car.
5. **Handling** Ahead-of-its-time four-wheel independent suspension.
6. **Lightness** All-aluminum engine with steel cylinders.
7. **Good breathers** Turbocharged or four-carburetor options (Spyder or Corsa series).
8. **House-trained** Corvairs do not leak oil (if re-sealed with Viton seals).
9. **Reliability** Corvairs do not throw fan belts (when using the proper high-cord belt).
10. **Good parts availability** Reasonable prices.
11. **Proven safety** The only automobile in the United States ever proven by the U.S. Department of Transportation to be safe to drive. (The only car known to be tested for that reason!)

Properly set up, tuned, and "tweaked," the Spyder would run the quarter-mile drag strip in the 17.5 second range at 80-85 mph. Not too bad!

And by 1964, things got better! The old 145-cid engine was stroked to 164 cid. The horsepower was raised again. Now, the drag strip times were increased to near 90 mph and in the low 17s.

Nineteen sixty-five was both a good and bad year for the Corvair. A brand new body style was on-hand with engineering changes to the four-wheel independent suspension. The trailing arm rear suspension was introduced and in effect, the Corvair was another new car.

Magazine writers could not praise the new Corvair enough. Photographers could not find a bad angle to take a picture. The coupes and four-doors were true pillarless hardtops. To top this, the 180-hp turbo was carried over and a new four carburetor engine was offered. The Spyder designation for the turbocharged version was dropped in favor of a new name - Corsa. The Corsa nameplate included both the 140-hp four-carb engine and the 180-hp turbo engine.

The Corsa included an exceptional dashboard, with a large tachometer, a turbo boost gauge (where applicable) and a cylinder head temperature gauge. Some writers still claim it to be as attractive and functional as any ever designed.

The drag strip times for the new Corvair with either the turbo engine or the four carburetor engine increased only slightly.

With the trailing arm suspension, the new 1965 model displayed great possibilities for a true racing car. Don Yenko, a Chevrolet dealer near Pittsburgh, Pa., a speed merchant, and a highly accomplished race car driver was the first to recognize this possibility. He immediately created the "Yenko Stinger." At least 125 were built in various stages of modification. The most powerful was a sizzling 240-hp version - over 10 hp per 100 pounds of automobile. These were campaigned with great success within the Sports Car Club of America road racing circuits.

As of this writing, many modified and Yenko-prepared Corvairs are still alive and performing well in the sports car racing circuits.

And for the occasional autocross (gymkhana, pylon racing) driver, all that seems necessary to compete in these activities is a suitable set of radial tires with the correct pressures, and to make a few front and rear camber adjustments. You will have a lot of fun with a competitive automobile that is (plus or minus) 30 years old!

We mentioned that 1965 was both a good year and a bad year for the Corvair. The bad part was that the 1964/2 Mustang with the largest sales and ad campaign ever known to the auto world had arrived.

The message was on the wall. The Mustang with a V-8 was eventually scheduled to be the Indianapolis pace car. The musclecar race was on. And no one would buy a six-cylinder car when they could buy a V-8 for nearly the same price.

GM recognized that the Corvair had its time.

In April of 1965, only seven months after the new series Corvair was introduced, the word from the top was: "Discontinue development... continue to meet safety and pollution requirements only."

GM had several replacements ready to take the Corvair's place. There was the Chevy II Nova, the attractive Chevelle Malibu, and the sporty Camaro waiting behind the curtains for 1967. The Corvair engine had always been expensive to make and was a major cost in the Corvair's design. It was not cost-effective to re-design the engine or to try to replace it with a V-8 or anything larger or heavier. The car was the epitome of balance with the engine it had. The Corvair had come to the end of its road.

You will notice that up to this paragraph, the name Ralph Nader has not been mentioned (except in the lead paragraph). The reason being that up to this point, he had little to do with the Corvair. He did not enter the public picture until November of 1965 (after the word to cancel the Corvair was made in April of that year).

Nader first drew attention to himself with an article he had written titled "The Safe Car You Can't Buy." At that time he was gaining popularity as a consumer advocate.

In November of 1965, his book *Unsafe At Any Speed* arrived on the bookshelves. In his book, he emphatically stated that early Corvairs (1960-'63) with rear swing axles handled poorly and were dangerous to drive. He further stated that GM highly improved the 1964 models with an added front away bar and a rear transverse spring.

