

Newsletter of Lehigh Valley Corvair Club Inc.

# the fifth wheel

SEPTEMBER 2021

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HTTP://WWW.CORVAIR.ORG/CHAPTERS/LVCC

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## *Next Meeting: Wednesday September 22 at the Oberholzer Pavilion*

The LANTA Center Conference Room remains off-limits to the public, so for our September meeting, we'll meet again at the Oberholzer Pavilion located near the band shell at Macungie Memorial Park, 50 N. Poplar Street, Macungie, PA 18062.

Date & time: Wednesday August 25, 2021 at 7 PM. It's an opensided structure so consider bug spray! If rain is in the forecast, call Allan Lacki at (610) 927-1583.

*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.

## My Introduction to the Corvair by Stephen E. Motsney

Editors' Note: The author of this story, Stephen Motsney, is the newest member of the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club. Although he doesn't currently own a Corvair, he's most definitely a Corvair enthusiasts. His story tells us why...

The year was 1965 and I was seven years old. My family, which consisted of my parents, two of my sisters and myself, were about to go and visit my aunt and uncle in Hellertown, PA. This time, however, my aunt and uncle from Frackville, PA were going with us in our car. I did not know why but I found out later.

After we were there for a while, my dad invited me to go with him and my uncles to either Bethlehem or another part of Hellertown (I cannot remember which) to look at a car which he wanted to buy (or perhaps he had already bought). We stopped at a woman's home to view the car which she had parked in front. The woman was a school teacher and I still remem-

ber her putting her hand on my shoulder and asking what grade I was in . I said, "Second".

The car was a red 1960 four door Corvair. At the time, I was not familiar with Corvairs, but it was so neat. To me, it was like a little red sports car and I loved it. It was so different from my dad's other car, a 1950 Mercury.

When we left, the Corvair ended up going with us back to my aunt

and uncle's house in Hellertown. It was at this time that I found out why my relatives from Frackville went with us. The were there to drive the Corvair back to our house in Buck Mountain, a small village near Mahanoy City, PA.

Now that the Corvair was finally home, it was used as a second car. I got to ride in it at times but it was never enough.

My oldest sister obtained a part-time second job in the afternoons and evenings during the week. So, much to my dismay, the Corvair was usually gone by the time I got home from school. It got to the point that I only saw the car on weekends.

My father worked for a construction company building roads and one day he came home with the news that his company won a bid to build a road in Snow Shoe, PA which is near State College. Since this town was so far away, commuting every day would be almost impossible. Therefore, he would be gone all week and home only on weekends. Of course, the Corvair would be used to travel out there every week and it handled the task easily. I now believe that my dad knew in advance of the coming job in Snow Shoe and this is why he bought the Corvair.

After a year of so, that job was finished and my dad was able to return to a normal home life. It was great to have him and the Corvair back home. The next project my dad's employer bid on, and won, was closer to home and this made commuting every day possible again. For this job, he used the old car and because of this, in addition to my sister not working her second job anymore, the Corvair was home more often.

Time went on and everything was going fine until the one Saturday when my family and I went in the Corvair to visit my Aunt Lee and Uncle Frank in Frackville. (They are the same aunt



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and uncle who went with us to drive the Corvair home). I still remember that particular seven-mile ride. Little did I know what was going on at the time.

After our arrival, my mom and aunt were in the kitchen while my sister and I were in the front room. My dad and uncle spent a lot of time outside looking at the Corvair and walking the half block to the used car lot at the end of the street. Later they came and asked me if I wanted to go for a ride with them and I went.

Although we went for that ride in a different car, I still not realize what was actually taking place. We went for a real long ride and even stopped at another lot and looked at a car similar to the one we were in. We then drove back to Frackville and I went into the house while my dad and uncle went back to the car lot. When they returned, we all enjoyed some food and had ice cream for dessert.

When our visit was over, we went outside and that is when the bombshell was revealed. My dad traded the Corvair in for a big black Oldsmobile. Just like that, the Corvair was gone!

The Olds was nice but I was sad and missed that red "sports car" which brought our whole family together because of the story behind it and the joy that beloved Corvair brought us.

