



the fifth wheel

FEBRUARY 2020

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

ESTABLISHED 1976

Inside this issue

Next LVCC Meeting:
Wed. February 26, 2020 1

HELP! My Engine Fell
Out! 2

Corvair Engine Mounts
Explained 3

Charlie Potts Makes a
Donation 5

LVCC's January
Meeting 5

Windshield Washer Sol-
vent, by Roy Lambrecht 6

Funny Funnel for FCs
By John Osburn 6

Install Audible Warning
By Walter J. Smith 6

NJACE Parts Auction
Recap 7

LVCC Classified
Ads 7

Shows & Events
Calendar 8

LVCC Officer
Contact Information 8



Next Meeting! Wednesday, February 26, 2020

LVCC Meeting Information: 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. 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 Lehigh Valley Corvair Club Inc. (LVCC), a chartered chapter for the Corvair Society of America. 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, redbat01@verizon.net.

HELP! My Engine Fell Out! Corvair lovers share tales of woe ...



Ever since the beginning, Corvairs have been demonized by those nattering nabobs of negativism who have no appreciation for the engineering sophistication of our favorite compact car. There have been so many tall tales. Leaky engines. Tail-happy handling. Smelly heaters. Blown head gaskets. Flipping fan belts. Some are based in fact. Others are fake.

Here's one I believed to be in the latter category. I had heard of engines falling out of Corvairs, but that seemed downright silly. Well, maybe it's not!

My favorite Corvair discussion board is the Corvair Center Forum. And on February 5, a respondent named "Ken" started a discussion about engines falling out of Corvairs.

Here is what Ken wrote,

I saw this on H.A.M.B. Get ready to laugh!

About 1965, I was commuting to the University of Minnesota, driving a '61 Corvair my folks bought new. By this time it had been around the block a few times, including engine removal at the dealership a couple of times to solve some valve problems. I was coming down Hennepin Avenue on my way home when I heard a strange grinding sound, and the car kind of squatted down and stopped. When I got out to investigate, I first saw the rear wheels were at a strange angle, and when I got around to the back, I saw the rear of the engine laying on the ground. The rear motor mount had one bolt pointing downward, and evidently, the nut holding everything together had worked itself loose and fallen off.

Luckily, the car had a scissors jack that I was just able to wiggle under the side of the engine and jack it up high enough to set the spare under it. I was then able to reposition the jack and when it was centered, I was able to jack the engine up the

rest of the way. The hole in the tab on the engine assembly went right up over the bolt sticking down like it was made for it (it was).

By this time, a good-sized crowd had gathered to see what was going on. A remark was made from the crowd, something to the effect of "Well smart guy, now that you got it jacked up, how are you going to hold it there?". To their credit, several in the crowd helped me walk back over the last couple of blocks to see if we could find the lost nut, or maybe even a length of wire or rope so I could lash it back together. Of course, we had no luck.

Sitting on the curb, I had a gnawing thought that that bolt sticking down looked sorta familiar. In an act of desperation, I removed one of the lug nuts from a front wheel and tried it on the motor mount bolt. It fit perfectly. I tightened it up with the lug wrench (I also made sure the remaining 3 on the wheel were tight), and removed the jack. Everything looked good, so I tried the engine. It started right up. I stowed the jack and spare away, closed the deck (remember, this was a Corvair), and drove away to a smattering of applause from the crowd.

Oh yeah, I forgot. The next day I went to the local hardware store and bought the proper size "fibre-locking-nut" (this was before "nyloks") and a brand new lock washer.

Anybody who doesn't believe me, go find an early Corvair and check out the rear motor mount and the lug nuts. You'll find they are the same thread size. I believe it is 7/16 UNF. [Rollseys]

Well, Ken's story ignited a flurry of replies, as you might expect! A write named "FL Steve" was the first:

Happened to me, but I was lucky and found the nut a few feet away. Put a 2x4 under the engine and pushed

down on the back of the car. Tightened up the nut and off I went. I must have forgotten the cotter pin and the nut came off about 1,500 miles after the engine was replaced. No damage but a little scrap to the exhaust and oil pan.

