



the fifth wheel

NOVEMBER 2011

[HTTP://WWW.CORVAIR.ORG/CHAPTERS/LVCC](http://www.corvair.org/chapters/lvcc)

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Monza SS

The October 2011 issue of the CORSA Communique had a short article regarding the fascinating Monza SS clone built by Mel Francis and financed by Dick Reinders, both of the Milwaukee Corvair Club. Here, we present additional details, all written by Mel, the constructor. The quotes are taken from the Corvair Center Forum.

How It Started. Dick Reinders is my partner in this prototype. He and I met at a Milwaukee Corvair Club meeting two winters ago, when I had just started the project and we found that we had a common interest in the original Monza SS. We both were curious as to what it would be like to drive the original, from a performance standpoint. So, he offered to help me achieve the goal and we have worked as a team ever since.

Tribute to Larry Shinoda. This car is somewhat of a tribute to the design work of Larry Shinoda and the vision of Bill Mitchell. It's rumored that Mitchell wanted to put the Monza SS into production. And if he had gotten his way, we would have probably seen

(Continued on page 2)



The Fifth Wheel is published monthly by the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club (LVCC), Inc. We accept articles of interest to Corvair owners for publication. Classified advertising of interest to Corvair owners is available free of charge to all persons. Commercial advertising is also available on a fee basis. Please contact our newsletter editors, Allan Lacki and Wesley Weiss, for details.

LVCC is one of the many regional chapters of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), a non-profit organization that was incorporated to satisfy the common needs of individuals interested in the preservation, restoration, and operation of the Chevrolet Corvair. LVCC caters to Corvair people who live in and around the Lehigh Valley Region of eastern Pennsylvania. This is a very special car club! LVCC dues are \$10 a year for CORSA members or \$15 a year for non-CORSA members.

(Continued from page 1)

a Corvair SS sports car based on production suspension components and it would have been almost as wide as a regular Corvair. This design is inspired by the original SS, but its slightly larger size makes it more comparable to a mid-1960s Corvette.

Larry's original body lines are smoother than the way the '68 Corvette actually turned out, with the extra flares around the wheels. This body has always seemed cleaner, not needing flares! The windshield really completes the smoothness of the design and is from an Opel GT, but with a flush fit around the perimeter.

It's no accident that an Opel GT windshield would suit this car, since the design team that handled the Monza SS pre-production design study, was sent to Germany to assist in the development of the new Opel sports car back in the 1960s. This was the production windshield that the team designed, so I felt it was all still in the family.

1965 Corvair Platform. The first thing you'll realize when you see it in person, is that it's larger than the original, which was about the size of a Triumph Spitfire. This car is built on the shortened platform of a '65 convertible, so it had to be wider than the original. In order to keep it all in the correct proportion, the entire body was up scaled by 6%, so it's not a true replica.

But the new dimensions give it the wheelbase and track of a late model Porsche 911, so it will make for an interesting comparison.

The amount of cutting and welding that we went through on this prototype is the type of fabrication that usually stalls out most kit car builds and you find the jumbled remains for sale 15 years later. Cutting up Corvairs is not the way to build these cars.

I'm not in favor of chopping up Corvairs to build them, as too much can go wrong. I only did it to get all our suspension and driveline mountings in the right place.

Making the Body. So here it is, with the middle spline attached to the two outer splines with cross-formers. Starting to fill in the gaps with surface panels that receive the actual surface contouring. If you'd like to try shaping in this foam for a project of your own, it's available at Home Depot, most building supply stores and makes very light patterns that are self-supporting.

Built for the Road. We want to be able to drive it on the road, not just at closed events, so modern HID headlights and a laminated windshield have been incorporated too.

The turn-signals are '66 Corvette units mounted high, for visibility the Hella HID lamps are the low-beams and when you hit the high-beam switch on the floor, the two Hella rally lamps in the nose come on to complete the four beams. It's bright! It resembles a vintage Le Mans racer, all lit up at night!

This prototype has a central tunnel which ducts air from under the nose directly to the cooling fan intake. We added a larger oil cooler



Mel & Dick turned this Corvair into a Monza SS!



The rolling platform prior to body fabrication.



Building up the body buck with foam panels.



Powered by Corvair, of course!

with fan and have moved that up to the front of the interior, as a heater, for early and late-season driving. It will duct out the floor pan in the summer months, when we don't need the extra heat.