## Kyle & Kasey Get Engaged!

On June 5, LVCC Member Kyle Regan and Kasey Charters, announced their engagement to get married. Congratulations!

#### A Toast to Wrench Turners! By Ken Schifftner

This article, written by Ken Schifftner, was first published in the September 2021 issue of "The Drip Line", the official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Corvair Club.

Back in college, I used to read Mad Magazine. Doing so was like a lozenge to sooth the sore throat of too much studying. Mad Magazine had off beat articles, intended to be satirical, clever, and/or funny, that stood in contrast to day to day thought and activities. I sometimes identified with Alfred E. Neuman, the "What Me Worry" guy.

Other readers must have enjoyed the same "release" since the magazine was popular. I recall one article. I believe the article had as its basis a travelogue for a trip in Russia. A portion mentioned a statue erected for a comrade at a tractor factory.

The comrade, a "wrench turner", had set a single day record of diligently applying thousands of nuts to thousands of bolts. The Russian government rewarded the achievement with the statue. But the statue didn't show the worker. Nope. Above the concrete base, high above it simply showed....a nut.

The caption read that the statue wasn't erected for the wrench turning achievement but for the worker's mental condition!

Now, among the Corvair "comrades" we have wrench turners and some who would rather not. The wrench turners get their enjoyment from loosening, tightening the nuts that hold the Corvair together. Some do this to race their vehicles. Some do this to drive and show their vehicles. Some do it to just escape from day-to-day activities. Like a lozenge.

But there are no statues for Corvair wrench turners. If there were, I think the statue wouldn't have the "nut". The base might be carved to depict and honor the CORSA Tech Guides. Above it might show two tools the Corvair wrench turners commonly use... A 9/16" and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wrench!



## LVCC Dues Are Due!

Many of you paid your dues on Sunday at Das Awkscht Fescht this year and we thank you. But for those of you who weren't there, this is a reminder that dues are due again!

Our accounting year is from August 1 to July 31 and so membership dues are due! If you haven't yet paid, send your check to LVCC Secretary- Treasurer Dick Weidner at 2304 Main Street, Northampton, PA 18067. Or simply pay in person at our next meeting.

The price of LVCC membership remains very reasonable at \$15 per year, and if you are also a member of the Corvair Society of America, the rate drops even lower to \$10 per year.

## Finally... A Local Chrome Plating Shop by Joe Darinsig

Editor's Note: This article was first published in the June issue of the Four Wheel Independent, the official newsletter of the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club (CPCC).

I mentioned a little about this place at the May CPCC meeting. But I didn't have a lot of pertinent information to pass onto the members.

I went up today to see the shop and talked to the owners and here is what I learned. It is B&B Metal Finishing Inc., Plating Specialists, 401 N. Main St., Manchester, PA 17345. Their website is: www.bbmetalfinishing.com, email is: bbmetal@ptd.net, and phone number: 717-764-8941.

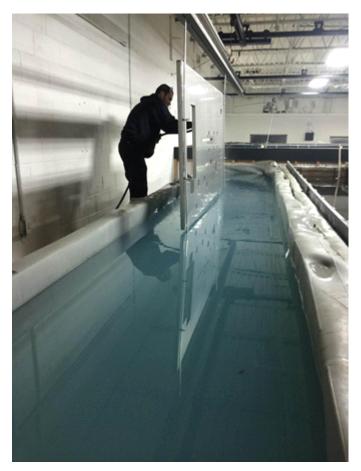
They have big dipping/chroming tanks for large items like bumpers, bike chassis, headers, axles, etc. Correct 3- step nickel/chrome plating. They do different color anodizing, chrome, and nickel plating. Stainless steel and aluminum polishing.

They do not repair damage to bumpers. grilles, or trim. It must be good condition and ready for plating. If you can't get there, you can email a picture of your item(s) you want plated and they will give you a quote. They will tell you if it is too pitted and they can't do it.

Check their website for additional information. They do small items like bolts, nuts, etc. Wayne Bushey of the National Nova Club is in there often to get bolts, nuts, washers, and small items they use for Nova restorations. Aaron Schwartz, part owner, will welcome the club (i.e. the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club) for a free tour later in the year as they are extremely busy right now. This would be a good Fall or Winter tour activity. Check it out.....