Frank DuVal wrote,

Not an unusual situation back then. Just one nut, not self locking, but castellated, which just needed the one cotter key to rust off or never replaced, and there goes the nut....

This is probably why the late models got the locking style nuts and TWO of them.

Dan Brizendine wrote,

I've heard that story at least a hundred times. It rarely actually happened to the story teller. The only way the nut could come of is if the cotter pin was left off...by someone recently working on the car. Even here in the rust belt, I've never seen that cotter pin rust away. No one ever mentions dealing with the rear grill or the mount cover which prevent access to the stud, probably because they were missing, which may be a clue as to the general condition of the car. Just a "Corvair" story that car guys love to repeat.

Dan Dood wrote,

This happened to my brother back in the early 1980s in the southwest area

(Continued on page 4)

Some folks believe that, if the rubber portion of the engine mount rips apart, "the engine will fall out". Actually, that's a poor description of the situation because the powertrain is still held in by the transmission mounts and will remain with the car. And besides, in later Corvairs, the mounts were designed to "fail safe" if the rubber broke apart.

But there is another way in which the mount can fail, and that happens if the nuts that hold the mount to the engine loosen and fall away. The engine mount can be in perfectly fine condition. The failure is in the fasteners, not the mount itself.

In early Corvairs, the engine mount "fasteners" consisted of a single threaded stud protruding down from the engine mount, which inserts into the engine bracket below. A castellated nut secures the bracket to the mount, and the nut is secured by a plain cotter pin. If the cotter pin is missing, it's possible for the castellated nut to spin off the stud over time, in which case, the engine will fall away from its mount.

In late-series Corvairs, the design is similar, but there are two studs. Rather than castellated nuts, the engineers chose self-locking nuts, thereby eliminating the need for cotter pins.

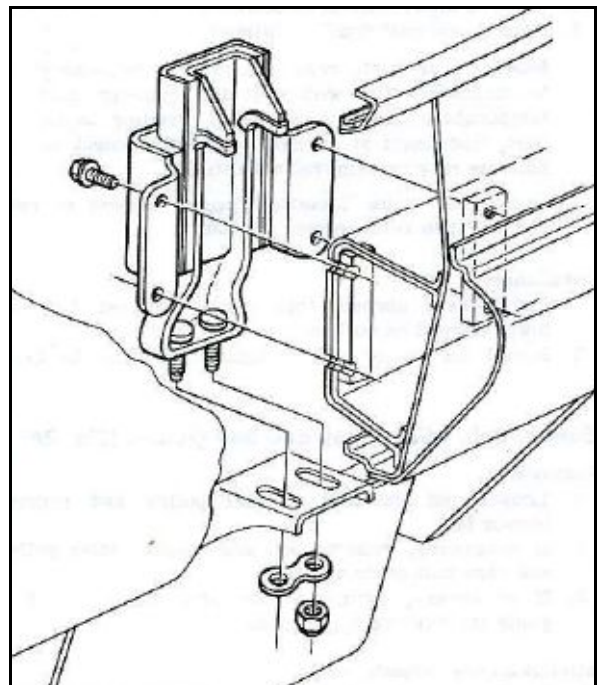
Of course, with either design, the nuts need to be torqued to specification. This goes for the transmission mounts, too. Each has a stud and nut arrangement. The whole powertrain hangs from the bottom of the car by these studs. It doesn't "sit" in the chassis. It hangs from it.



1961-64 engine mount. Castellated nut spins onto the single stud and held in place with a cotter pin.



1966-69 Corvair engine mount. 2 studs. Nuts (not shown) are self-locking type, not castellated. No cotter pins.



1965 Corvair engine mount schematic. 2 studs.

(Continued from page 2)

of Detroit. He was driving a late model. He was going to work and as he was going over some railroad tracks the car suddenly stopped. He probably could finish the story but I remember him telling me the motor mount broke and he needed help to get the poor little Corvair off the tracks before a train came through.