As some of you might have already read, we got the car out of the garage this last August and took it to the Detroit Homecoming event. I have started driving it fairly regularly, getting things adjusted and modified somewhat. We changed to a HD front spring from Clark's catalog and now the nose sits up at a better height.

Corvaire Power. The engine is a 3-liter unit, built by Dave Clemens for us. It's electrically cooled, with a belt drive onto the stock fan at a constant 3000 rpm. We've had no problem keeping the engine at 350 degrees with this setup. That's a Clark's high-capacity alternator, to help out with the amps needed for the fan motor. It has a large, remote oil cooler, that also doubles as the interior heater.

Future Copies? Considering today's economy, we seriously doubt if there's a market for these cars. If any copies are made, we will supply the body along with a tube space frame, much like a Cobra kit, and then the owner can outfit it with whatever Corvaire mechanicals they'd like. We'll see....that's still off in the future.

FLOPPY MIRROR FIX by Allan Lacki

Does your Corvaire have a floppy outside mirror that goes out of adjustment every time you drive? If so, you have plenty of company out there. And this isn't just a Corvaire problem. It's a problem shared by lots of folks who have own 1960s GM cars.

The old original equipment are nearly 50 years old now, so it's not surprising that some of them don't hold their adjustment anymore. But the problem is actually more prevalent with those shiny new "exact replacement" GM mirrors sold by the vendors. The repro mirrors may look much better than the old pitted originals, but what good is a fresh chrome finish if the mirror can't hold its adjustment?

This is a common complaint voiced out there on the Corvette, Camaro, Firebird and Corvaire message boards. I especially pity the Corvette guys, because they pay top dollar (up to \$130 apiece) for repro mirrors that go floppy after only a few months.

But believe it or not, floppy mirrors can be fixed. The first step is to remove the mirror from the car. That's the easy part.

The second step is to remove the glass from the mirror head so that you can see what's inside. Depending on the manufacturer, the glass is secured to the head by either a thick glue compound or a snap-in spring ring.

Removing the Glass. If the glass is secured in place by a spring ring, the ring will be clearly visible. The ring will have a small gap, much like a piston ring. Press down on the glass gently, and that will loosen the ring so that you can pry it loose with a small sharp pick. Don't try to pry under the gap. Instead, pry the ring about an inch or



In some cases, the mirror glass is secured to the mirror head with a spring ring.



In other cases, the glass is simply glued-on. Photo by Mike Tarrant of Prescott, AZ.



Here is the little spring plate that puts the ball-and-socket in compression. On the left side, the factory peened the top of the stud over the plate, just like the head of a rivet. On the right side, the plate is held down with a screw. This is one of the three kinds of repairs described in our article.

two away from the gap. Pull it in toward the center of the glass. An extra pair of hands is helpful in this situation. Be patient and careful, and eventually you will pull the ring out of its groove enough so that you can remove it entirely. At this point, the glass will be completely free and will come out along with three tiny coil springs that you will need to reinstall when you reassemble the mirror. The little springs are necessary, but no, they aren't the cause of your troubles.

If the glass is secured by glue, soak it overnight in gasoline. By the next morning, the glass should be easy to remove. You can use a silicone compound to glue it back together after the repair.

Did you ruin the glass in the process? If so, you can buy replacement mirror glass for much less money than a new mirror.

Examining the Ball and Socket. After you remove the glass from the mirror head, you will see that the mirror head is fastened to the base by a ball-and-socket joint. And the ball is squeezed to the head by a small spring plate that is fastened to the head by a pair of peened-over studs, something like a rivet head. Theoretically, the tension provided by the spring plate keeps the mirror head from flopping around.

The studs are an integral part of the

- World's Best Pickup Truck - Greenbrier 1961-64



mirror head, which is made of soft pot metal. Pot metal, (zinc), isn't exactly the strongest material. Eventually, the spring pressure works the peened head loose or even cracks it. The spring plate becomes loose, the pressure is diminished, and the mirror head flops around.

Repairing the Studs. There are at least three ways to fix the peened-over studs that hold the spring plate down.

Method 1: If the peened metal is loose but not cracked, it's possible to insert a slotted washer between under the peened metal and the spring plate, and this will tighten up the ball joint. It may be advisable to reinforce the top of the affected stud with a dollop of J.B. Weld. This method is recommended by

Glenn Davis of Peekskill, NY.