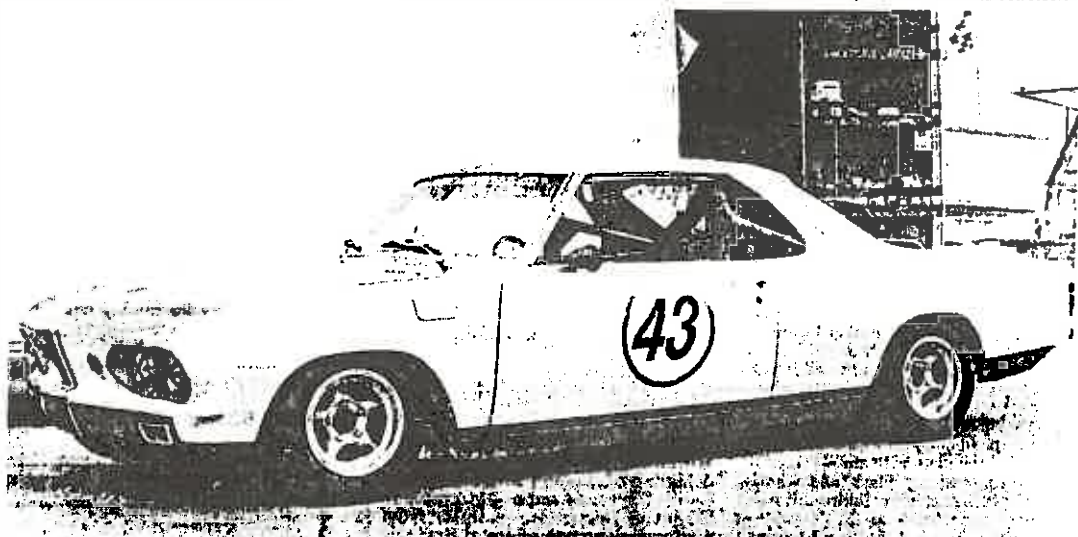
Nader had few comments in his book about the 1965 Corvair. He did confide that GM used its well-developed knowledge of a rear-engined race car designed by Zora Arkus-Duntov (of Corvette fame) to re-invent the Corvair.

Only the first chapter (41 pages) of *Unsafe At Any Speed* was devoted to the Corvair. Other chapters referred to other makes of cars such as Buicks, Chryslers, and Fords. The book has 354 pages! But Ralph Nader will be remembered only for those 41.

Conversely, Nader did us a great favor. His book created the turning point for the auto industry's awareness to build "safer-to-drive" automobiles.

So now that we understand the Corvair story, we should recognize the great injustice done to the Corvair.

However, the story was not totally over. In the late 1960s, Senator Abraham Ribicoff

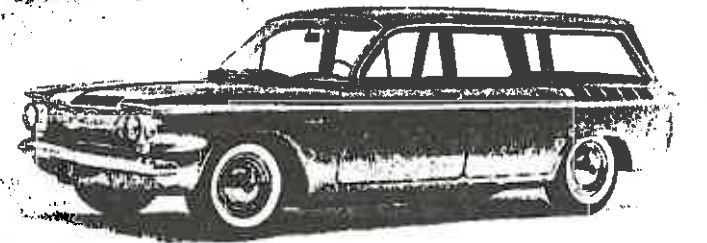


One of the many reasons to own a Corvair is to enter it in the competitive arena, such as this race-prepped model staged in the paddock of Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wis.

was assigned to hearings on auto safety. The hearings lasted until March of 1973... four years after the last Corvair came off the assembly lines! The hearings were based initially on the 1960-'63 Corvairs.

GM imprudently investigated Nader's background and was unable to discredit him in any way. This led to GM's entry into the hearings for reasons other than the reports on the Corvair. The hearings cost the taxpayers millions of dollars.

In the final analysis, the Corvair was exonerated. The U.S. Department of Transportation issued a statement in July of 1972. "The handling and stability performance of the 1960-'63 Corvair does not result in an abnormal potential for loss of control or rollover, and is at least as good as the performance of most contemporary vehicles, both foreign and domestic."



Not all Corvairs were sporty.

The Corvair today, because of its misunderstood reputation, remains "borderline" in the collectible world. But through it all, it has friends and followers. The Corvair Society of America (CORSA) has over 6,500 members in its organization. They have a high-class monthly magazine that lists at least five Corvair events each month. There is a yearly national convention (Ralph Nader attended the CORSA convention in Washington, D.C.) and the club's activities increase with each year.

In 1982, it was estimated through state-by-state registrations, that over 300,000 Corvairs were registered, licensed, and roadworthy. That is a remarkable 17 percent survival figure. That makes one more positive mark for the Corvair and says it shouldn't be overlooked.