Good times for sure.

Ken Hand writes,

This happened to my son on a 69, even with the double nuts! I don't remember the exact circumstances but the engine had been out and, since my son did most of the work, I'm sure he forgot to tighten the 2 nuts in the back. He called me and said what had happened. I got a jack, 2 different nuts and put the engine up and drove home after fixing the coil power wire.

Real life and almost first person!

Allan Lacki writes,

My story is different. The mounting lugs broke where the Powerglide attaches to the transmission crossmember. So, the powertrain dropped down at the front. Needless to say, this affected the accelerator, but luckily, in a way that slowed the car down.

This happened around 1972, when I was a kid. I don't know why it happened, but I do recall that I liked to downshift the Powerglide down into low gear to hear my trombone mufflers cackle!

GM wasn't very good with engine mounts back then. It wasn't limited to Corvairs.

Chad Guthrie writes,

That happened to me 2 summers ago. I had just bought my car and was driving it as much as I could. One night my wife and I drove it to a welding class at the local community college, about 35 minutes away. We got home just as it was getting dark, not a problem to be had.

The next morning we hopped in the car to head to work, pulled up to the stop sign about 1/4 mile from our house and just as I was about to pull away, there was a loud bang and the engine quit. I got out of the car and the rear of the engine was sitting just off the ground. It broke one of the coil wires, ripped the battery ground, but otherwise didn't do much damage.

I walked home, got the truck and towed it home. One of the previous owners must have neglected to put the pin in, and the castle nut on the rear mount had come loose and eventually just fell off. I wasn't happy, but man, that could have been so much worse. My wife still thinks telling that story is sooooo funny. In my panic and annoyance at the time I didn't think to take a picture that I would consider funny later...

Bob Marlow writes,

I can share three such experiences.

The first, in the early 1960s, involved one of the 1961 Greenbriers that my father used in his business. Going over a railroad crossing in town, something odd happened, so the employee who was driving made an immediate left turn into the Chevy dealer that was right there. Upon stopping, the problem was obvious, the "engine had fallen out."

All these years later I can recall no further details of the failure, only that the problem was corrected and the van gave many more years of service.

The second, in the early 1970s, was when I came upon a 1962 Corvair wagon parked at the side of the road in a rural part of the state. The back of the engine was sitting on the ground and there was a long scrape in the pavement leading from the car back to the point where the failure occurred. There was no one around, and I continued on my way.

The third, in the early 2000s, was my own 1964 track car (the car in my signature). The rear mount failed on the track at Lime Rock, on the "No-Name Straight." Not knowing what had happened, only that something was wrong, I drove the remainder of the lap and pulled into the pits. The analysis: No cotter pin, nut backed off, engine fell out.

In this instance, the fact that the car had a lowered suspension and the '64 transverse leaf spring kept the engine off the ground... by about an inch. I jacked it back into place.

But why was there no cotter pin? I had just installed the engine the prior week. I had a helper. Each of us assumed the other had taken care of it. On the morning of the track event, I checked over everything... except that rear mount because the rear center shroud piece, which we had managed to install without noticing that the cotter pin was missing, hid it from view.

One of those "forever" lessons.

My helper and I were equally culpable in this episode, but I do not want to embarrass him by identifying him here. But his initials are Pete Koehler. [grinning smiley]

Drew writes,

When I reinstalled my engine in my 64 last month (after having the car painted), I realized that I'd forgotten to bring the castellated nuts to the shop with me. They had a few lug nuts sitting around, so I used those. About a week later, the paint shop brought my car home, and that weekend, I drove it over to Steve Morton's house to put the right nuts in (his shop is heated).

He crawled under the car and asked where the nuts went. Yep, the front of the power pack was being held up by the transverse leaf spring.

I found one nut on the floor of my garage and the other in the driveway.

