



the fifth wheel

Winner of the 2014 CORSA Tony Fiore Newsletter Competition

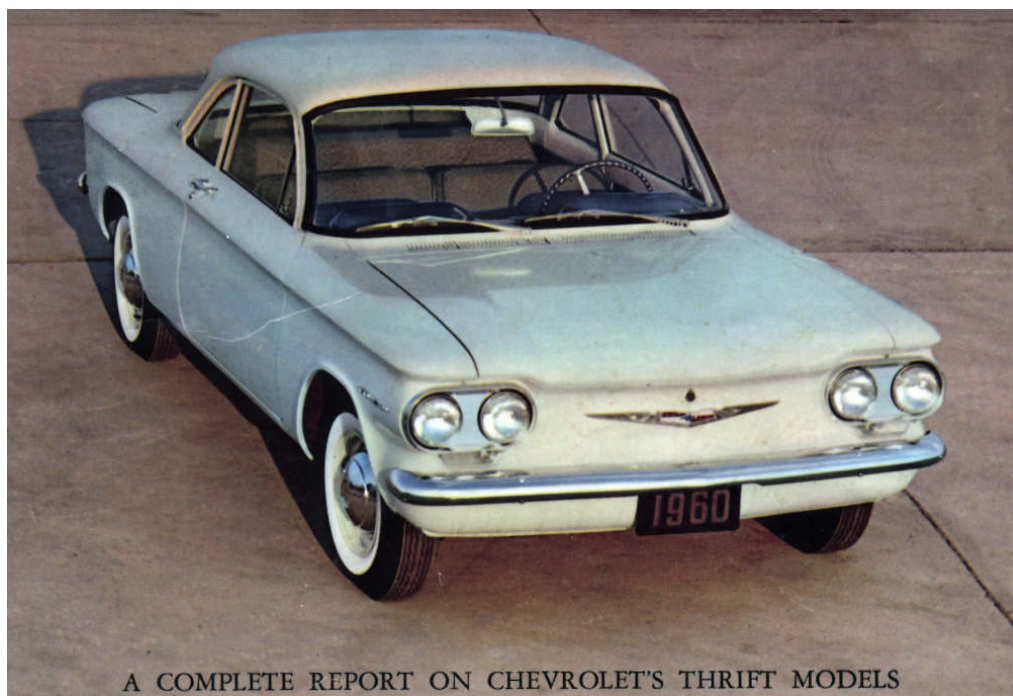
OCTOBER 2015

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

ESTABLISHED 1976

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Next LVCC Meeting: Weds. Oct 28, 2015

Time 7:30 PM. Place: Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority Headquarters (LANta), 2nd Floor Meeting Room, 1060 Lehigh Street, Allentown, PA 18103. Latitude : 40.587607 | Longitude : -75.474405. Bring a guest!

Don't get locked out! If you arrive late, the main door of the LANta office building may be locked. This is for security purposes. But the facility is open around the clock, so ask one of the garage employees to direct you to the second floor.



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. For details, email our newsletter editor, Allan Lacki, at redbat01@verizon.net.

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.

DESERTER GS - BIG KAHUNA OF CORVAIR POWERED KIT CARS.

Back in April 2014, the Fifth Wheel included an article written by Alex Dearborn of the Dearborn Automotive Company. Among other things, it included a few paragraphs and photos of the Dearborn Deserter GS.

Last month, we promised you a more comprehensive article about the Deserter GS. So here it is. This one has a more technical slant. We hope you enjoy it!

The Deserter GS. Big Kahuna of Corvair-powered kit cars. It looks like a typical dune buggy until you notice the stretched wheel base. But it was not a four-passenger buggy. A Corvair engine resided where the back seat would be. The Deserter GS was a mid-engine, tube-frame sports car with a dune buggy body.

The Deserter GS came in kit form and the kit was manufactured in Marblehead, Massachusetts by a dune buggy company named Dearborn Automobile Company, Inc. Dearborn Automotive shared ideas and shop space with Autodynamics, one of the top race car fabricators in the country. Between 1964 and 1970, Autodynamics designed and

built 1,400 race cars. The design and fabrication skills available from the Autodynamics crew provided creativity and engineering far beyond a typical dune buggy shop.

