

## **Prairie Capital Corvair Association**

**P.O. Box 454  
Pawnee, Illinois 62558**

# The Flat Six

February 2023

### 2023 Officers

President -Tim Mahler	(217) 793-3824	Vice-President Jim Allen	(309) 361-5351
Secretary-vacant	(Call Tim)	Treasurer-Glen Rittenhouse	(309) 472-3882
Membership-Chris Hall	(217) 691-6529	Historian/Inventory - vacant	
FlatSix Editor Tim Mahler	(217) 793-3824	Email	PrairieCapital@corvair.org

### Board of Directors

Mike Hall (2023)	(217) 494-7105	Chris Hall (2024)	(217) 691-6529
Jim Collier (2023)	(217) 972-2285	Brian Nicholson Jahn (2023)	(217) 891-0808

## From the Prez

Oh boy. Another wintry month has slipped past. February is a short month, than it's March which signals the start of Spring. The start of Spring equates to robins singing, rides with the top down and all the other fun outdoor activities. Guess I'm a bit ahead of myself, typing away in late January, but you gotta dream, right?

Besides now is the time to plan for all those fun Spring and Summer activities. The CORSA convention in Wisconsin will be here before you know it. Are you taking a Corvair? Corvair parts? Both? Or thinking about what treasures you might find at the convention. Wisconsin Dells is a fun place for everyone – especially family, so taking a Corvacation is really possible this year.

Locally, PCCA needs some help planning programs for the Spring and Summer – Any ideas you may have would be beneficial. You don't need to be the presenter although that would be great. The club is open to a wide range of topics, Corvair, Car related tend to top the list but we also enjoy other things. I even talked my sister in doing a craft program last fall. Drop me a note with your idea.

February program will be presentation given by me but the story and history was written by Rick Loving. Rick owns a early model Fitch Sprint and several Monza/Chevy Jr karts. The program will be about those interesting Monza Jr /Chevy Jr Karts.

Stay warm and safe – Spring is just around the corner.

Tim



Sign in Museum, Photo by Shelby Berta

# Calendar of Events - 2023

PCCA Home Page may be found at <http://www.corvair.org/chapters/chapter627>

**Directions to the CPF Corvair Museum near Glenarm Illinois.** Take exit 88 from I-55, from either direction, head west – turn right if you are traveling south on I-55, left if traveling north. Follow the road as it curves to the left, south. Go straight at the stop light (turning right takes you to Chatham). The Museum is 1.3 miles from the stop light on the right hand side – just past the Double J campgrounds.



## 2023 Calendar

February 11, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm  
Refreshments: Carrie Allen (Bernie and Jim Allen)  
Program: The Monza Jr/ Chevy Jr Karts - by Rick Loving, presented by Tim

March 11, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm

April 8, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm.**  
**LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm

April 21,22 SpringFest, Helen Georgia. Corvair Fun  
<https://corvairspringfest.com/>

May 13, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm.**  
**LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm

June 3 Pawnee Prairie Days and Car Show – Pawnee Illinois  
June 10 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm.**

**LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm  
This may become the Pawnee Prairie day Show in Pawnee.  
June 10,11 Route 66 Association Annual tour.  
Corvair Museum is on Historic RT66 stop for the tour.

June 19-24, 2023 2023 CORSA International Convention June 19-24, 2023  
Chula Vista Resort, **Wisconsin Dells, WI**  
**Concours, Road Rally, Economy Run, Autocross,**  
**swap meet, tech sessions, More**

July 8, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm  
August 12, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm  
September 9, 2023 **SOS Auto Show, downtown Springfield 8:00am to 3:30pm**  
**PCCA Meeting 1:00pm. At the show.**

Sept 29,30, Oct 1 Great Plains Corvair Roundup. Guthrie Oklahoma (just North of Oklahoma City)  
Car display, Corvair Concours, swap meet, other activities

October 14, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm

November 11, 2023 **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm. LOCATION: the CPF Museum** in Glenarm

December 9, 2023 **PCCA Christmas get together, luncheon.** Need location and ideas, please.