Crawford Rose wrote,

All of these stories have a common omission, the nuts were not torqued to 55 ft/lbs after the engine was serviced. I doubt a torqued nut would come loose any time soon. The showing of this is that it is not difficult to remove the cotter pin from a torqued nut which it usually would be if the nut had loosened and stopped onto the cotter pin.

Joe of Northlake, Texas points out:

So true. If the nut is tight the cotter is just insurance. It should never do anything. The only place on a Corvair I can think of that a cotter pin retains a nut is at the front wheel bearings.

Eric Eric C. Player, Porterville, CA writes,

Can I tell a story?

I was rear-ended in my 1966 500 Powerglide at 2AM in 2006. (I was in grad

school working late.) The engine dropped when that happened, and I was inexperienced enough in Corvairs at the time that while I could tell the engine was off-kilter, I had no idea how to fix it. So I drove it for about another month until I got the insurance settlement and bought a 65 Monza to replace it. Yep, I drove that car for 30 days with the engine off the mounts. I was and am that stupid.

It drove fine. I just couldn't take it over 40 mph. I was a real hit with other cars on the freeway.

And so it must be true. Corvair engines sometimes do fall out. Especially on Earlies, where the rear of the powertrain is held up by just one castellated nut secured with a cotter pin. But as Joe pointed out, the front wheels were secured to the hubs the same way, with just one castle nut. Not just on Corvairs, but on almost every car built since the 1950s.

We often hear of wheels falling off cars, but the cause is almost always because the lug nuts were loose and seldom the castle nut. Maybe that's because drivers never have their axle bearings repacked!



All this trouble for lack of a cotter pin!

Charlie Potts Donation

Charlie Potts, the VCCA's master carburetor expert, is not a member of LVCC but he has certainly been a good supporter. Last month, he donated \$50 in the form of a check to our club. Thank you very much Charlie!

LVCC's January Meeting

Our previous meeting was held January 22 at 7:30 PM. Larry Asheuer, Allan Lacki, Larry Lewis, Dennis Stamm, Jeff Strausser, Bob Weideman and Dick Weidner attended.

Dick Weidner presented minutes from our October meeting and gave the usual treasury report. In October, we had \$1,495.80 in our checking account. Since then, we received a \$50 donation from Mr. Charlie Potts and spent \$29.05 on newsletter expenses. Our current checking account balance is \$1,516.75.

Dennis Stamm made a motion to accept the minutes and treasury report as read. Al Lacki seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

We were very pleased to have new member Jeff Strausser in attendance. The members introduced themselves to Jeff, one at a time, and we all talked about our years of experience in the Corvair hobby.

Al Lacki mentioned that member Tom Hambel would like to find a Corvair mechanic to go over his '63 Monza sedan. Dennis suggested that Tom contact Larry Asheuer before Spring arrives. That's when Larry's landscaping business takes priority.

Dick Weidner passed around more Corvair photo albums from his extensive collection of memorabilia.

Larry Asheuer did a show-and-tell demonstration showing the difference between incandescent bulbs and LED bulbs for instrument panel lighting. Larry used a display board of his own making, hooked up to a 12 volt power supply, to show how much brighter LEDs can be.

There was considerable discussion about the types and sources of LEDs that are now available for Corvair instrument panels.

We also discussed problems with fuel gages. Bob Weidemen said his fuel gage works fine when the tank is higher than half full, but then shows $\frac{3}{4}$ full when the tank is nearly empty. Al Lacki said his fuel gage works OK, but when the tank is full, the needle on the gage swings way beyond the full mark.

Larry Asheuer, who has worked on Ed Prescott's Corvair Corsa, said Ed is getting ready to downsize and is thinking of selling his Corvair. Ed has already given his Porsche to his son and sold his Austin Healey, so the Corvair is next to go. He's looking for advice with regard to a reasonable selling price.

Al Lacki said he'd reach out to Ed to see if he'd like to place his Corvair in our newsletter's classified ad section.

Green Windshield Washer Solvent **by Roy Lambrecht** **Feb 2003 Communiqué**

Ever notice that some show cars have the original green colored solvent in those three-sided bottles in the trunk?