Autodynamics had a reputation for building competitive Formula Vee cars. Its Formula V cars won championships time after time during the mid-1960s. And underneath, the Deserter GS was much like a Formula Vee.

The Formula Vee racing class is based on pre-1963 Volkswagen Beetle powertrain and suspension components fixed to a purpose-built tube frame. The VW engine, transmission, front suspension, brakes and wheels are stock or modified stock parts, but the engine is mounted mid-ship. Formula Vee cars are open-wheel single-seaters and their bodies are made of fiberglass or carbon fiber. From a distance, they look like Formula 1 cars from the early 1960s, but they are smaller and simpler. The intention of this class is for the average person to build, maintain and race the car at reasonable cost.

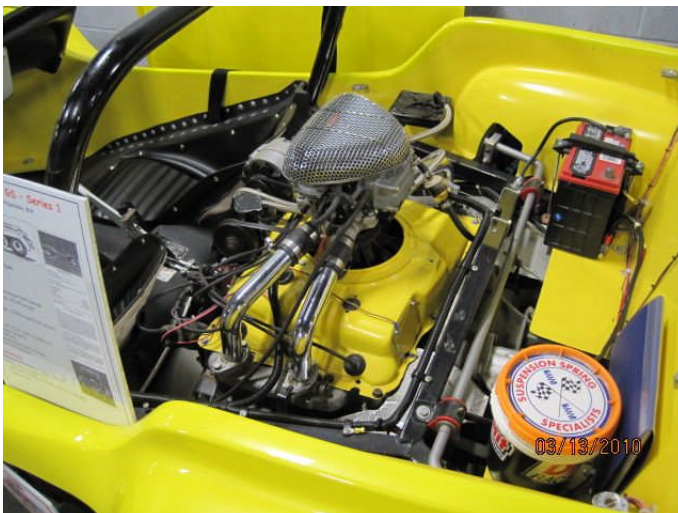
Deserter GS kit cars shared these features except their frames were wider

and longer to accommodate two-passengers instead of one. And of course, they were designed for Corvair power. But they retained Volkswagen Beetle suspension front and rear and many other pieces of Volkswagen hardware.

Although they could be licensed and registered for use on the street, the Deserter GS was intended for autocross as well as other forms of racing. The combination of a balanced, light, stiff chassis with the fiberglass body proved to be competitive on autocross circuits across America, SCCA track events and even the Pikes Peak hill climb. Drivers included Reeves Callaway and Ted Trevor as well as the head of Dearborn Automotive, Alex Dearborn.

The Deserter GS assembly manual contains step by step instructions and several tips for selecting the best Volkswagen parts. For example, the use of a 1968 or later Karmann Ghia front end is recommended because it has disc brakes. So is a 1966 or later rear swing axle assembly.

Curiously, Dearborn continued to specify the Beetle swing axle suspension for





AMERICA'S HOTTEST SPORTS/RACING CAR IN STREET LEGAL CONFIGURATION

DESERTER[®] GS
by DEARBORN

MID-ENGINE AUTOCROSS CAR

GS stands for "Giant Straton", indicating the car's design purpose as an autocross car. Using an Aerodynamically-built tubular space frame in place of the usual shortened VW frame, the GS is the hottest sports-racing car ever offered in street legal configuration.

Experience gained in developing the conventional Desertler for racing and Aerodynamics Corporation's knowledge in Group 7 racing combined to perfect the mid-engined Desertler GS.

With a stock Corvair engine, its power-to-weight ratio is better than any production sports car now made. Tubular space frame is designed for midships-mounted Corvair, VW or Porsche 912/911 engines.



Desertler GS is available in individual parts, in kit form, or as a race-ready or street automobile.



Kit includes complete body, hood, dashboard, steering column height adjuster, floor pan, windshield, headlights, seats, engine cover, steel space frame with roll bar, coil spring, and Koni shock absorber rear suspension, adjustable trailing arms, shift and handbrake linkage, spherical rod ends, Ozus fasteners and attachment hardware.