Sample of work by B&B Metal Finishing Inc.



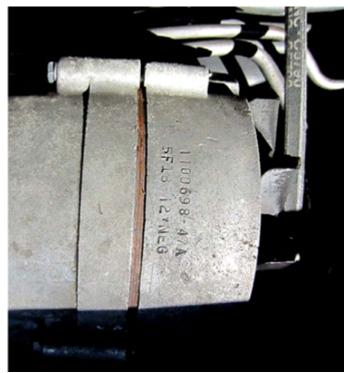
One of B&B's immersion tanks.

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## Alternator Date Code by Bob Welch

*Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the September 2021 of the Flat Six Journal, the official newsletter of the Mid Continent Corvair Association.* 

Working on my parts storage today. I have learned a bit about Corvair alternators. Each alternator has its part number stamped on the top of the housing, then the amperage. For example, in the photo, it's 1100698 47A, with 1100698 representing the part number and 47A representing the ampere rating.



The second line provides the build date. Again referring to the photo, we see  $5F18 \ 12v$  NEG. The first digit represents the year of manufacture. It can be either 4,5,6,7,8, or 9.

Next, a letter representing the month, like so:

A =January	G = July
B =February	H = August
C = March	J = September
D = April	K = October
$\mathbf{E} = \mathbf{M}\mathbf{a}\mathbf{y}$	L = November
F = June	M = December

Then, the day of the month.

So, the alternator in the photo is a 47 amp unit manufactured on June 18th, 1965.

### Meet the Makers by Eva "Corvair Lady "McGuire

*Editor's note: The following article is from the September* 2021 issue of "The Flat Six", the official monthly newsletter of the Prairie Capital Corvair.

Most folks know the official date of Corvair production began on July 7, 1959, at Willow Run. However, not many know that the first Corvair body by Fisher was made on May 15, 1959.

This first body shell was shipped to the Chevrolet Division next door by an overhead over-the-roadway conveyor system on May 18, 1959.

On May 20, 1959, Willow Run employee, Cecil Cole; who began working at the plant in 1955 building trucks, was issued a special "Production Pilot Line" special pass name badge, and was selected to hand assemble (by himself) the first Corvair without the use of power tools in the top secret "Green Room" (later called the Pilot Room).

Once Mr. Cole put together (and took apart several times) this first Corvair and figured out how everything worked, Cecil helped to train employees for assembly line production.

The official start of Corvair production is marked as July 7, 1959.

Mr. Linus (Pete) Rausch was appointed as Plant Manager for the Chevrolet Division.

Mr. J.C. Owens was the Plant Manager for Fisher Body of the Willow Run operations.

Other Willow Run fun facts and some miscellaneous datelines during Corvair production that I thought might be of interest include:

<u>July 1, 1958</u> - Work begins to build an addition to the Chevrolet Division Plant at Willow Run. It was completed in 1959.

Next door Fisher Body plant, which had already been acquired by GM from Kaiser-Frazer in June 1954, assembled trucks during 1956-1957. Then, in 1958, truck assembly was moved to other locations and the Fisher Body plant was closed to make preparations for Corvair body production.

May 15, 1959 - First Corvair body by Fisher produced at Willow Run.

<u>May 18, 1959</u> - First Fisher Corvair body shell delivered to Chevrolet Division (Willow Run). <u>May 20, 1959</u> - Willow Run employee, Cecil Cole, begins hand assembling first Corvair at Chevrolet in top secret "Green Room.

<u>July 7, 1959</u> Official start date of Corvair production with first car officially driven off assembly line by Pete Rausch, Plant Manager.

<u>July 15, 1959</u> - Steel strike begins and lasts until November 7th, 1959, but Corvair production continues for a while before shutting down.

August 6, 1959 - Chevrolet registers the Corvair name.

<u>October 1, 1959</u> - 1960 Corvair makes its first official debut at the Paris Auto Show (one day before the U.S. public introduction).

October 2, 1959 - Corvair is introduced to the general public. The Ypsilanti Daily Press purchases the first made Corvair. Not sure of exact date the newspaper bought the first Corvair (could have been sooner). Its current whereabouts is unknown.