Well, I have done a lot of research on this. The bracket and bottle were installed beginning in 1961 as part of the Comfort and Convenience Group option. The original color of the solvent was green until 1966. In 1967 the label was changed to "Optikleen" and the fluid was changed to blue.

If you are like me and want to have the correct color, then you can change it. To make green washer solvent, use denatured alcohol and add a drop or two of green food coloring. Get the correct jar label from vendors.

Funny Funnel **by John Osburn** **Apr 1990 Communiqué**

If you have ever tried to add a quart of oil to a Greenbrier or other FC through the rear access door, you probably used

some words that you shouldn't. An oily bumper is the usual result. A small conical funnel is not much help, either; it tends to lean over and spill out the side if you don't hold it carefully.

A solution came to mind when changing oil from the new plastic containers with an offset spout. Simply cut off the bottom couple of inches of one of these modern oil bottles and invert it for use as an offset funnel. The offset puts the pour area a little farther to the rear and permits better access with the can or bottle from which you are pouring.

Install Audible Engine Warning **By Walter J. Smith**

In the bright sun it's sometimes difficult to see the red warning lights. I have added an audible warning device to the idiot lights which directs your attention to the instrument panel if one of these lights comes on.

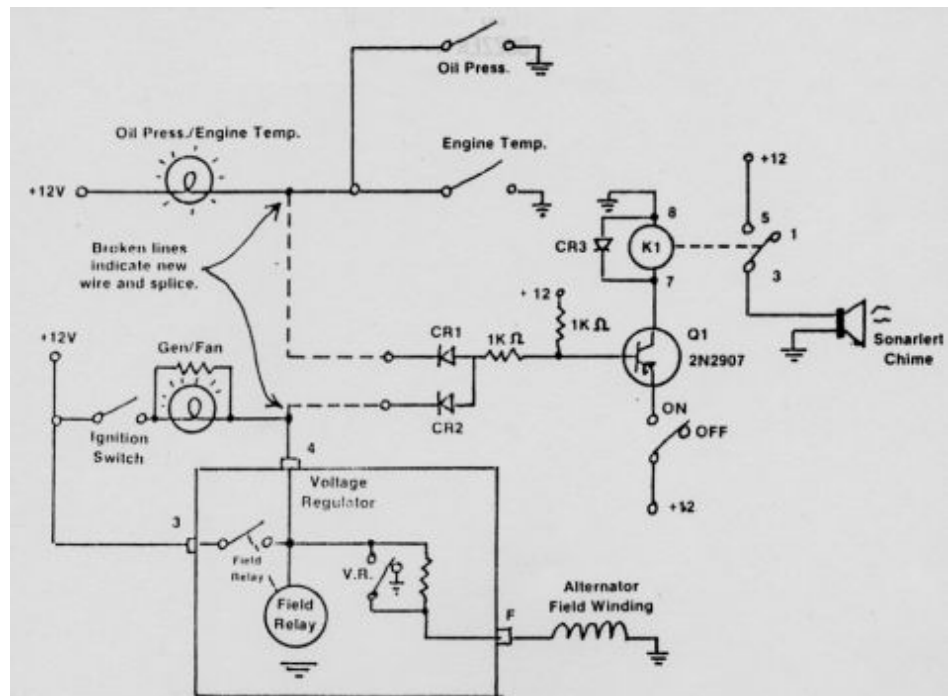
A relay and driver are used to minimize the current drain on the existing oil pressure and engine switches. A

schematic of the device is attached. Operation of this warning system is as follows:

If the oil pressure drops or engine overheats, then a ground is applied to these lamps causing them to light. This ground also causes the transistor (Q1) to turn on and energize a relay (K1). When K1 energizes, the closed contacts (3 and 5) apply 12 volts to the Sonalert chime for an audible alert.

If the generator / alternator fails or the fan belt breaks, the field relay in the voltage regulator de-energizes. This provides a low impedance path to ground through the voltage regulator and field winding of the alternator and causes the idiot light to come on. This also causes Q1 to conduct and energize K1, which sounds the alarm.

