



*THE*

# *AIRCOOLER*

*Newsletter of the  
DETROIT AREA CORVAIR CLUB  
CORSA Chapter 480*

Volume 23 Number 4

April 1997

## **Pres. Sez... Pete Cimbala**

Here it is almost April, that dirty old white stuff should be gone soon. Maybe with a little luck we will get the pot holes filled so we can drive our "real" cars that have been put away for the past winter. Clark has set up our second event of the year for April 19th. A tour of the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn, this will be an event you won't want to miss.

At our March meeting, we learned of the untimely passing of Tom Barry at his winter home in Florida. Tom was the lucky guy that had a Corvair to enjoy in Florida, and a big block Corvette conv't to tool around in up here in the summer. Tom was a very interesting man to talk to about the "old days". He enjoyed our events and will be missed by many of us who had the pleasure of knowing him. Marvin and I often said to each other that when we get older it would be great to be like Tom.

As some of you know, I won the 50/50 at the March meeting. The second time in the last year. I have donated the \$25 won that evening to the Swartz Creek Community Playground Project, to be built in May at the Elms Rd. park. DACC will be named on a playground picket that can be purchased for the donation.

### **Homecoming update:**

Our March board meeting was also a planning meeting for our big event. We need items for the auction, and some solid food commitments for the hospitality room, and people to help Ken with the ever present "fixins" table. Frick and Frack (Pete K. and Clark) need some help with registrations and I know that all the regulars who pitch in every year will help make this a fun time for everybody. Flyers, schedules and "event data" forms will be made up by the next meeting.

## **Dinosaurs And Other Relics**

**Clark Hartzel**

On Saturday March 8, a huge crowd of 5 gathered at the Plymouth Quality Inn eagerly awaiting a tour to Ann Arbor to see dinosaurs at Domino's Farms. Joanne and I thought nobody was coming but finally Jim and Marilyn Westervelt and Pete Koehler showed up. Pete drove his 62 Monza sedan so I rode with him and Joanne went with the Westervelts. John Allesee met us at Domino's to make a half dozen.

The exhibit had about 100 skeletons, skulls, sculptures and models of various critters with names nobody can pronounce or spell. One complete skeleton of an Arcocanthosaurus was 40 feet long and a tarbosaurus was 24 feet long. The exhibit was interesting but not as exciting as the Dinomation moving models at the Sloan Museum.



My plan was to tour and come back to Plymouth for lunch but I'm a 10 year veteran of Bill Cotrofeld Vermont tours so you learn to improvise and seize the moment! Someone suggested we go to Ypsilanti and do the Auto Heritage Museum so that's what we did!

We chatted with Jack Miller at the Hudson Dealership about the Orphan Car Show in Ypsilanti on June 1 and assured him we would come in force. He already has 60 entries of some pretty old and unusual cars. Cars and Parts Magazine has announced they will cover the show and rumor has it that Larry Claypool and some of the Chicagoland Corvair gang are coming. I'll have entry forms at the next meeting.

The museum still has the Gilmore Museum Tucker on loan and a fiberglass mock-up Tucker on a stretched Ford chassis that was used in the "Tucker" movie. After wandering the museum we wandered "Depot Town" and had



brunch at Cady's Grill. All in all we had some fun, saw some neat stuff and were home by 2 P.M. Wish you were there.

Don't forget our next tour is April 19 at the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn. See coming events page.

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday April 19** - Dearborn - Henry Ford Estate. The powerhouse has been restored and is now a museum for some of Henry's vehicles. Meet in the parking lot at 10:00 A.M. Take the Southfield Freeway to Michigan Ave. west to Evergreen, North to signs for Estate.

**Saturday May 03** - Detroit - Detroit's oldest fire station and museum at Mt Elliott & Mack. See a 1906 rescue truck.

**Sunday June 01** - Ypsilanti - Orphan Car Show at Riverside Park. This could be the start of something big! See Kaisers, Frazers, Hudsons, Nashes, Pscards, Studebakers, Tuckers, even Corvairs if we show up! We will show up, won't we?

**Tues.-Saturday June 17-22** - Lake Placid N.Y. - CORSA National Convention. Everyone should be going just because it is one of the most beautiful areas of our country. Now add 300 Corvairs and this could be the most scenic Corvair convention ever.