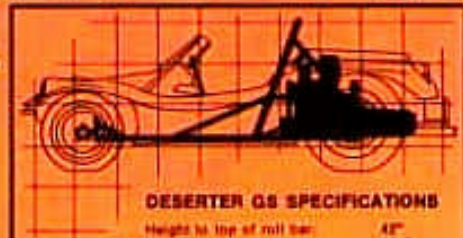
No welding is required to assemble the car; the kit builder need only add engine, VW transaxle and VW front end.



The chassis is so versatile that the rear member may be changed in five minutes per side, using no tools.



GS MID-ENGINE TUBULAR SPACE FRAME. Replaces the shortened VW frame commonly used... gives Desertler GS lighter weight advantage, more rigidity, and better (more even) weight distribution. Used successfully in Hill-climb, Autocross and SCCA road races.



DESERTER GS SPECIFICATIONS

Height to top of roll bar:	42"
Length s.a.	124"
Wheelbase:	85"
Weight:	1100 lbs.
Weight distribution, front/rear:	48/52
No. cylinders:	6
Displacement:	2600 cc.
Horse power:	180
Power-to-weight ratio, lbs/H.P.:	6.2
Acceleration, 0-80 MPH:	4.7 seconds

Kit price: \$1,495
P.O.B. Martinehead

Frame available separately for \$375

Available from authorized Desertler dealers, or contact

DEARBORN AUTOMOBILE CO., INC.

2 BARNARD ST., MARBLEHEAD, MASS. 01945 Phone (617) 831-1556



the rear, rather than the 1968 and later double-jointed half-shaft suspension system. Perhaps this was due to the Formula Vee pedigree, which mandated the same. And some of the instructions are funny, such as "Bash the corner of the gas tank to clear the toe box."

The assembly manual further advised builders to use care in the selection of wheels and tires. "Choice of tires and wheels, and proper offsets for the wheels are important factors. Generally speaking, 5 1/2 x 13 or 5 1/2 x 15 wheels should be used up front, and 6 x 15, 7 x 15, or 8 x 15 wheels in back. All wheels should have stock VW inner dish dimensions."

Dearborn offered several accessories, sold separately from the kit, including quick-steering adapters, camber compensators, rear Z-bars, front end lowering components and much more.

Were they perfect? Well, almost, but not quite. Like any kit car, they needed to be sorted out before they were reliable. And when used in competition, the tube chassis could be fragile, with reports of broken welds here and there. Also, on the track, the aerodynamics of the body would force cooling air up into the bottom of the engine, countering the blower fan's efforts to push it from the top down. This could be cured by installing an air dam under the car, below the passenger compartment. But who knew? Chuck Riblett of Blackhawk Engineering, a Corvair parts vendor, has owned and auto-crossed a Deserter GS since 1973. He devoted a complete web page to the experiences he has had with his. Look up www.blackhawkengr.com/ and look for the link to his Deserter page.

Dearborn Automotive went out of business in 1971 and Autodynamics took over production of Deserter GS kits. Autodynamics threw in the towel a couple of years later. From time to time, a Deserter GS will come up for sale on the internet, and the good ones fetch a lot of money.



LVCC Meeting Notes, by Dick Weidner

Six members attended the September 2015 meeting of the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club: Dennis Stamm, Fred Scherzer, Larry Lewis, Jerry Moyer, Rich Green and Dick Weidner.

Secretary / Treasurer Dick Weidner read a letter he received from CORSA regarding Chapter membership. The letter announced a new policy whereby each chapter will be charged \$35 per year instead of the old policy of charging \$3 per non-CORSA member. The letter also included a form for returning the fee. The attendees authorized Dick to fill out the form and mail a check for \$35 to CORSA.

Larry Lewis announced that he and Al Lacki took first and second place respectively in the Corvair class at the All Air-Cooled Car Show in Flanders, New Jersey.

Dennis Stamm gave a brief account about Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club's (CPCC's) Corvair Day event held on September 12. This was a rain-or-shine event, and attendance was poor due to heavy rain that day. CPCC is considering establishing a rain date for next year's Corvair Day event.