<u>April 1960</u> - Ed Cole (known as the "Father of the Corvair") and Chevrolet's Vice President and General Manager is presented with Motor Trend Award for the 1960 Corvair for its "Engineering Progress," and they also named Corvair "Car of the Year".

<u>April 26, 1960</u> - Corvair Monza 900 coupe is announced to be in production by Chevrolet.

By May 16, 1960, Chevrolet Motor Division employs 1,000 and Fisher Body employs 2,000. Fisher Body encompasses 823,400 sq. ft. on a 38-acre site; while Chevrolet Motor will have 446,500 sq. ft. on an 88-acre site. (Willow Run)

<u>May 18, 1960</u> - a formal dedication takes place at Willow Run with 145,000 Corvairs made to date, building 60 cars per hour and at 60% of the Corvairs being built nationwide. June 23, 1960 - Bill Mitchell receives Industrial Designers Institute award for the 1960 Corvair.

<u>On December 7, 1960</u>, four door station wagons added to the Corvair line.

<u>In Sept 1961</u>, the Chevy II is along with the Corvair line for 1962 model production.

<u>November 6, 1961</u> - Ed Cole is moved up to Executive Vice President of General Motors Car & Truck Group.

<u>March 27, 1962</u> - Turbo charged version of Corvair is introduced.

<u>April 30,1962</u> - Willow Run builds Chevrolet Motor Division's 47th million vehicle - a 1962 Corvair.

<u>March 17, 1964</u> - One millionth Willow Run built Corvair produced (4 years and 8 months after production began).

<u>Oct. 21, 1968</u> - Willow Run adds females to production workforce.

<u>Mid November 1968</u> - Corvairs taken off the main assembly line due to heavy demand for Novas. A Corvair Room was made where the remaining 1969 Corvairs were hand assembled. Time difference in production went from one car being made per minute on the main line to one car being hand assembled every 1-1/3 hour.

<u>November 15, 1968</u> - First hand assembled 1969 Corvair built (car #2195) in Corvair Room.

<u>May 14, 1969</u> - Willow Run builds its last Corvair (car #6000), an Olympic Gold, 2 door hardtop. Its whereabouts is unknown.

<u>April 22, 1983</u> - Willow Run's special Corvair Project Build is completed in conjunction with GM's 75th anniversary when they took a 1964 Corvair (originally built in Sept. 1963) and ran it through the assembly line again. This pro-



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ject was spearheaded by Plant Manager, Harvey Williams, and was a joint effort of UAW Local 1776 and GM officials.

The project took six months to complete and the finished Corvair was placed on display in the Rotunda (Fishbowl) building at the Chevrolet Division at Willow Run. Its current whereabouts is unknown, but I'm working with someone on a good lead.

<u>July 1993</u> - Willow Run Assembly Plant closes, and operations are transferred to the Arlington Assembly Plant in Texas.

Willow Run built the vast majority of Corvairs producing 1,397,698 cars from 1960 to 1969 (out of an approximate total 1.8 million vehicles made).

#### Suspension Upgrade by Kenton Vellner

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the September issue of "The Aircooler", the official newsletter of the Detroit Area Corvair Club. It concerns the rear suspension strut rods on 1965-69 Corvair cars.

One of the previous owners of my Corvair installed nylon bushings in both ends of the rear suspension lower control struts.

While it did stiffen up the suspension, it was difficult to align the strut ends when reassembling the rear suspension. In addition, the added stress caused one of the differential brackets to crack.

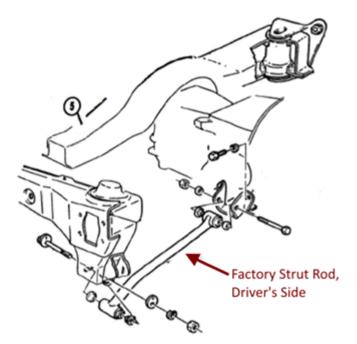
Rather than replace the bracket with another stock unit, I chose to use the Crown bracket. After considering what to replace the nylon-bushed struts, I finally chose struts from PMT Fabrication. They have Poly w/graphite bushings on one end and a spherical pivot point on the other.