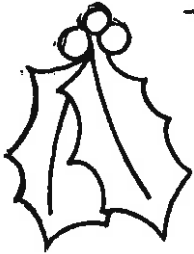
IT'S WPCC HOLIDAY PARTY TIME



AT: PAULE'S LOOKOUT - In the big room!

ON: SATURDAY DECEMBER

4:00 to 5:30 PM COCKTAIL PARTY - Hors d'oeuvres, shrimp cocktail, and soft drinks PROVIDED BY THE CLUB. Also cash bar and sale of tickets for the Chinese auction.



5:30 PM HOT DELUXE BUFFET DINNER - Includes: roast sirloin of beef, beer batter-dipped haddock, grilled ham, fried honey dipped chicken, spaghetti, scalloped potatoes, green beans, tossed salad, coleslaw, relishes, cake, & coffee, tea, or milk.

6:30 PM Meeting, gift exchange, elections, and member of the year award.

: In order to get the big room and our own buffet dinner - WE GUARANTEED PAULE'S 50 PEOPLE MINIMUM. WE NEED ALL OF YOU AND PERHAPS SOME OF YOUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WHO ARE THINKING ABOUT BUYING A VAIR.

Each of you should bring a wrapped gift worth about five dollars & marked guy, doll, or either. Bring gifts for your own children.

Please bring items for the Chinese auction, such as Corvair parts, baked goods, craft items, or even practical goodies.

\$15 for adults
\$8 for children

(includes tip & tax)

PLEASE RUSH YOUR RESERVATIONS & CHECK (payable to WPCC) TO:

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A.S.A.P. PAULE'S NEEDS TO KNOW HOW MANY.
SEE YOU THERE!



For-Sale

1961 Corvair 4-dr/automatic. Only 21,000 miles - second owner. Been stored since 1978 - runs well. Very good condition - red-on-red. Make fair offer.

Emil Portman 761-5605

I have not seen this car, so I can't comment on it. I received this information by phone . . . via Gene Rapp (comments, Bill Artzberger).

Many new and used (good condition - not junk!) parts for 1964 Corvair. New tinted windshield, new bumpers, new door handles, 4 good used engines, etc., etc. Ken Schuring 741-4691

1961 Lakewood - green/green/auto. Lots of chrome, accessories on older restoration. Still in excellent condition. Power train redone by John Sweet prior to leaving Pittsburgh. Excellent, eye catching rare car. Make offer! Dale Smith 561-5050 / 563-4047

Good News

Don Cekus, one of our new members, recently sold his 1967 orange Fitch coupe to a prospective new member. He then located a 1966 Monza 4/dr (exactly what he was searching for. . .). His new find is a blue/blue/auto with only 4,900 miles. It is a one-owner car...and was located in the Manchester area of Pittsburgh.

There yet seems to be many Corvairs hiding in garages. Never give up!!!

"Friends of Corvair Weekend" - August 27 and 28) Don and Alice Schneider - hosts. The Gundlachs, Hamlins, Cekuses and Al Friend "Corvair" out Rt. 22 (joined by Joneses in a water pumper) to meet the "Friends of Corvair" at Don & Alice Schneider's. After viewing Don's show cars and those of other members it was off to the Chateau in the Valley for a Swiss lunch. Following lunch we drove through the Amish countryside and a tour of the Warther Museum. This is a "must see" in the area - an art learned from his grandfather known for his miniature railroads (his museum is in Berlin). After giving us an informative tour the Club thanked Chris by showing him what Corvairs are. He was as enthusiastic about the cars as we were with his ships. Then it was off to the Amish Door Restaurant for dinner and their gift shop in Wilmor. After a full day of touring (and full of food) we headed to the Guggsburg Inn for an evening of showing off chrome and paint, and going on a real Amish buggy ride.

It was up and out early Sunday morning for an hour-and-a-half drive to Mohican Forest and a tour of the Lodge, and to view the beautiful forest and grounds. The drive is beautiful! Those brave enough can climb the fire look-out for a breath taking view. Back into the cars and off to our last stop - the Alpine Alpa Restaurant for another wonderful family style dinner and another gift shop. After dinner and a final round up in the parking lot, those from WPCCC headed home.

The weekend brought back memories of what good times we use to have with the Club. Was it the enthusiasm, of Corvair for a wonderful time. Their Club asked if we would sponsor an overnight event in the Western PA area. We promised to let the '95 WPCCC board know and make this part of the year's scheduled events.

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