**June 21-22** - Flint - Sloan Summer Fair. This was always our club event but I'm not going to be the one to suggest you skip the CORSA Convention.

**Sunday July 06?** - DACC club picnic and informal car show at a nice grassy park with lots of trees and shade! If you know of a place, let me know!

**Sunday August 03** - Hickory Corners - Gilmore Red Barns CCCA Museum annual "Red Barns Spectacular" show and swap meet. The Gilmores

traveled the world, bought huge historic barns and moved them to a beautiful estate near Kalamazoo-Battle Creek area then filled them with classic/antique cars and made a terrific museum out of it. This is worth the trip just to see the museum but add about 1000 cars displayed in grassy fields and you've got a real event!

**August 21-23** - Plymouth DACC annual "Homecoming" at the Quality Inn. Pete Koehler has arranged for the last plant manager of the Ypsilanti Assembly Plant to come to our show and be a guest speaker. He likes Corvairs!

**September 06-07** - Frankenmuth annual car show. Put your car in the show and spend some time "browsing" in town or eating chicken.

I'm checking on some other activities such as visiting the Classic Aircraft Corp. in Lansing who build brand new 1935 Waco biplanes and visiting the Fisher Mansion in Detroit. Then there is this guy in New Haven who has a collection of old gas pumps, etc. Let me know if you have a neat place to visit.

Clark Hartzel  
810-293-1587

## Treasury Report

Balance 2/28/97	\$3940.77
Expenses:	
Meeting Room	\$35.00
Pete Koehler Homecoming items	77.05
John Allesee Aircooler Feb.-Mar.	214.19
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>326.24</b>
Income:	
50/50 Drawing	\$25.00
Membership Dues	144.00
Parts Sales	43.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>212.00</b>
Balance 3/31/97	\$3938.58

John Wolford

## Membership Report

Membership in the DACC is \$12.00 per year. Make check payable to Detroit Area Corvair Club and mail to 4124 Lamont Waterford, MI, 48329

### These memberships expired in January (this is your last newsletter):

<b>Bailey, Lavern &amp; Diann</b>	<b>Fraley, Richard</b>
<b>Gilhuly, Al &amp; Gerry</b>	<b>Malesko, Eugene</b>

### These memberships expired in February: Matthews, Fred & Bertha

### These memberships expired in March:

<b>Dunn, Margery &amp; Daniel</b>	<b>Lieving, Charles</b>
<b>Hickerson, Bill &amp; Barbara</b>	<b>McCook, James &amp; Alda</b>
<b>Mackey, Ken &amp; Carol</b>	<b>Weiss, Ron &amp; Linda</b>
<b>Wright, Christopher</b>	

### These memberships expire in April:

<b>Balow, Craig</b>	<b>Carless, Kim</b>
<b>Shreve, Jeff</b>	<b>Shuster, Stu &amp; Elinor</b>
<b>Wheeler, Wallace</b>	

There are currently 139 names on the roster, 129 paid members in DACC, 76 with Corsa memberships.

Kim Carless

## Swap-N-Sell

**For Sale:** '65 Convertible. Ken Hand rebuilt 110/auto. Red/blk interior, white top, spokes, new boot. Body has sub-frame connectors added. Includes records, receipts, photos. Tint glass, AM-FM, tele/wood whl. Many extras. \$4500 obo. Walt (810) 997-9896

**Wanted:** Volunteers needed for the Homecoming. If you can help out, call Pete C. and let him know.

**For Sale:** 1947 Oliver 70RC tractor. Runs well. Makes good restoration project. Make reasonable offer. John Allesee (313) 429-2196

## Flair for Corvairs pays off

James M. Miller  
Journal Staff Writer  
The Flint Journal  
Sun. Oct 6, 1996

Genesee Twp. - Norm King drives a 1965 Corvair greenbrier Van to his business, where he works on Corvairs, sells parts and occasionally an unrestored Corvair.

Inside his Norm King Garage, he's surrounded by parts from dismembered Corvairs.

Air intake grills dangle from a rafter.

Shelves are packed with alternators and generators. A stack of axle shafts rests overhead.

Used carburetors and cast-iron cylinders are piled on wooden shelves that sag with their weight in the Genesee Township shop.