They are also adjustable for length and can be used to finetune rear camber. Installation was very easy. I marked the outer eccentrics to maintain the camber settings. I also adjusted the new strut rods to equal the stock rod lengths.

Thanks to the swivel ends at the differential end, I was able to align the holes and easily slip the bolts in. The finished installation looked very satisfactory. I was very happy to leave the original struts behind. Below: 1965-1969 Corvair rear strut rods by PMT Fabrication. At \$389.99 for a pair, they aren't cheap but they are much easier to install and remove than the stock units.

And they are cheaper than the rebuilt stock units sold by Clarks at \$306.55 <u>apiece.</u> [ However, your used strut rods have a core value of \$120 apiece if you return them ].





Above: This is the kind of strut rod described in the Kenton Vellner's article.

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#### Our August Meeting Photos by Dale Parkhurst

Rich Greene, Tom Hambel, Allan Lacki, Scott Oberholzer, Dale Parkhurst, Fred Scherzer, Dennis Stamm and Dick Weidner met on the evening of August 25 at the Oberholzer Pavilion in Macungie Memorial Park.

Dick reported that a new member, Stephen Motsney, joined our club and that, in addition to his membership application, he also sent a very nice letter which serves as the feature article for this edition of "The Fifth Wheel". Welcome aboard Stephen!

Allan Lacki asked the folks at the Lanta bus garage if we can resume use of their conference room for our monthly meetings. This was our usual meeting place before the COVID epidemic. Word came back that it is still off limits and will remain so well into January.

The members present agreed that we can continue meeting here at Macungie Memorial park in September and possibly October, weather permitting. It was also noted that we traditionally skip November and December due to the holidays, so that will buy us time to find a new place if Lanta remains closed..

Rich Greene, who is a member of both LVCC and the Philadelphia Corvair Association (PCA), reminded us that the Philly club's newsletter editor will be resigning at the end of the year and, so far, nobody else has stepped forward to take his place.

The last time this happened, LVCC issued a combined newsletter that covered both clubs. LVCC editor Allan Lacki said he's willing to do this again, and everybody agreed it would be a good thing to lend PCA a hand this way. It's likely this will become a permanent arrangement and possibly a precursor to merging the two clubs, although there was no consensus about the latter.

Rich also talked about recent events at the America on Wheels Museum in Allentown. It's been busy with bus loads of tourists coming in. Currently, the museum has Hudsons on display and this will last through September. The next exhibit will include antique cars owned by Gary Hiller. Fred Scherzer said he's acquainted with Gary and that his collection is unique.

Rich and Dick Weidner talked about their visits to the Gilmore Museum and Dale talked about the Tow Truck Museum in Chattanooga.

The meeting began a few minutes after 7 PM and adjourned at  $8{:}04$ 



Fred Scherzer, Dick Weidner, Larry Lewis, Dennis Stamm and Scott Oberholzer.



*Left to right: Allan Lacki and Rich Greene. Not shown: Tom Hambel & Dale Parkhurst.* 



# **Calendar of Events**

<u>**Cruise Nights**</u> Go to https://carcruisefinder.com/ It's easy to use and lists more cruise events than we could possibly fit in this newsletter!

#### **Day-time Car Shows:**

**Saturday September 18, 2021. 42nd Annual CPCC Corvair Day.** Location: astern Museum of Motor Racing (EMMR), 100 Baltimore Road, York Springs, PA 17372. Use GPS address for Latimore Valley Fairgrounds (which is part of EMMR) 314 Latimore Valley Road, York Springs, PA 17372. Time: 9 AM to 3 PM. Rain or shine. Price per car: \$15 day-of. Event will feature: Bake Sale, 50/50 drawing, door prizes, and dash plaques. Food available to purchase: Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Drinks, and much more. Bake sale. Free Indoor/Outdoor Vendor set-up available.

**Sunday September 19, 20212. 36th Annual Anthracite Region AACA Show.** Location: Tri-County Little League Field, Grove & Hancock Streets, McAdoo, PA. Time: 8 AM to 3 PM. Rain or shine. Price for each show car and flea market space: \$15 day of show. Pre-registration available for a slight discount. Dash plaques to the first 200 registered vehicles. Open to all antiques, classics, street rods, rat rods, modifieds, street machines, trucks, customs and muscle cars. Music by the Legends Oldies Band. Food & drinks of course. Contact Joe Forish (570) 929-2017.

