

# The Flat Six Journal

Mid Continent Corvair Association Newsletter

May 2009

## From the President

# Show Time

The weather finally allowed some of us to go out and show off our cars. The MCCA club had a nice showing of 5 cars, April 24th at the Central & West Cruise in. Showing up were Ned, Terry, Greg, Jim and Bernie & Julie. We had a great evening visiting among ourselves and with the people that showed up to view all the cars. Just to let everyone know, this is an weekly event. It is every Friday evening at the corner of West Street and Central, starting at 5:00



**Julie and Bernie Strecker relax with Greg Renfro beside Greg's 63 Corvair convertible. They were saving Ned's a parking spot at the Friday night Cruise-in held weekly at Central and West Street.**



**April Meeting**  
EM 2 LM 4



**May Meeting**  
**Sat. May 9th 7 pm**

Derby Recreation Center  
801 E. Market, Derby, KS

P.M. and running till 9:00 in the spring and later thru the summer months. Everyone is welcome to come out and join us and see how much fun it really can be. Along with the car show there are several nice places in the area to eat, so, a car show and good food and what else could you ask for.

Some of the plans are coming together for the Round-Up, but there is still a lot that needs to be done. We would like to get a lot more finalized in the next few months so that everything comes together for a great event.

Also on the agenda will be road trips. Lets all come up with ideas for places to go. This is another great way to show off our cars and to have lots of fun. Hope to see all at the meeting on Saturday.

**Bernie**

# Classifieds

## MCCA Officers

Bernie Strecker  
*President*  
316-619-9844 cell  
Bob Bright  
*Vice-President*  
316-619-5800 cell

Julie Strecker  
*Treasurer*  
13802 W. Texas Ct.  
Wichita, KS 67235  
juliestrk@cox.net  
316-619-6213 Cell  
316-722-0556 Home

Terry Kalp  
*Newsletter Editor*

Web Site  
<http://www.Corvair.org/chapters/chapter672/index.html>

**FOR SALE:** Lower Price \$1500 White 1963 convertible with 1960 engine. The engine runs but the carburetors need adjustment and probably a tune up. The body is very straight and has just a couple of small rust spots. The front seats are of the Terry Kalp collection and are in good shape. The top frame is intact but needs the top cloth.

There are miscellaneous extra parts, some unknown. It does have new brakes, single master cylinder, 0 mile tires, dimmer switch, push rod rings, muffler and new black carpet. I'm asking \$1500 or best offer. If interested, please e-mail wrightres1@cox.net or call me at (316) 304-1266 or (316) 789-8302.

## The adventure . . .

Continued from pg. 3

nylon and compress it in the vise. It works. But watch this. Duane reassembles drag link, tie rods, etc. and has cotter keys neat and tight on about 6 castle nuts while I am doing one.

Oh yeah.. the lights. Duane cleans and changes out a dimmer switch. Duane checks out light switch, I raid the parts car, and find another

switch in glove box. I break one light switch, and Duane makes one work I strip some black tape and follow a wire. Duane solves it and finds poor connection at the dimmer switch.

Got lights, got steering. Little short on trust with this car. May wait for an escort at the next meet.

**Larry L. Lee** 1966 Corvair Corsa Convertible

**CUSTOM Engines By**

Chet Wilson  
**ENGINE SERVICE**  
Call Chet Wilson  
for all your engine needs

**Jerry**

**Wilson**

**(316) 264-5155**

**CHET WILSON ENGINE SERVICE**

email: [offykillr@aol.com](mailto:offykillr@aol.com)  
[www.chet-wilson.com](http://www.chet-wilson.com)

559 W. Douglas  
Wichita, KS 67213

**FORSE**

**CORVAIR**

**REAR-ENGINE SPECIALISTS**

16010 W. 5th Ave. Unit 12  
Golden, Colo. 80401

Steve Goodman

(303) 278-4889  
e-mail: [rearengine.steve@worldnet.att.net](mailto:rearengine.steve@worldnet.att.net)

*A funny thing happened on the way home*

# The adventure of Larry Lee

Saturday (4/11/09) I was pleased to be able to drive my 66 Corvair project car to the MCCA meeting. Had fun talking about how many ways I could try the shift linkage before being able to get it into reverse.

First piece of excitement was head lights did not go on. I know I had them working before I left. Hmm.. try the brights. Lights!, oops ... no,...yes...no.. Hmm.. lights only when holding down the dimmer switch. Ummm. Kinda hard to shift with one foot on the dimmer, but ... I want to get home. Turn signals working, brake lights working. I'm shifting quick to get the lights back on and skipping gears.