Rich Greene gave an update on the 1965 Corvair drag racing car he co-owns with Larry Asheuer of the Philadelphia Corvair Association. Rich and Larry continue to tune their Corvair to get better performance on the strip. Rich also discussed work he is performing on his Rampside.

The discussion then turned to methods for replacing engines and rear wheel bearings.

During the meeting, Dick also gave the financial report. Here it is:

Balance from July	\$ 1,232.21
August Receipts	\$ 152.00
August Expenditures	\$ 50.96
August Balance	\$ 1,358.25

Thermistor Update, by Al Lacki

From time to time, the Fifth Wheel includes an article on Al Lacki's search for replacement thermistors. As we all know, used Delco thermistors for Spyder and Corsa cylinder head gauges are getting hard to find, and new old stock thermistors are ridiculously expensive. So, several Corvair enthusiasts have been replacing the Delco gauges with aftermarket cylinder head temperature gauges that use a thermocouple for the pickup instead of a thermistor. Others, including Al, have been looking at alternative thermistors. In theory, thermistors react more quickly than thermocouples, and that's probably why Delco used them in the first place.

It's been a long road, but Al can now claim some degree of success. Here is what he has to say:

Earlier this year, I sent two Corvair Corsa cylinder head temperature gauges to Air Parts of Lockhaven. They agreed to experiment with the gauges to see if they can be calibrated to the Rochester-brand 3080-38 thermistor. The Rochester 3080-38 thermistor has the same dimensions as the original stock AC Delco thermistor and has the advantage of being widely available through aircraft supply houses.

By the way, Rochester thermistors are manufactured by Rochester Gauges, Inc., which is not affiliated with the old Rochester Products Division of General Motors.

George, the proprietor of Air Parts of Lockhaven called and told me they were able to calibrate my stock Corsa cylinder head gauge to the Rochester thermistor successfully. With modifications to the gauge, and in conjunction with the Rochester thermistor, the gauge was reading temperatures accurately, within "one needle-width" at all temperatures between 200 degrees and 500 degrees on their test bench.

I told George to complete the work, pack up the recalibrated gauge and Rochester thermistor, and send the package to me. I haven't had time to install the parts in my own Corvair, but Air Parts of Lock Haven is an FAA certified repair station (#QK1R429K), so I'm reasonably sure the parts will work just fine. It appears we need not worry about the availability of thermistors in the future.

This is not a cheap proposition. George said he would provide this same service to any other Corvair owner for a price. The charge for this service would be approximately \$225. This is in addition to the cost of a new Rochester 3080-38 thermistor, which is \$114 apiece. But for what it's worth, there is no minimum order quantity involved.

By way of email, I asked George to send instructions so that a do-it-yourselfer could replicate the modifications necessary to calibrate the stock cylinder head temperature gauge to the Rochester thermistor, but so far, he has been silent. We do know the secret sauce includes an external "variable resistor" mounted on the back of the gauge and some internal adjustments within the gauge itself. A qualified electronics guy could probably reverse-engineer the modifications Air Products made to my gauge.

George cautioned that the insulator on the Rochester thermistor begins to melt somewhere between 500 and 600 degrees, the latter being the high-end reading on the scale of the stock temperature gauge. George's technician didn't record the specific temperature at which the insulator began to melt, but the main point is that it can't take 600 degrees. He did mention that the Rochester thermistor works fine for cylinder heads on air-cooled aircraft engines, which he said seldom rise above 460 degrees. And a Corvair running in excess of 500 degrees for any length of time would probably suffer major internal damage anyway, so the matter is academic.

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



LVCC Guys Go to Detroit!

Every year, LVCC members Jerry Moyer, Fred Scherzer and Dick Weidner make a pilgrimage to the Detroit Area Corvair Club's Corvair Homecoming event, and this year was no exception. This year, LVCC President Dennis Stamm joined them for the trip. The Homecoming includes a tour of the General Motors Heritage Center museum and several of the photos below were taken there. The immaculate blue Rampside below belongs to Dennis' brother.