"I sell everything but the squeal," King says, echoing the claim of meat processors who use every part of an animal.

His customers are equally diverse, coming from around the world.

Foreign students attending GMI Engineering & Management Institute have bought parts and shipped them to Africa, Australia and Europe. A buyer came from Calgary, Alberta, to buy two four-speed transmissions.

Several years ago, he said, two men from Amsterdam spent two days in his garage. They left with engines, wheels, transmissions, bumpers, starters, alternators and other Corvair parts.

King said he currently is assembling an engine for a customer in Hawaii, who plans to come to King's shop to pick it up.

All these parts are for a car Chevrolet quit making more than a quarter century ago. A car vilified by consumer activist Ralph Nader. A car that even today some would list in the American auto industry's hall of infamy, next to the Edsel and the Ford Pinto.

But King and his customers believe the Corvair got a bum rap.

The Corvair was a pioneer in what GM called "unibody" construction, in which body panels were welded together to form a unit with no frame. Today, most passenger cars are built without frames.

"By the bodies being built as a unit, they're stronger," King said.

He said he also likes the Corvair because it was an economy car, fairly easy to maintain.

"They're extremely good in snow," he said. "I liked the size, the way it handled. I thought it had good acceleration for an 80-horsepower motor."

He said some of the charges about poor safety and its alleged tendency to roll over could have been because the Corvair had quick steering, more like a European car, at a time when most U.S. cars had steering with a lower ratio.

The Corvair's snow-going capability is due to the location of the engine over the driving wheels. Many modern cars use front-wheel-drive, with the engine over the driving wheels.

"But I don't like front-wheel-drive myself," he said. "I just don't like the feel of it."

The Corvair lasted not quite 10 years. The car was introduced in October 1959, and the last one was built in April 1969.

But for a car that has not been built in more than 27 years, some parts are not that difficult to find.

"Mechanical parts are quite available, and there's quite a bit of reproduction material available," King said.

He sells used parts, reproduction parts and "new old stock" parts (called "N.O.S." by collectors, they are original parts supplied by the manufacturer when the car was new, but never sold).

King is the president of the Detroit Area Corvair Club, and his wife, Jean, is the club treasurer.

Corvairs can be divided into the early style, from 1960-1964, and the later versions, 1965-1969.

King said both models have their devotees.

"I have people come in and say, 'Oh, I love the looks of that early model,' and others will say, 'I don't like that old model at all. I like the new car.'"

His interest in Corvairs began when the car was introduced, and he was working at Applegate Chevrolet.

There was an ice storm that winter, and a Corvair came around a corner and slid into a ditch near Kings' Genesee Township home. Jean King watched as the Corvair pushed itself out of the ditch.

"She said, 'Look at that little car.' And when I told her what it was, she said, 'I want one.'"

King started his shop in a garage on Franklin Boulevard in 1969, the year the last Corvair was built. His business expanded until he needed extra space and bought the Dort Highway location in 1976.

# Norm King Garage



### **Corvair facts:**

Chevrolet introduced its rear-engined, air-cooled Corvair in 1959. It was innovative for an American car company, because the U.S. industry for decades had been tied to the front-engine, rear-wheel-drive layout.

The car was envisioned as an import-fighter. But got tangled up in charges about its safety, most visibly as part of Ralph Nader's 1965 book, "Unsafe at Any Speed," which alleged the car had handling problems that could cause it to roll over.

But a 1972 investigation by the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration found no safety-related defects in the early Corvairs.

NHTSA's administrator said the car's handling and stability were at least as good as several other cars, both domestic and imported, and added, "The Corvair performance does not result in abnormal potential for loss of control or rollover."

By 1972, of course, it was too late. The safety controversy, coupled with increased competition from the Ford Mustang and other sporty cars, already had killed the Corvair. The last Corvair was built in April 1969.

G-5167 North Dort Highway  
Flint, MI 48505  
(810) 238-4124  
(810) 767-4769

## Minutes

### Regular Meeting - March 4, 1997

Pete Cimbala called the meeting to order shortly after 7:30 All board members were introduced, there were over 28 general members.