Saturday September 25, 2021. Salem - Berne UMC Car Truck & Motorcycle Show. Location: Salem-Berne UMC Church, 292 Salem Church Road, Hamburg, PA 19526. Time: 10 AM to 4 PM. Rain or shine. Price: \$15 day of show. Judged show. Door prizes, baked goods, food & soup sale. Please bring a non-perishable food item to benefit the Greater Berks Food Bank. Phone: (610) 562-5867. Email: Sbumccarshow@gmail.com

**Sunday September 26, 2021 Delaware Valley Fire Co Annual Fall Car Show.** Location: Delaware Valley Vol. Fire Co., 75 Headquarters Road, Erwinna, PA 18920. Time: 8 AM to 2 PM. Rain Date: October 3, 2021. In case of rain, call on the morning of the show for details. (610) 294-9385. Price: \$15 per car, day of show. All makes and models are welcome. People's choice judging. Raffles, door prizes and 50/50. Food and drink. Additional info: Chris (610) 442-7239 www. delawarevalleyfire.com

**Sunday September 26, 2021. 46**<sup>th</sup> **Annual Meet for All General Motors Cars.** Location: Padre Pio Shrine, 111 Barto Road, Barto, PA 19504. Time: 8:30 AM to 3 PM. Rain or shine. Price: Preregister - \$15 per vehicle. Day of show - \$20. Trophies awarded to the best in show and runner-up for each GM brand. Sponsor: Keystone State Chapter, Pontiac Oakland Club International. For info, call Tom Wright at (610) 587-3468 or tommyjw22@yahoo.com or Sandy Kemp (610) 367-6664.

**Sunday October 3, 2021 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Auto Show & Flea Market.** Location: Rajah Shrine, 221 Orchard Rd, Reading, PA. Time: 10 AM to 3 PM. Price: \$20 day of show. 22nd annual auto show and flea market. Classic cars, muscle, antique trucks, street rods, race cars. Tractors, gas engines, motor cycles. https://rajahshrine.org/docs/Rajah-car-show-2021.pdf

**Sunday October 10, 2021. Brodheadsville Chevrolet Benefit Car Show.** Location: Brodheadsville Chevrolet, 1476 Rte 209, Brodheadsville, PA. Time: 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Price: \$15 day of show. 40+ trophies, dash plaques, t-shirts, door prizes and goodie bags. DJ, food & drink, bounce house for kids. All makes and models welcome!

**Saturday, October 16, 2021. Halloween Car Show.** Location: Falls Township Community Park, 9061 Millcreek Road, Levittown, PA 19054. Time: 2 PM to 6 PM. Rain date Sunday Oct 17<sup>th</sup>. Price: \$15 per car day of show..Dash plaques to the first 100 registrants. Food, games, prizes. Trophies for best in class,-stock,-modified, truck, motorcycle, and halloween costumes. Visit our website at:www.delawarevalleyroadrunners.com. For more info: Len@ 215-510-6629

**Sunday October 31, 2021. Old Car Show with Outdoor Flea Market.** Location: Phifer's Ice Dams, 880 Main Road, Lehighton, PA. (Formerly held at Kempton, PA). Time: 8 AM to 2:30 PM. Rain, shine or snow! Accepting all cars trucks and motor-cycles to 1998. Dash plaques to first 150 cars. Day of show prices: \$12 per show car. \$13 per car for car corral. 20 feet of flea market frontage available for \$12. Conducted by the Free Spirit Chapter of the Buick Club of America. Contact Sandy Getz (610) 377-6130. www.buickfreespirit.org

# We'll Meet Here!

For our September meeting, we'll meet here again: Oberholzer Pavilion located near the band shell at Macungie Memorial Park, 50 N. Poplar Street, Macungie, PA 18062. Date & time: Wednesday June 23, 2021 at 7 PM. Rain or shine. It's an open-sided structure so consider bug spray!



# **Clark's Corvair Parts<sup>®</sup>**

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.



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# 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