Up to maybe 50 mph on K-15 planning for the light and turn at 47th. Remember, I don't have the instrument panel in this project yet. Uh Oh. Drifting to left lane, steering did not correct, UH OH. Steering wheel turns freely with no result on front wheels. Drifting left, I'll need to take out a few reflectors and stop in the median. Oh..... letting up on gas changes torque, drifting right. Touch the brakes. Nothing drastic slowing and still drifting right. Getting onto shoulder.... More brakes..... good, one wheel in the dirt. Back up. Looks like a normal pull over. Get out and walk around (plenty of adrenaline).

I'm the dad that made sure wife and kids always had a working flashlight in their car. Guess what I don't have in the Corvair. But, I was not the last to leave the meeting, there will be another Corvair along soon. .... Well, pretty soon.... Did they take another route? Do I have club list in glove box. .... No.... Kalp numbers on my phone, but not Kalp cell. Try 'em anyhow. Oh.... Someone stops. "My uncle used to have one of them"... Don't know if uncle had an early or a late, but he has flashlight.. Two seconds to see the pitman arm bushing arm fell out. Good Samaritan pushes it in place while I adjust the steering wheel. OK... so what do I have to



hold it there. Key ring goes through the cotter key hole. Did have tool box, and pliers bent the key ring so it won't just fall out.

Thank you friend for the road side assistance. Drive home, 20 miles??, slowly, corner easy. Shift rarely, hold down that dimmer switch. Plenty of time to think, speculate, still making adrenaline. Were the threads stripped? Is that the one Duane said for me to put in the cotter key? Maybe... But I thought I checked that. Made it home. I'm not dealing with this project anymore tonight....

Sunday, company, busy week. Friday, Corvair day in my garage. Nope. Threads are good. Go get a castle nut. It fits. Where is the hole. Try that 3 times... Look in Clarks. The one with the nylon looks shorter. Yep. It is shorter, Castle nut not going on far enough to get to hole for cotter pin. So, more evidence I did not get it in the first time, won't go in. Take off drag link. Squeeze pin in vise. Nylon does not compress much. Check Clarks price for the longer one. They say this is an easy install. Check the manual....

Call Duane. He comes over. We kick around some ideas, then put some heat to that

**Continued on pg. 2**

# Plastigauge Your Rebuild

Hi If you are like me and haven't spent a lot of time rebuilding engines you may not know what plastigauge is or how to use it. I had heard the term thrown around from time to time but I really had no clue what it was. I was beginning the rebuild on my Son's engine, I had my bearings, all the parts were clean, ready to put it together and make it run. "Not so fast" the words came from my trusty mentors in the local Corvair club, "you need to plastigauge the engine before you just put it together"

Just what is plastigauge? It is a waxy plastic roughly the size of sewing thread. It is sold at most auto parts retailers for less than \$5.00. The packaging is a paper with a gauge printed on it.



Here's how it works. Cut small pieces of the plastigauge and place it on the surface of the journals you are going to check. To do the main bearings for example, install your bearings in the block halves. Place the crankshaft in one half of the block. Be careful not to spin it around too much as there is no lube on the bearings at this point.



The plastigauge is carefully laid out on the journal surfaces. Carefully place the other block half with bearings installed on top of the crankshaft making sure the crankshaft doesn't turn while doing this process. It is a good idea to have some help holding parts still for this part. Next install the bolts and tighten to spec. I had to do this twice when I made my first attempt as I read the wrong torque spec from the manual and after a brief moment of panic realized my mistake and made corrections. Once the bolts are all properly tightened, carefully reverse the assembly process to expose the compressed plastigauge on the journal surface. Use the plastigauge package to measure the clearance of you bearing to the journal. Compare this measurement to the factory spec.

This same process is carried out on the camshaft and rod bearing journals as well. The trick on the rod bearings is that the crankshaft will be in a vertical position so placing the small pieces of plastigauge can be a

little tricky. If you are prone to swear, this is when it might happen. Once again I highly recommend having someone help hold things steady as the rod caps are tightened.



Connecting rod and piston with new bearing installed.



Plastigauge on a rod bearing journal



Make sure to hold everything steady while tightening down the rod caps

Continued on pg. 5



Torque the rod caps with some help.



Measure the compressed plastigauge with the packaging and compare the measurement with the spec in the shop manual. In this case the spec was .0012 to .0027. This journal is in spec. Plastigauge is quite a bit of extra work so why do it at all? After all the crank was turned to a spec and bearings were purchased to match that spec. What could go wrong?