For more Corvair Events Check the calendar on the CORSA Web site: [www.corvair.org](http://www.corvair.org)

# PCCA January meeting

Meeting Photos cutesy of Shelby Berta

Hmm. Not much to report this month. The general meeting was attending by 13 members which seems to be our numbers now. The weather was sunny but the wind was quite brisk so everyone opted to drive their daily drivers versus their Corvairs. Mike Hall, of course, had his usual collection of Corvairs in the museum including the tow truck and Rhona's station wagon that made a splash up in the Chicago area back in November. The wagon is a pretty car.

Returning to the Corvair Museum was the Limousine, a stretched late model Corvair. I think Saturday is the first time I actually stuck my head inside the rear window. WOW. The interior is very nicely done. It is covered in a blue fabric with a mini bar. It would be an excellent prom car for some lucky attendees. Or wedding, or class reunion or ?. I'll eventually find some type of event that would allow me to request to borrow (for a donation to the museum, I presume) the car for the weekend.

Tim Mahler gave a presentation on Fitch Sprint and John Fitch after the business meeting. He used mostly his collection of Sprint automobilia collected over the years - and his strong interest in the Fitch Sprint. Tim noted that Robert Landers Sprint is a Sprint with most if not all of the Sprint options as seen on the cover of the September 1965 issue of Car and Driver.

The Corvair museum owns and displays Fitch's Demonstration Sprint, a 1966 Corvair modified by Fitch and Company. The paint scheme is slightly different than most late model Sprints but it has many of the Sprint options. One noted difference was the high beam flasher knob - for flashing you high beams to inform the car in front of you your intent to pass. The 1966 model uses the shorter knob while Robert's Sprint uses the longer version seen in the Car and Driver photo. The knob was shortened because the longer one kept getting broken.

Tim also discussed the early version of the Fitch Sprint which was first offered in 1962. Fitch prototype was a 1961 model. John first used a Judsen turbocharger on the modified engine but was not satisfied with the delay in reaction to the gas pedal. He switched to the (Thompson) 4 carburetor set up which is what Bill Pierson's 1962 Sprint had installed. It provided more oomph than the stock 145 CI engine but still paled in comparison to a well prepped late



Normally, the cars are not THIS close together. We moved the Hall's wagon back to make room for the meeting and presentation causing this tight squeeze.





model (164 ci) 4 carb motor.

Tim noted that Bill's Sprint was the only customer delivered Corvair to have the rear anto glare reduction window treatment. John reduced the rear window size by adding a vinyl treatment reducing the clear glass area to an area comparable to a convertible rear window. Through the rear view mirrow, the window opening was quite large enough. Tim also noted that in a late 1961 article featuring John Fitch and his prototype 1961 Sprint, that the prototype also had the window treatment.

Tim did run through many of the available options for the Sprint including the assist rail for the passenger. Basically a grab bar for the passenger to hold. John was a rallyist. And not in the style of the Corvair or SCCA rally where obeying the speed limit is important. John road rally days involved racing through the country side at speed – first to the finish line speed. Those type of races are not very common today, superceded by road courses where the track owners and TV companies can collect revenue. Not to mention, it is a lot safer.

Speaking of safety, that became a key focus of John Fitch. He is known for inventing the Fitch barriers – those barrels seen in front of overpasses and other potential hazards on the interstates. During John's racing days, John witnessed several tragic wrecks that killed both race drivers and spectators and he became a proponent of better safety for all.

Tim did neglect to mention during his presentation John's numerous racing endeavors and his management of the Corvette racing team and Limerock race course. He'll try to do better next time.



The 66 Sprint



2022 Prez Chris Hall and Family



# Happy 46<sup>th</sup> Anniversary PCCA!

Editor: The following notes are from albums put together by Sharon Rogers.