Diodes CR1 and CR2 are used to isolate these two car circuits. Switch 1 is used to disable the system. The chime is mounted inside the car. Mine is attached to the dimmer switch. It is advisable to use a connector when installing the system so that it may be easily removed if maintenance is required.



Parts needed are:

- Sonalert is a Mallory SC616CP, 6-12V DC, 2900 Hz chime. An equivalent alarm is suitable but this is just a little less strident.
- K-1 is a Radio Shack part, #275-218B. The contacts are rated for 10 amps. This is overkill, but the part is readily available.
- Socket for K-1 is also a Radio Shack part, #275-220.
- Transistor Q1 is a 2N2907.
- Diodes CR1, CR2 and CR3 are 1N3600.
- Resistors are ¼ watt, 1000 ohm (1K).
- Switch is any small SPST switch capable of carrying 80 mA.

Chime is mounted above the dimmer switch utilizing the same mounting dimples provided for the turbo Corsa buzzer.

The schematic diagram (on the previous page) depicts existing warning lamps and the added warning circuitry.

The voltage regulator diagram has been simplified for clarity. Broken lines indicate new wires that are attached to existing lamps.

NJACE Parts Auction Recap

The Annual NJACE Corvair Parts Auction is an indoor February event that provides ample opportunity for Corvair enthusiasts to buy and sell Corvair parts. This year, it was held on Saturday, February 15. The venue was Ashley's Auto Body Shop as always, located in Flanders, NJ just a few miles south of Route 80.

People started to wander in before 8 AM, bidding began around 10 AM and the fun continued until 3:30.

Auctioneers Brian O'Neill, Tim Schwartz and Ray Coker took turns drumming up business while Roberta O'Neill and Frank Hunter kept track of the transactions.

Hundreds of items were presented and sales were brisk. There were good bargains, too. For example, a complete set of unused repro 1966-1969 wheel trim moldings went for \$105. Clark's price: \$179. A set of bare 140 heads, clean and ready for rebuild sold for an amazing but true price of \$55. Two sets of 1965 unused repro rocker panel trim sold for \$100. Clark's price: Out of stock at \$250. Two complete used engines were sold, each for less than \$100.

The bargain of the day had to be a set for four FC wheels – rusty but not

bent – for a mere \$4. That's \$1 per wheel!

Some items were offered at bargain-basement minimums but had no takers nonetheless. A used but certainly usable 1966 factory quick ratio steering box sold was a no-sale at \$175, even though it's rare and very desirable in certain quarters.

And of course, there were all the usual service parts: Ignition kits, brake hoses, fan belts, AC spark plugs, tail light lenses – all new and ready for installation. Plenty of tools, too.

We had an unexpected occurrence mid-morning when the electric power went out. The outage affected the whole community and, while there was plenty of daylight streaming through the glass garage doors at the body shop, there was some consternation in the rest rooms. (Ashley's Auto Body draws its water from a private water well which is powered by electricity, of course.)

But after a couple of hours, the power came back and just in time, too, for the pizza arrived and a hearty lunch was enjoyed by all. Then the auction continued until the closing. The numbers aren't in just yet, but it certainly seemed to be another successful event for NJACE and Corvair lovers in general.

Classified Ads



I recently went through my Corvair parts inventory and would like offer some parts for sale. If you have any questions or offers, please give me a call. Thanks!! I live in central Brick, N.J. Bill Doerge, phone 908-910-0131, email bjdoe2@gmail.com or bjdoe1@verizon.net."