Pete C. presented a piece of mixed media artwork created by Dave Guindon's grandson (Picture the right front headlamps on a bright red late model, with artistic effects done in sort of a mosaic fashion and your mouth open wide with wonder.) It was suggested that this would make a great cover for Corsa and everyone agreed. Nice work.

Our guests were: Harry Bruss - He works with Pete Koehler and owns a '67; Bob Bacheski - He bought a '69 Convertible from North Carolina; Bob Storc - He has a 65 Corsa and Yenko Stinger.

Pete mentioned the new Chevy van commercial. It features a hippie style Greenbrier that morphs into the new Chevy Venture.

#### Board member reports:

Kim Carless - Membership - We have 140 members on the roster. Walt Tycholiz sent in dues and wrote a nice letter explaining work is keeping him away. Kim C. is enclosing a \$3 00 coupon towards a DACC license plate in all new membership kits. Get yours today!!

John Allesee - Newsletter - Received letter from Walt Tycholiz he's selling his Corvair for \$4500. John A. wants your help to build our DACC web page. If you're an Internet user, we need you and your ideas. John has e-mailed Mark Luther in Australia. Marvin Granger spoke with Suzie Luther. Mark is now a licensed architect in Australia. She is working in a German restaurant. Their black car is 10 days from being done.

John Wolford - Treasurer - Current balance of \$3940.11 in the Club account. Jean King reported that her investigation of no cost check-

ing with credit unions died when a federal lawsuit was filed restricting Credit Union membership .

Clark Hartzel - Activities - From June 28th through July 5th you can plan on joining Our trip around Lake Michigan. The circle tour begins in Chelsea at the Big Boy and continues across the state and around the lake. Our travel guide, Pete Koehler, created an itinerary that allows you to start at the beginning or any point in between during the week (Corphibians are welcome and could come in handy.) Lots of opportunity for fun and friendship without spending a lot of money (don't worry Rob, I'll find a way.) To get one of the guides call Clark. I'm having Pete plan all our vacations from now on. Clark also brought an agenda for 10 other events the club should participate in. Dave Guindon volunteered his son's home & pond for the picnic. A lot of other locations were mentioned. Clark's open to your ideas for different events to attend.

Ken Pepke - Parts & Service - We've got plenty of everything. Sam Christ reported that he's still wrestling with the suppliers of the Tech Guides, they lost track of our check.

#### Homecoming Issues:

Pete Cimbala - Chairman - Board and Homecoming meeting will be simultaneous next week at the Big Boy on Baldwin just north of I-75 in Orion Township. Please feel free to join us and bring your ideas and energy.

Pete Koehler - Concours - In an effort to keep things simple and fun, competition will be for the top 25 Corvairs. Judging done by entrants, the committee breaks all ties. The winners of the top 25 will be displayed on our 1998 calendar. Best Car of Show will be on the 1998 Homecoming Dash Plaque. Model Car winners will get a model. Driving competition will be a poker run. Possible prizes - Flight of the Navigator video or Driving Miss Daisy video.

Pete Cimbala won \$25.00 from 50/50 tonight. He was volunteered to buy at the meeting after the meeting. He then gave the wrong directions

to Bennigans when asked.

Earl & Carol Wright won and lost \$25.00 in chip dip. Earl's business is A & S Plumbing in Swartz Creek and according to the membership's response, Earl does wonderful work and was probably busy working tonight. Hey Carol where were you? Rob would kill me if I let \$25 get away.

### Swap & Sell

Clark Hartzel is looking for a club member to paint his 67 Monza, it's stripped and ready to sand and paint and can be towed to any location - Ken Pepke volunteered.

Bob Storc, one of our guests has a 65 Corsa coupe, Arizona car for \$2500 2 20# cans of Freon, and some turbos \$300.

Pete Koehler wants a '60 parts car.

Ken Hand is liquidating lots of parts and the engine he built as a spare for his race car.

Well, the coffee was hot, the donuts were fresh (thanks Ab,) and this is where my notes end so I guess this meeting was adjourned.

### **Board meeting - March 11, 1997**

Meeting and meal began around 7:00 at the Big Boy on Baldwin in Orion Twp.

Activities - Clark Hartzel - Events list is just a preliminary. June 1 is the Orphan Car Show in Ypsilanti.