LVCC Guys Go to All Air-Cooled Show

LVCC members Larry Lewis and Al Lacki went to the All Air-Cooled Show and scored trophies in the Corvair class. Shown below are photos of Larry and Al receiving their awards. Yes, the trophies were unusual but eminently practical-new, unused paint cans with special trophy labels! This annual event is sponsored by the Central Jersey Volkswagen Society and draws over 300 cars, mostly Volkswagens of course.



Local Events In and Around Lehigh Valley

Wednesday through Saturday, October 7 - 10, 2015 :::: AACA Hershey Fall Meet

Location: Hershey Park, Hershey Show Field, Hershey, PA 17033. Time: 7 AM to 11:45 PM each day. Pre-Registration for 2015 Hershey ended on February 16, but you can certainly attend as a spectator. Hershey is considered one of the largest antique automobile shows and flea markets in the United States. It consists of over 9,000 flea market spaces, over 1,000 car corral spaces, and approximately 1,500 show cars. Each year the show attracts visitors from all over the United States and many countries throughout the world. Some of the most unusual cars and parts can be found at Hershey. If you love antique cars, Hershey is the place to be. Phone: (717) 566-7720. Email: fallmeet@hersheyaaca.org

Saturday and Sunday, October 10 - 11, 2015 :::: Riverfest Cruise-In at Berwick

Location: Test Track Park, South Eaton Street, Berwick, PA 18603. Time: 10 AM to 7 PM each day. Price: free. This is an open 2 day event you can come either day or both days. There are plenty of food vendors and activities. Check our face book page Berwick Riverfest for more info. Live music both days. Air boat rides on the Susquehanna River. Phone: (570) 759-3930. Email: tmetz@pa.metrocast.net. This listing is for LVCC member Curt Stone!

Saturday, October 10, 2015 :::: Cruise Trexlertown Shopping Center

Location: Trexlertown Shopping Center, 7150 Hamilton Blvd, Trexlertown, PA 18087. Time: 3 PM to 6 PM, weather-permitting. All vehicles welcome. DJ. Host: Mopar Madness. Website: www.moparmadness.org

Sunday, October 11, 2015 :::: North Catasauqua Autumnfest & Car Show

Location: North Catasauqua Park, Grove St, Catasauqua, PA 18032 (between Grove & Arch Streets). Time: 11 AM to 4:30 PM. Pre-register by October 10: \$12. Day of show: \$15. Benefits Toys for Tots. Info: Call Marc (484)-560-1938

Wednesday, October 14, 2015 :::: Cruise Queen City Diner

Location: Queen City Diner, 1801 Lehigh St, Allentown, PA 18103. Time: 4 PM to 7 PM. Rain date: Following Wednesday. Price: \$1 donation for Canine Partners for Life. Door prizes, 50/50, trophies. Host: Found in the 60's. Info: Call Linda at (484) 695-3698 or Smokey at (610) 333-6395

Saturday, October 17, 2015 :::: Wheels of Time Cruise Night

Location: Macungie Memorial Park, 50 S Poplar Street, Macungie, PA 18062. Time: 5 PM. Price for cars: \$1. Costume contests. Host: Wheels of Time. Website: <http://www.wheelsoftime.org/>

Saturday, October 17, 2015 :::: Annual Pumpkin Run in Boyertown

Location: Wilcox Farms Complex, 1134 Reading Avenue, Boyertown, PA. Time: 10 AM to 2 PM. Price: \$10 per vehicle. All classic cars & trucks, street rods, and modern muscle cars welcome. Special discounts from Wilcox Farm are available for their corn maze & hay rides. After the show, there will be a 5-mile cruise through Boyertown ending in Pottstown. Contact Brad Ray, Public Relations, Pottstown Classics (484)-919-3424.