Late Hood, \$35. Late Rear Deck, \$25. (4) PG trans with differentials, \$50 each. (1) differential, \$20. Wiper Motors, \$15. Starters from good to cores, \$15 to \$5. Aftermarket Steering Damper, \$15. Transmission Main Shafts, \$15. Early Shift Rods, \$15. Late Shift Rods, \$20. Lakewood glass and rubber, \$80. Stainless trim - all kinds!!. Dashboards need to be cleaned up. '65 Silver Stick dash, \$15. '65 Saddle/tan Stick dash, \$15. '65 Silver PG dash, \$15. (2) '66 Monza PG dash, \$15 each. Other late dash, \$15. Late model bezels, \$15 to \$10. Late model rear grille, \$15. Turbo crossover pipes, \$10. Used clutch plates (cores,)\$5. Late streetable bumpers, \$20. Heads: (1) 3856632 '64 110 head. (1) 3786588 '61 80 head/'61-63 van head. (2) 3878566 '65-67 110 heads (rough shape). (1) 3878566 '65-67 110 head. Folded fin oil coolers, \$20. Distributors - serviceable, \$10 (#294, #310, #311, #319). Dozens of late Hub caps, \$10. Bunches of other parts!

Calendar of Local Events



Tuesday February 25, 2020 :::: Fastnacht Day in the Reading Diner

Location: Location: Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, 85 South Walnut Street, Boyertown, PA. Time: 11 AM to 1 PM. Price: Regular museum admission fee applies. Enjoy this Pennsylvania Dutch treat in our 1938 Reading Diner! After enjoying your fastnacht for just a quarter, and a cup of coffee for a nickel, stroll through the Museum gallery to see our collection of Pennsylvania-built autos and trucks. Phone: 610-367-2090. <http://www.boyertownmuseum.org>

Sunday March 1, 2020 :::: Hamburg Swap Meet and Car Corral

Location: Hamburg Fire Co. Field House, 127 South Fourth St. (rear), Hamburg, PA. Time: 7 AM to 2 PM. Event Info: Over 100 indoor spaces with unlimited outdoor spaces, handicap friendly, refreshments available. Held rain or shine. Adults \$2, children under 12 free. For vendor spaces or general information call 610-823-4656. <http://ontelaunee.aaca.com/hamburg-swap-meet/>

Saturday April 25, 2020 :::: 34th Annual NNL East Model Car Show

Location: Wayne PAL Building, 1 PAL Drive, Wayne, NJ 07470. Time: 9 AM to 4 PM. Model car show, scale marketplace and cottage industry expo. Presented by the Tri-State Scale Model Car Club. This year's theme: Known Survivors - Original old customers from our youth. www.nnnleast.com

Saturday March 28, 2020 :::: 3rd Philly NNL Model Car Show

Location: Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum, 6825 Norwitch Dr, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19153. Time: 9 AM to 2 PM. Price: \$12 museum admission fee and includes unlimited model entries. Tables filled with models and the museum packed with people, not to mention the museum's huge collection of historic race cars. Contact Tommy Kortman kortmatry@yahoo.com. www.simeonemuseum.org

Sunday June 21, 2020 :::: 34th Annual Father's Day Rod Run

Location: Oley Fairgrounds, 477 Main Street, Oley, PA 19547 (enter on Jefferson Street). Time: 8 AM to 3 PM. Price: \$15 day of show. Rain or shine. All show cars and trucks welcome. Dash plaques to first 200 vehicles. Door prizes, vendor spaces, raffles, games, NSRA safety inspection, etc. Contact Rick @ 610-678-3948 or Fran @ 610-944-5515.

Clark's Corvair Parts®

Our catalog lists over 15,000 parts for your Corvair. We carry engine parts, body panels, upholstery and much more! There are 1,000's of reproduced items available, pages of technical information and lots of other helpful hints.



Clark's Corvair Parts® 400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370 (413)625-9776 www.corvair.com

LVCC Officers

President: Dennis Stamm Phone: (610) 926-4723 Email: dmstamm@comcast.net
 Vice Pres: Fred Scherzer Phone: (484) 948-5142 Email: jukeboxman44@gmail.com
 Secretary / Treasurer: Richard Weidner. Phone: (610) 502-1414 Email: anythingvair@yahoo.com,
 Newsletter & Website Editor: Allan Lacki. Phone: (610) 927-1583 Email: redbat01@verizon.net