Method 2: Another method is to simply grind-off the peened metal completely so the top of the of each stud is flat. A Dremel tool is especially handy for this job. Then, drill and tap a hole in the top of each stud. Tighten the spring plate back down against the head with a screw and washer. This sounds like a great method, but to do it successfully, you need to drill and tap the hole very carefully because the studs are quite shallow. It's probably best to do this with a drill press. And the head of the screw must be nearly flat because there isn't much room inside the mirror

head. This method is recommended by Mike Tarrant of Prescott, AZ.

Method 3. Another alternative is to drill the bases of the studs with short blind holes and secure the spring plate in place with straight lengths of piano wire that span the space between the studs. The piano wire snaps into the holes that you drilled in the bases of the studs. This method also requires great care because it's easy to drill the holes right through the head of the mirror, which doesn't do much for their appearance. But it's an effective solution.

Personally, I've tried methods 2 and 3 and I like method 3 better.



Glenn Davis of Peekskill, NY repaired his Corvette mirrors by inserting a slotted steel washer under the peened head of the stud that secures the spring plate. Then, for extra measure, he swabbed it with JB Weld for a permanent fix.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

Under the By-Laws of LVCC, at this time of year we receive nominations for officers for the coming year. Please take a moment to submit your nominees for 2012.

We are accepting nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Activities Director. You may submit nominations for any or all of these positions. You can even nominate yourself!

Please indicate for which position you are placing a member's name in nomination. When you submit a nomination we ask you to include your name as all nominations must come from members in good standing.

When any individual receives a second nomination, the nomination will be considered to have been "seconded" and will be valid.

Elections will take place at our January meeting. Please participate in this very important process.

Submit your nominations by e-mail or postal mail to Dick Weidner, our Secretary/Treasurer:

Richard C. Weidner
2304 Main Street
Northampton, PA 18067
(610) 502-1414
rcwvair@rcn.com

OCTOBER MEETING.

Our October meeting was attended by Dennis Stamm, Dick Weidner, Randy Kohler, and Allan Lacki.

LVCC Secretary / Treasurer's Report. Dick Weidner read the minutes of the September meeting. Dick reminded everyone that it's time for us to hold annual elections. The club is now seeking nominations for officers.

Dick circulated his brand-new copy of Hemmings Classic Car magazine. This issue is completely devoted to Chevrolet's 100th Anniversary. It is fully illustrated and has lots of Corvair content.

Dennis Stamm discussed a 1965 Corvair 500 coupe that he recently purchased and refurbished. He passed around photos of this car, which he is currently selling. See our Classified Ads for details.

Randy Kohler and Dennis Stamm led a discussion about tires and the vast improvement that radials provide for highway stability, especially with Corvairs. The group also talked about carburetor tuning, Powerglide transmissions, and a variety of other topics.

Dick Weidner discussed his intention to drive his Corvair to the Central Florida Corvair Club's annual fall Corvair Affair in Saint Augustine, Florida. The event schedule was scheduled for November 4-6, 2011 and included a Friday

night welcome meal, valve cover racing, part vendors, car show, autocross, rally, and an awards brunch. We look forward to hearing about Dick's long trip from Lehigh Valley, PA to Saint Augustine at our next meeting!

The attendees discussed the club's meeting schedule for November and December. Recognizing that the timing would interfere with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, the group unanimously agreed to postpone our next meeting until January.

2012 CONVENTION UPDATE

The Northeast Corvair Council continues to make progress with plans for the 2012 CORSA Convention in Sturbridge, MA. Volunteers are coming forward for concourse judging, arrangements have been made for a New England-style clam bake, contracts have been signed for tour buses, and NECC President Brian O'Neill is currently negotiating with Thompson Speedway and Stafford Springs Speedway to rent a track for the autocross.

The next planning meeting will occur at the Sturbridge Host Hotel on Saturday, November 19. CORSA officials will be in attendance to help coordinate those activities that will be performed by the CORSA office with those activities that will be performed by NECC.

LVCC Merchandise for Sale!