Here is just one example. One of our Corvair club members was rebuilding an engine. He ordered connecting rods from a vendor. When they came in they were mic checked but no plastigauge was done. The engine was built and seemed to

run ok at first. After 500 miles the oil was changed and there was metal residue in it. As it was a break in of a new engine it was thought to be normal. After approximately 2000 miles the engine developed a knock. Worst of all it was on a long trip when the failure started. The car was towed home and the engine removed and torn down. After further inspection it was found that the new connecting rods were out of spec by a few thou-

sandths. The vendor replaced the parts but if the engine were plastigauged the issue would have been caught before the assembly and subsequent failure of the engine.

So I recommend whenever you are putting together an engine take a couple extra hours and plastigauge it. I know it has given me a great deal of confidence in the parts I am putting in my Son's engine.

**Greg Renfro**



Gathering at the Kalp Shop Wednesday evening, April 15 were Jim Dallas, Greg Renfro, Gary Anderson, Terry Kalp.

## Minnesota Visitor

It all started out as an innocent message on the Corvair Center Forum. Gary Anderson of Rochester, Minnesota was traveling with his wife to a convention in Houston, Texas and wanted a Corvair fix along the way. Terry offered him a

Wichita welcome and tour of the shop. Some MCCA members got a last minute invitation and showed up to meet Gary. Greg, Jim, Mark Welte, Bernie and Julie Strecker all showed up. Gary was presented with a MCCA T-shirt.

# Thermostat Fixes

By Matt Nall, Corvair Center

Matt developed a replacement fix for the Corvair thermostat bellows. Reproductions are pricey and have had a reputation for short life. The replacement is with a Corvair Choke coil.

1 The stock Choke coil allows the door to open by 170f.... and it is linear... not sudden open as the Bellows is. It warms the engine quickly.. heater output is approx. 20F lower...When engine is shut off...it takes a long time to close the door.... because of the residual heat. I see NO ill effects....

2 The "trick" to slowing the opening is to "Shield" the Coil from the heat from the exhaust manifold..but not BOX it ...as that really quickens opening!. It needs the airflow going across it. You can see in the pictures.. I used the stock shield, with just a Cover piece, and a U-shaped piece to act as 2 more shields... not touching the Factory shield... so as not to conduct heat.

3 The "Secret" to making them open at a higher temp than 170f ? The Brass shaft with a slot... it needs to be turned to 12 o'clock / vertical. It's peened, but can be rotated without hurting it. Unbend the side cage...slide coil up on shaft... just enough room to slip your channellocks in, but using the coil to keep the SLOT open.Factory, all seem to be at the 8 /2 o'clock position. This adds tension, and of course requires hotter air to make them move further. You only need ONE Coil on each side.



Matt also devised a method to work both thermostat flaps with one working thermostat. Remove the inoperative thermostat and rod, then attach both doors together with a 1" x 24" strap bent to allow the doors to open without hitting the engine.



Here are the parts required for the conversion in addition to the choke coil: a 1/16" stiff rod bent to clear, a self tapping screw and a 1/4 inch "molly" style wall anchor.



After straightening out the 90 degree bend next to the coils cage, position the foot securing with a self drill/tapping screw. Expand the anchor in the pivot in the door, remove the screw and attach the rod with a 90 degree bend.



Top and side view of the shield added to allow the thermostat open at a higher temperature.





## May Birthdays:

Kathy Stout - May 3rd  
Tom Stout - May 13th  
Bernie Strecker - May 21st



## May Anniversaries:

Ned & Kathy Madsen - May 25th

MAKE A DATE TO SEE IT!  
**Corvair**  
NEW COMPACT CAR BY CHEVROLET

**HUGS THE ROAD LIKE IT'S  
IN LOVE WITH IT**



**COMING FRIDAY, OCT. 2**

See it at your local authorized Chevrolet dealer's

## Get ready for Juna Tuna Valve cover racer test 'n tune Headlight Aim-A-Thon

June 20th and the Juna Tuna will be upon us before you know it. One of the highlights of the Tuna will be the opportunity to run and tune your valve cover racer before the Roundup in October. Make sure your VC racer is finished enough to run at the Tuna, if you haven't started get started now. Contact Terry Kalp if you need a cover for your racer.