Back in the early days of Prairie Capital Corvair Association, the local newspaper still reported various club elections, upcoming meetings and other activities.. PCCA 1978 election results were reported by the State Journal Register on February 24, 1978.

“The Prairie Capital Corvair Association has elected Jesse Rogers of Pawnee as president.

Others chosen for offices include: Gordon Davis, vice-president; Bob Dawson, secretary, and (sic) both from Springfield; Bill Berta of Rochester, newsletter editor; Garry and Sue Biggs of Springfield, program and publicity; and Nick Whitlow of Springfield, membership.

The group is an association of Corvair owners and trade technical information concerning their vehicles and is affiliated with the Corvair Society of America.

The organization meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Dutch Pantry in Capital City Shopping Center.”

Editor notes: PCCA is still much the same as 1978, except the newsletter editor and membership chair are now appointed. Program chair is now under the officer’s list of duties. Most importantly, we currently meet the second Saturday of each month at the National Corvair Museum in Glenarm. BTW: Jesse sported a smart looking beard back in 1978.

Speaking with Bill Berta, In the early days, to add money to the PCCA treasury, PCCA attended car exhibits sponsored by local malls. The malls would pay x dollars for every car in the exhibit. The photos here are from 1978 - the very very early days of White Oaks Mall. This is the south end of the mall where Montgomery Wards anchored the mall (Now, Dicks Sporting Goods). Garry Biggs 1963 convertible, Bob Dawson’s Greenbrier and Wil Gaedtkas 65 convertible were on exhibit along with CCE’s powertrain exhibit.



Photo from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, south end of the mall



Note: I found this Mike Dawson Article on the Central Oklahoma Corvair Association web site under Tech Tips. A page I had book marked in my browser eons ago. It's cold, so I went surfing. For the FC enthusiast, it has lots of interesting items. For the non FC enthusiasts, it is still fun reading. You may want one because of the article or decide you are lucky you don't have one because of the article. Thanks Mike Dawson, well written as always. could check a coil without simply trying it in the car. Now I know. Thanks Fran.

## The Preventive Maintenance Series

Mike Dawson

**FC Stuff:** Greenbrier, Corvan, Rampside & Loadside – Don't have one? Get one!

**Shock Absorbers:** Because of the short wheelbase, the FC models originally had super duty shocks on the front with a 2 1/4" diameter body. Replacement with anything less causes a really choppy ride. I recently installed the Monroe Magnum 34750 with excellent results. Installation does require a minor adjustment: removal of about 1/8" from both the lower mounting slots. That shock is listed for the front of a big Dodge pickup and if you check auto supplier websites such as O'Reilly, you will find the specs are very close to the Corvair shock. For the rear I used a less expensive gas shock from NAPA: 94002.

**Steering Box Pitman Arm Nut:** The large nut on the steering box pitman shaft may be loose, apparently from the factory since it does have a lock washer. I doubt that the arm could ever come off due to the fit and age but the nut can block a clutch pedal if it backs off very much. Check yours since several FC's have shown up with that problem over the years.

**Steering Column Noise:** Both of my Greenbriers (1962) began making creaking noises when the steering shaft was under a load. The problem is lack of reinforcement under the floor. Looking up from the ground, a triangular plate that supports the steering box and floor is 3/8" short of reaching the floor towards the rear. It needs to be welded on two sides to prevent flexing and noise.

**Greenbrier Air Intakes:** As part of noise abatement, insulation was glued to the inside of the paneling along the engine air intakes. This insulation comes off (looks like a rolled up tube) and will partially block the holes at the rear of the intake shaft. GM issued a TSB, so the problem must have begun occurring early. Not an easy job to correct, but necessary for proper engine cooling. You will have to remove the screws on the inner panel, pull the panel out and use a tool to reach in and pull the insulation out. Not used on trucks.

**Vent and Antennae Work:** You can quickly and easily remove the headlight buckets if you need to work on the antennae, vent doors or cables – makes vent cable attachment easy.