Sunday, October 18, 2015 :::: Octoberfest Car Show

Location: American Legion West End Memorial Post 927, Route 209 & Fairgrounds Road, Gilbert, Pa 18331. Time: 10 AM to 3 PM. Prices: Pre-registration to October 2: \$10. Day of show: \$12. No rain date specified. Dash plaques to first 125 entries. Complementary coffee and bagels to Noon. German music, beer garden, pig roast, cake walk, tricky tray. People's choice voting and awards. (No Corvair class). Phone: Ed (610) 657-6196. Email: ksbvnet@ptd.net

Sunday, October 25, 2015 :::: 39th Annual Old Car Show & Flea Market at Kempton

Location: Kempton Community Recreation Center Field, Route 737s and 143, 5 miles north of I-78, Kempton, PA 19529. Welcome to cars prior to 1994. Prices: Pre-registration to October 16: \$7. Day of Show: \$10. Rain or shine. Time: 8 AM to 3 PM. Inquire about prices for indoor & outdoor flea market spaces. Contact: Clarence Getz, (610) 377-6130. <http://www.buickfreespirit.org/2015-kempton-car-show/>

Sunday, November, 1 2015 :::: 25th Annual Riegelsville Fall Roll Out Car Show

Location: Riegelsville Boro Park, RT. 611, Riegelsville, PA 18077. Time: 8 AM to 2 PM. (Arrive early!) Price: Car entries are FREE. Vintage, Antiques, Street Rods, Customs and Trucks. Automotive Flea Market. Vendor spaces are available for \$25. First 475 exhibitors receive Dash Plaques. Contact info: Phone: (610) 749-2726. Email: riegelsvillefallrollout@gmail.com

Local Events (continued)

Saturday November 7, 2015 :::: Vargo Dragway Reunion

Location: 1333 Elephant Road, Perkasie, PA 18944. Time: 8 AM to 3 PM. Awards at 2 PM. Rain Date: November 14. Show car price: \$15 (No pre-registration). Spectator price: \$5. Dash plaques to the first 300 show cars. All makes and models welcome. Email: info@vargodragway.com Website: www.vargodragway.com



LANta Community Center Entrance



Lehigh and Northampton
Transportation Authority
(LANta) Headquarters

Community Center Meeting
Room, 2nd Floor

1060 Lehigh Street
Allentown, PA 18103

We Meet Here!
(Entrance to LANTA)

LVCC Club Officers:

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Clark's Corvair Parts®

400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
(413)625-9776 www.corvair.com



Our 42nd Year! Get the 2013-2018 Catalog

If you did not get our latest catalog in 2013 or 2014, you can get one free on your first \$50 order during 2015. (Additional catalogs \$3 with an order)

Over 100 new repro parts in the past 3 years.

LVCC Classified Ads!



FOR SALE: 1966 Chevrolet Corvair Monza Sport Coupe. 110/PG. Very original car. Nice patina (mostly original paint). 34K original miles. Window sticker and POP. Second owner. Very solid car. Artesian turquoise with black interior. No leaks and clean heat. Runs and drives very well. Recent brake overhaul. Also comes with original wheel covers with NOS centers installed. Car is located in Phillipsburg, New Jersey. Price of \$8,500.00 is negotiable; but the car must go to a good home. Contact Ron Peles by phone at 908-479-1777 or by email at . ronaldpeleslaw@gmail.com



FOR SALE: 1965 Corvair Monza Convertible. Runs well. Good interior and tires, new top. Gail and her late husband Ron Snyder bought this convertible on May 22, 2009. They were active members in the Philadelphia Corvair Association until Ron's passing in December 2012. Since then, Gail has kept good care of their 1965 convertible, having a new top put on earlier this year. \$5,000. Contact Gail Snyder: gsnydertrustpins@verizon.net



FOR SALE: 1966 Corvair Corsa Hardtop. This 1966 Corvair Corsa may look a bit rough at first, but look deeper and you will see a very nice project that has already had most of the "heavy lifting" done for you. Structurally, the body is very solid with excellent new floors. There are two small, non-structural areas that still need some attention with the welder. Comes with many Fitch Sprint parts, new interior door panels, exterior trim, lights and lenses, glass (some extra), interior fittings, carpet, and assorted hardware. Front and rear seat covers have been re-trimmed in new white vinyl. It runs very well and can be lot driven (brakes need some fine tuning). Bethlehem, PA. Ike Eisenhart. 610-442-7183 ike@ikesservice.com



Next Meeting: Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2015