LVCC license plates and hat pins: \$3.00 each. LVCC T-Shirts: \$6.00 each.
Call or email LVCC Secretary/Treasurer Richard Weidner at 610) 502-1414 rcwvair@rcn.com

FREE: Corvair engines! I have a few early model Corvair engines and some parts I would like to get rid of. Any club member's have an interest? They are there free for the taking. Gail Sharp Email: gail_r_sharp at yahoo.com

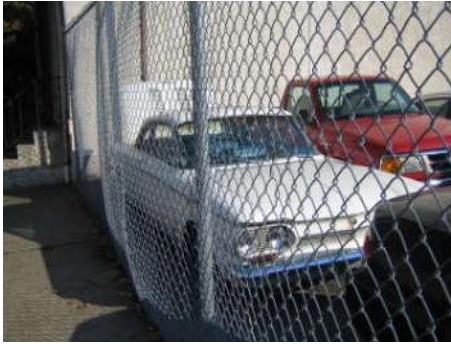
WANTED: Hello, I was wondering if anyone might know where I can find a Corvair engine (or two). The engine will be modified for use on an airplane I'm building. While I'm not too particular, I prefer 1965-1969 95 and 110HP (any of these engine codes: RD, RF, RH, RX, RK, RA, RE, RG, RJ). If you don't know of any for sale, do you know where I can look? John Cronin
Email: jcronin737 at yahoo.com
Telephone: (570) 643-6499.



FOR SALE: 1965 Corvair 500 Coupe. 110 hp. Powerglide. Dennis Stamm recently purchased and refurbished this Corvair 500 coupe, which has a white exterior and red interior. It has only 39,000 miles on the odometer and is completely rust free. A prior owner intended to do a V8 conversion on this car, but then lost interest after removing the Corvair power-train. To get the car back on the road, Dennis sealed and installed one of his own spare engine and transaxle units, rebuilt the brakes, and installed a good set of tires mounted on four Chevy Nova rally wheels. The engine is equipped with all-new oil seals. Dennis claims the car runs very well and would make a nice respectable daily driver. Price: \$4,500. Contact Dennis Stamm, Phone: (610) 926-4723 Email: dmstamm at comcast.net



FOR SALE: 1963 Corvair Monza M900 Coupe. 102 hp. Unrestored survivor. Runs perfectly. Never in a body shop or driven in snow. All service records since new. 50,000 miles. Needs nothing. Tinted glass. Day-night mirror. Pushbutton AM radio. Factory seat belts. Asking \$7,000 or serious offers only. Dave Riddle. (610) 264-7155. Dariddle at verizon.net