**Resister By-Pass Wire:** The wire from the starter solenoid that provides 12V to the coil during starter operation was omitted from some early FC models. My '62 was missing its wire and I have found several other FC vehicles with the same problem. The small yellow wire in the two wire connector at the forward left side of the engine compartment will be present at the connector but dead ends in the harness. Check your coil: if the + side has only one wire with an asbestos wrap then your resistor by-pass wire is missing. Either install one from the two wire connector or track it down in the harness. The function is to provide a hotter spark during cranking which could come in handy in cold weather.

**Winter Helper:** The '64 FC models had a door added behind the front grill that could be shut for winter operation; this was necessitated by persistent air leaks from numerous areas in the front panel. For pre-'64 owners you can take off the front grill, disassemble, and cover with wide black electrical tape; makes a big difference in winter highway driving.

**Door Latch:** The driver's door latch loses the spring (available now from CCP) and will not latch because the teeth have rotated downward. The immediate fix is to pull back the handle or push in the button and rotate the teeth upward (counter-clock wise) until they stop. It will latch again until the next time you shut it wrong.



**Truck Bed Drain Holes:** Thanks to Smitty Smith for this one. The two bed drain holes on the passenger side drain in to the underbody paneling before reaching the ground. Mud builds up and the water does not drain out. Smitty drilled two 9/16 holes clear through to the ground, cut ½" steel conduit to fit and welded at the top. The water would then drain to the ground as does the driver's side holes.

**Transaxle Cover:** If you want to be able to remove the cover over the transaxle to have instant access to starter, differential vent and filler or just want to watch your axles turn, you will first need to remove the nuts holding the heater plenum – the plenum is secured to studs protruding from the cover. Not easy, but you can remove the nuts, remove the cover and fabricate a support for the heater before re-installing the cover.

**Heating & Defrost:** FC air flow can be helped significantly by adding a high speed blower, separate ground to the heater box and a relay that directs battery current straight to the blower motor during high speed operation (eliminating voltage drops through all the wire runs, connectors and the switch).

**Seat Adjuster:** The seat adjuster may become very difficult to utilize, but the solution in most cases is very simple: lubrication. You may think the latch is bad, wire is stretched etc., when all you need is a can of spray grease and about two minutes. A little lube and a few trips back and forth it will be like new.

**Rusted Brake Lines:** Although all steel lines are subject to failure, the two places that fail the most frequent are the lines next to the gas tank where it is hard to see and at the ninety degree bend under the cargo area, forward on the left side. As with all aging vehicles, if it is old stuff, perform the stomp test in your driveway periodically.

**Manual Transmission Popping Out Of Gear:** Due to the long involved shifter and the movement of the engine/transaxle on the mounts, early manual transmission FC vehicles would pop out of gear, usually fourth, but sometimes other gears. GM added a bracket with a bolt & nut just to the rear of the shift coupler that limits the movement (to the front) of the power train. I have seen more than one design, and some may have been fabricated in the field. You may also find two, on either side lined up with the transmission mounts.

### CPF Membership!



**2023 WINDOW CLINGS NOW AVAILABLE!**

Great Gift to Give or Receive!  
501c3 Tax Deductible!

**[www.nationalcorvairmuseum.com](http://www.nationalcorvairmuseum.com)**

Use left nav menu to click...

"CPF FOUNDATION & MUSEUM" / "MUSEUM MEMBERSHIPS"

Become a CPF Member and support the legacy of the Chevrolet Corvair. For only \$45.00, CPF Members enjoy an official Membership Card, our annual 2023 CPF Window Cling supporting our newly named "National Corvair Museum" and celebrating the 60th anniversary of the 1963 Corvair. Members will also enjoy free year-round admission to the CPF's "National Corvair Museum."

Your dues and donations are tax-deductible, and you'll also have the satisfaction of knowing your contributions help keep the history and preservation of the Chevy Corvair alive for future generations.