Parts & Service - Ken Pepke - We have a good supply of everything. Looking for a good strong battery for Early's & FC's. Pete Koehler has a source for late windshields for \$100, clear or tinted.

Membership - Kim Carless - Membership has dropped to 138. Kim introduced a Post Card that can be handed out instead of a business card.

Treasurer - John Wolford - We have a balance of \$3826.53. John & Jean have to get together so

John can get his signature on the account. At the board's suggestion John will give brief totals during our meeting with a full report in the newsletter.

### **Homecoming:**

Homecoming's theme seems to be More Fun for Less Money & Less Work. Homecoming help is needed. Take charge and volunteer. Join us in the fun. Do your duty.

People in charge:

**Pete Cimbala** - Chairman.

**Clark H. & Pete K.** - Registration.

**John Allesee & Pete Koehler** - Trophies.

**Ken Pepke** - Hospitality Suite & Saturday Pizza Party - Ken would like members and guests to bring desserts.

**Pete Koehler**-CarShow -This year each registrant with a name tag will get a vote for the car show. Be sure to bring the whole family. Everyone will get to vote for the top three vehicles.

**Marvin Granger** - Auctions, Friday Tour & Saturday Drive Through.

**Jeff Shreve** - Model Show (Jeff wasn't here but was volunteered.)

**Rob Duerden** - Shopping Shuttle.

If you would like to help with any of the categories above, please contact the person(s) in charge and let them know you would like to help. We need donations for the hospitality room and for the auctions.

No Limit and no charge for swap spaces. They will be distributed on a first come first serve basis.

Just a note - Ed McFarland is doing the interior of Tim "The Tool Man" Allen's truck.

Next months board meeting will be at the Wolford's home in Highland. Contact John or Mable for directions.

Meeting closed at 9:45 p.m.

Elaine Duerden

# The **Detroit Area Corvair Club** a charter chapter of the Corvair Society of America

Our elected officers are:

President:	<b>Pete Cimbala</b>	4091 Sheraton Dr. Flint, MI, 48532	(810) 733-1558
Vice President:	<b>Marvin Granger</b>	7089 Granada Flint, MI, 48532	(810) 635-0825
Secretary:	<b>Elaine Duerden</b>	4365 Elmdale Clarkston, MI, 48346	(810) 674-3318
Treasurer:	<b>John Wolford</b>	1260 Grebe Highland, MI, 48357-3920	(810) 887-9691
Membership:	<b>Kim Carless</b>	4124 Lamont Waterford, MI, 48329	(810) 674-8416
Editor:	<b>John Allesee</b>	P.O. Box 549 Saline, MI, 48176-0549	(313) 429-2196
Parts & Service:	<b>Ken Pepke</b>	25760 Pineview Warren, MI, 48091	(810) 759-4865
Activities:	<b>Clark Hartzel</b>	16911 Anita, Fraser, MI 48026-2275	(810) 293-1587
Parade Chairman:	<b>Sharon Pepke</b>	25760 Pineview Warren, MI, 48091	(810) 759-4865

Regular monthly meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm. The meeting place is the Royal Oak Senior Community Center located on Marais, (between N. Main & Crooks) north of 13 Mile Rd. in Royal Oak, MI. Members are encouraged to attend and guests are welcome. Dinner before the meeting can be had at The Old Port Inn on 14 Mile Rd. between Rochester Rd and Main St. at 6:00pm. The Meeting after the Meeting is held at Bennigans on Stephenson Hwy. just south of 14 Mile Rd.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Apr. 1 - Regular Monthly Meeting
- Apr. 8 - Board Meeting at the Wolfords
- Apr. 19 - Tour of Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn
- May 3 - Tour of Detroit's oldest fire station
- May. 6 - Regular Monthly Meeting
- May. 13 - Board Meeting
- June 1 - Orphan Car Show in Ypsilanti
- June 3 - Regular Meeting
- June 10 - Board Meeting
- June 17-22 - CORSA National Convention in Lake Placid, N.Y.
- June 21-22 - Sloan Summer Fair in Flint
- Aug. 22-24 - DACC Homecoming - Quality Inn - Plymouth, Mi



### The Aircooler

John Allesee  
P.O. Box 549  
Saline, MI, 48176-0549