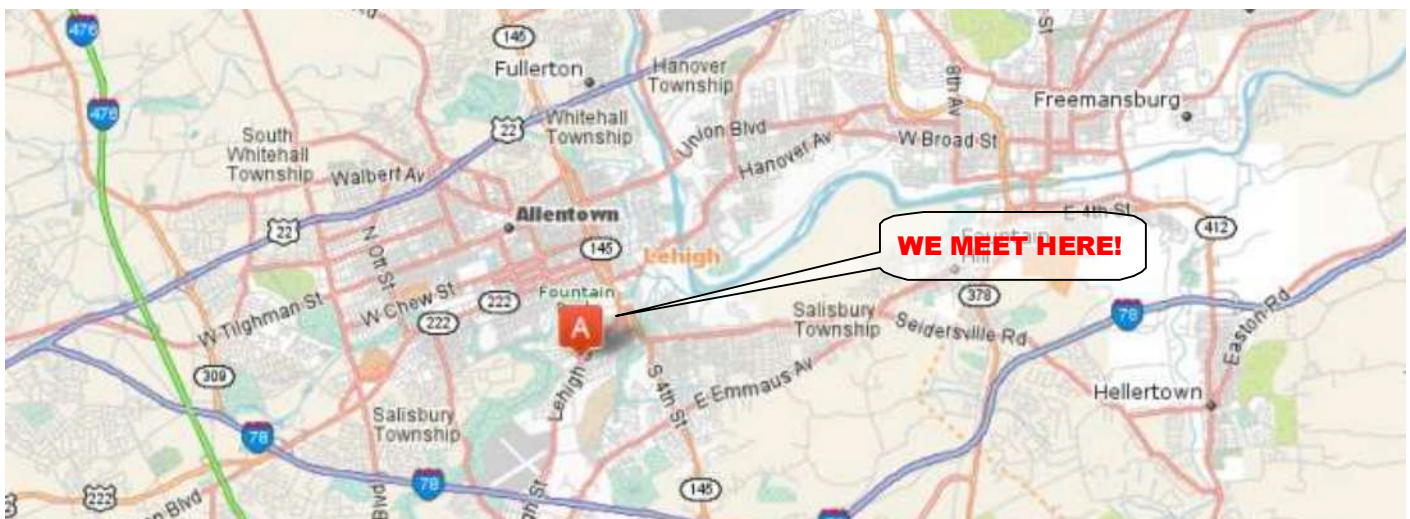


FOR SALE: 1963 Corvair Monza Coupe. White with light blue interior. 140 hp. Powerglide. The car is complete, has little rust, and no dents, but it does not run. The former owner brought it to Davie's Auto Services Center on Pine Street in Reading, PA for storage about two or three years ago, where it has been resting ever since. According to Dave Davies, the owner passed away and despite Dave's efforts to reach out to the family, nobody from the estate has attempted to claim the car. There is no title. Dave would like to sell it for \$500. LVCC member Allan Lacki inspected this car and can provide a written report on request. Contact Al by phone at (10) 927-1583 or by email at redbat01 at verizon.net. Or, contact Dave Davies directly in his shop at (610) 375-9436.

FOR SALE: 1966 Corvair Monza 4-Door. 110 hp. Powerglide. 42,911 miles. Body and interior are in reasonable condition, with some rust below the windshield. Owner indicates that the engine runs but needs a battery. Car has been parked for six years on concrete. This car is located in Maple Shade, NJ. Any reasonable offer would be considered. Please contact Jack Rose at (215) 327-1855.

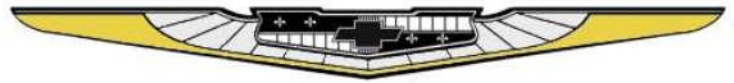


Next Membership Meeting: Wednesday, January 25, 2012



Time 7:30 PM. Place: LANTA Community Center, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, 1060 Lehigh Street, Allentown, PA 18103. All LVCC members are encouraged to attend. Feel free to bring a guest.

LVCC Calendar of Events



It's not too early to start planning for next year!

January 20-22, 2012 ::: Auto-Mania 2012

Allentown, PA - Auto-Mania 2012, 22nd Annual Indoor Automotive Parts & Memorabilia Flea Market and Car Corral at the Agricultural Hall Allentown Fairgrounds. PA's Largest HEATED Indoor (NOW 50% Larger) Automotive Parts & Memorabilia Swap Meet and ALL NEW indoor & out door Car Corral (limited Car Corral Space so call ahead!) Admission \$7.00, Friday 12:00 noon - 9:00 pm, Saturday 9:00 am - 6:00 pm, Sunday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm., P.S. This Event Does Not Cancel For ANY Reason! e-mail: tonyabilliii@yahoo.com or <http://www.automaniashows.com>

Wednesday, January 25, 2012 ::: LVCC Membership Meeting.

Time 7:30 PM. Place: LANTA Community Center, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, 1060 Lehigh Street, Allentown, PA 18103. All LVCC members are encouraged to attend. Feel free to bring a guest.

January 26 - 29 2012 ::: Pennsylvania Auto & Boat Show

Harrisburg, PA - Motor Trend Auto Show Pennsylvania Auto & Boat Show, At the Pennsylvania State Farm Show Complex. Located at 2301 N. Cameron Street corner of Cameron and Maclay Streets, Exit 23 off of I-81. Event Hours:

Wednesday - Thursday 1:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Friday - Saturday 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

Sunday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Admission: Adults \$8.00 Senior Citizens (62+) - Active Military (w/ID) - Students (w/id) \$5.00 Children 7-12 \$3.00.

e-mail: Shaun.Foley@sorc.com or <http://www.motortrendautoshow.com/home.jsp> or www.AutoShowHarrisburg.com

January 29 – February 5, 2012 ::: Philadelphia International Auto Show

Philadelphia, PA - Philadelphia International Auto Show at the Pennsylvania Convention Center at the NE & NW corners of 12th and Arch Streets.

Saturday, January 28: 9am – 10pm

Sunday, January 29: 9am – 8pm

Monday, January 30 – Friday, February 3: 12noon – 10pm

Saturday, February 4: 9am – 10pm

Sunday, February 5: 9am – 6pm

<http://www.phillyautoshow.com/>

July 25 2012 to July 28 2012 ::: 2012 CORSA Convention at Sturbridge.

The Northeast Corvair Council (NECC), of which LVCC is a part, has been awarded the 2012 international convention for the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), to take place in Sturbridge, Massachusetts. The dates are July 25 2012 thru July 28 2012. Plan on being in colonial Sturbridge, Massachusetts, in July of 2012! See our website for details:

<http://www.corvair.org/chapters/necc/convention>



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