Buy a membership for yourself and/or for your favorite Corvair or classic car friend. How do you join? Just go to [nationalcorvairmuseum.com](http://nationalcorvairmuseum.com) and click on "How to become a member." We thank you for your support.

Eva "Corvair Lady" McGuire  
CPF Publicist & Historian

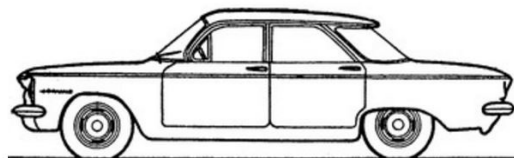
Special thanks to Rod Murray for his creative art work

**Let's get the year off to a roaring good start. Almost half of PCCA members have already renewed, the goal is 100%.**

**January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2023**

If joining after July 31, dues are: Individual \$8.50, Family \$10.00. If applicable, the discount is \$2.50.

Please make checks payable to Prairie Capital Corvair Association or PCCA.



January 13, 2023	1965 Corvair Corsa, turbocharged, ermine white, black interior	\$27,350
January 11, 2023	1961 Rampside, 3 speed, 30k miles shown, red w/white stripe	\$29,000
January 8, 2023	1966 Corsa 4 speed, turbocharged, red w/ black interior	\$18,500
January 4, 2023	1961 Rampside, 4 speed with 13k miles, blue with white stripe	\$32,323
December 30, 2022	1965 turbocharged Corsa, , 209 miles shown, light blue, black int.	\$28,500
December 30, 2022	1962 Corvan, 33k miles, PG Aqua blue with white stripe	\$8,700
December 13, 2022	1962 Greenbrier, Teal paint, silver stripe, PG	\$12,100
December 13, 2022	1963 Monza Spyder 4 speed, white with blue interior	\$4,455
December 4, 2022	1963 Rampside, PG, red with white stripe	\$19,963
December 3, 2022	1964 Monza Sedan, 4dr, white with red interior	\$11,500
November 15, 2022	1963 Monza convertible, light blue with blue interior	\$13,500



## **General Meeting Notes      January 14, 2023      taken by Tim Mahler, acting secretary**

President Tim Mahler brought the meeting to order shortly after 2:00pm leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Aside from the collection of Corvairs, including several from Mike Hall's collection, there were no Corvairs driven to the meeting on this chilly January afternoon (the wind was quite brisk).

The secretary report for November was printed in the Flat Six, as was a meeting recap for December (no official meeting at the Christmas meeting ). No changes were noted, Mike Hall motioned to approve, Jim Collier seconded, motion was approved. Treasurer Glen Rittenhouse was unable to attend. Tim Mahler gave the treasurer report from Glen's paper version. Checking account starting balance was \$4,520.91, dues received (9) \$170 and no expenses. Ending balance checking was \$4,690.91 with \$5 in Savings and \$151.63 cash on hand. This brings the overall balance to \$4,847.54. Motion to approve Treasurer's report was made by Mike Hall, seconded by Rich Grooms, motion was approved. Chris Hall did not have an update for the membership report. Editor (Tim) noted 15 of 39 members have renewed for 2023.

Old Business: Programs for January and February will be presented by Tim Mahler - Fitch Sprint in Jan, and Monza Jr carts in Feb. Need volunteers, ideas for March and Beyond. Similarly, have Volunteers for refreshments for January and February (Grooms, Allens); need volunteers for March and beyond. Sign up sheets on the table. (Post meeting: Berta's volunteered for April, weather permitting).

Upcoming events: PCCA is scheduled to meet at the Corvair Museum the second Saturday of the month for the foreseeable future. September 9, 2023 is the SOS Auto Show in downtown Springfield. June 19-24 is the CORSA Corvair Convention at the Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI – a really family friendly place to go. Pawnee Prairie Days is scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> (a week earlier than 2022). Tremont show should be the following weekend. The RT66 Association annual RT66 tour thru Illinois is scheduled for June 10, 11; many could will be stopping by the Corvair Museum on Sunday. The museum is listed as one of the stops with a RT66 stamp for the tourers to collect.