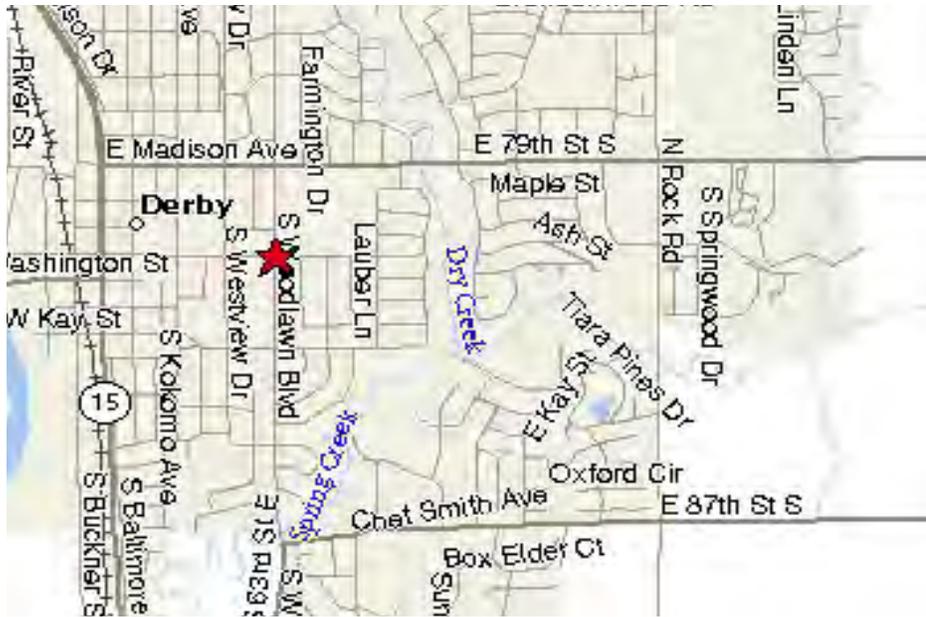
Another great opportunity at the Tuna will be the Headlight Aim. Greg Renfro and Terry will have an area setup for you to pull your Corvair into and get the headlights aimed in less than 20 minutes. Before the Aim-a-thon it would be good to check you Corvair for burned out head lamps and make sure the plastic sockets for the headlight adjustors aren't broken. If you find problems purchase replacement bulbs and get the new sockets ordered and delivered so they can be installed at the Tuna.

## *Bring Door Prize and Hospitality items to May meeting*

Remember we are gathering up items for the Hospitality room and door prizes for the 2009 Great Plains Corvair Roundup that MCCA is hosting this October. There will be a table set up for the donations so members can see the pile grow from month to month. There will be no table at the June meeting at Lake Afton, but you are welcome to bring Items to the Kalp shop for Juna Tuna.

## *Kansas City's Corvair Club To Celebrate 45th Birthday*

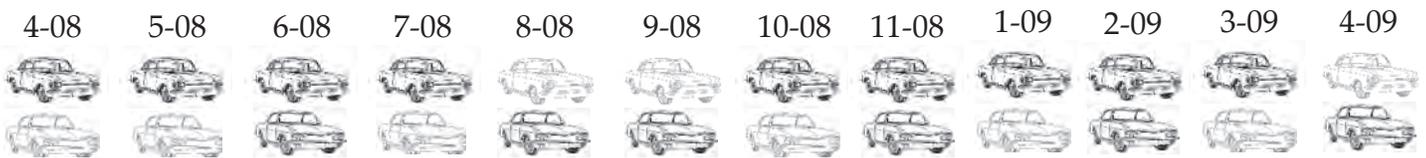
The Heart of America Corvair Owners Association (HACOA) are making plans to celebrate their 45th anniversary as a Corvair car club on June 27th at the home of Gary and Helen Moore near Lawson, Missouri (Kansas City Area). Several MCCA members made the trip to KC five years ago to help the HACOA celebrate their 40th Birthday. The Kansas City club is the oldest continuously running Corvair only Corvair club in the world. The club started at a dealership in KC in 1964. Think about making the drive up to KC to help them celebrate.



**May Meeting**  
**Saturday**  
**May 9th**  
**7 pm**

Derby Recreation Center  
 801 E. Market, Derby, KS

Derby, KS



# The Flat Six Journal



Mid Continent Corvair Association  
 621 N. Birch, Valley Center, KS 67147

## Calendar

May Meeting	May 9th
Lake Afton	June 14
Juna Tuna	June 20
July Meeting	July 11
Moonlight Show	July 11
KC Birthday	June 27
Great Plains Corvair Roundup	October 2-4