Museum update: Mike Hall noted that the Limo is back and looking quite nice. A donation of numerous parts and 3 Corvairs has been accepted from a location near Danville Illinois. The collection included a Evening Orchid coup, a 66 Chevy Pickup and a 1 ton dump truck. The dump truck already has a new home

New Business: President asked about a museum event for 2023. The current thought from the PCCA board (which met earlier in the day) was that maybe we should take a year off. As a fundraiser, the event didn't raise very much in terms of dollars in 2022 even though it was a lot of fun.

Comments from the floor: Tours anyone? Back in 2020, a discussion was held about touring to Hannibal Missouri, then Covid struck. Try Again? Suggestion from the floor (Bill and/or Shelby Berta) was a return trip to Pontiac Illinois. Both deserve additional research.

Mike Hall handled the 50/50 drawing. Rich Grooms brought refreshments - brownie (yum), tea (sweeten and unsweeten) and water. After the meeting Tim Mahler gave a presentation on John Fitch and the Fitch Sprint using his collection of artifacts and the Fitch Sprint demonstration model in the Museum.

## **Board Meeting Notes      January 14, 2023 taken by Tim Mahler, acting secretary**

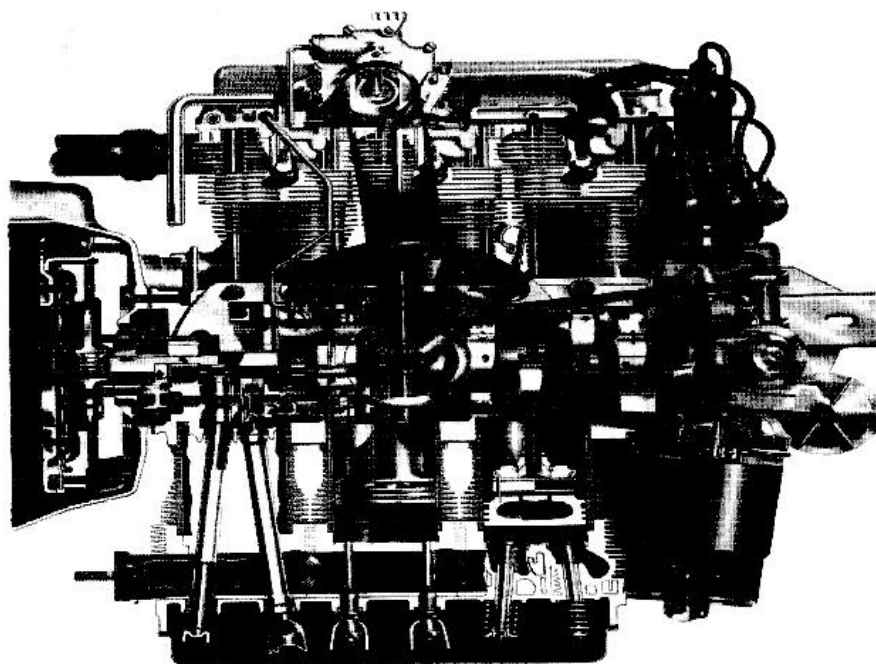
Board members in attendance: Mike Hall, Jim Collier, Chris Hall. President Tim Mahler.

This board meeting was the first in quite some time. The meeting participants discussed upcoming programs for PCCA. Unfortunately, the group did not develop any good leads beyond the two set for January and February. Tours were also mentioned, including Hannibal Missouri which was cancelled because of Covid. Second topic was hosting a Museum event in 2023. The overall consensus was to take a sabbatical for 2023 and try to develop a larger event for 2024 as we celebrate 60 years of the 64 Corvair and the RT66 celebrations begin to take place.



Taking a photo of the whole limo is hard

# The Flat Six



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