



the fifth wheel

DECEMBER 2021

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

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Next Meeting 3rd Saturday of January!



Date: Saturday January 15, 2022
 Time: 10 AM
 Place: America On Wheels
 5 North Front Street
 Allentown, PA 18102



The Fifth Wheel is published monthly by Lehigh Valley Corvair Club Inc. (LVCC), a chapter of 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.

The Story of the 1966 Chevrolet ElectroVair the Electric Corvair You Never Knew Existed. by Ciprian Florea

Editor's Note: The following article published on December 11 appears on <https://www.autoevolution.com> Autoevolution.com is a blog site that has a number of articles about Corvairs and cars in general. It's a great place to spend some time and do some reading.

The story of the ElectroVair began in 1964 when GM built the first Corvair fitted with an electric motor and a battery pack instead of a flat-six engine. There's not a lot of info on this prototype based on the first-gen Corvair, but Chevrolet revisited the idea in 1966.

By that time, it had introduced the second-gen compact with a new suspension design to correct the "notorious" handling problems of the first Corvair.

Apparently, GM picked the Corvair for its electrification project for two reasons. First, it was the lightest car in its corporate lineup at around 2,500 pounds (1,134 kg). Second, the Corvair was a rear-engine car, making it the perfect candidate to receive an induction motor in the rear and a battery pack in the rather spacious front trunk.

But Chevrolet also had loads of Corvairs sitting around as sales plummeted following the publication of Ralph Nader's book, "Unsafe at Any Speed," in 1965.

The ElectroVair II, based on a 1966 Monza four-door hardtop model, looked identical to a regular Corvair inside and out. But the 2.7-liter flat-six mill was no longer filling up the space atop the rear axle, having been swapped out for an AC induction motor.

The unit was good for 115 horsepower.

For reference, the gas-powered 1966 Corvair delivered 95 horses in the base spec and 140 horsepower in range-topping trim.

The motor got its juice from a 532-volt silver-oxide battery pack mounted under the front hood, which acted as a trunk on the regular Corvair. The conversion added almost 1,000 pounds (454 kg) to the car's curb weight, which made the Corvair as heavy as a full-size Chevrolet Impala.

But that's still lighter than a modern Tesla Model S, which tips the scales at more than 4,300 pounds (1,950 kg).

GM claimed that the electrified Corvair needed around 16 seconds to hit 60 mph (97 kph) from a standing start. It seems painfully slow at first glance, but the EV was actually on par with the base Corvair. It was, however, some four seconds slower than the 140-horsepower sedan.

The drivetrain topped out at 80 mph (129 kph), notably slower than the regular production Corvair, good for 93 to 108 mph (150 to 174 kph) depending on engine specs.

Range, on the other hand, was very limited since batteries were far from compact at the time and the Corvair's trunk had its space limitations. GM advertised the ElectroVair's range at 40 to 80 miles (64 to 129 km) on a full charge.

But the almost unusable range wasn't the concept car's only problem. The high-density silver-oxide batteries were not only expensive and still heavy at the time, but they also wore out after being recharged only 100 times.

So they had to be replaced after the ElectroVair covered 4,000 to 8,000 miles (6,437 to 12,875 km), a little more than a trip from New York to Los Angeles and back.

But GM never planned to turn the electrified Corvair into a production model, so the company was happy with the attention it got from showcasing the EV to astonished journalists.

While some viewed the ElectroVair as a preview of things to come, little did they know that the electric car was still a few good decades away.

As the early 1970s brought the first regulations for fuel economy and emissions, automakers began focusing on new technologies for gasoline engines. GM's next venture into electric cars would only come in the late 1980s when the development of the iconic EV1 began.

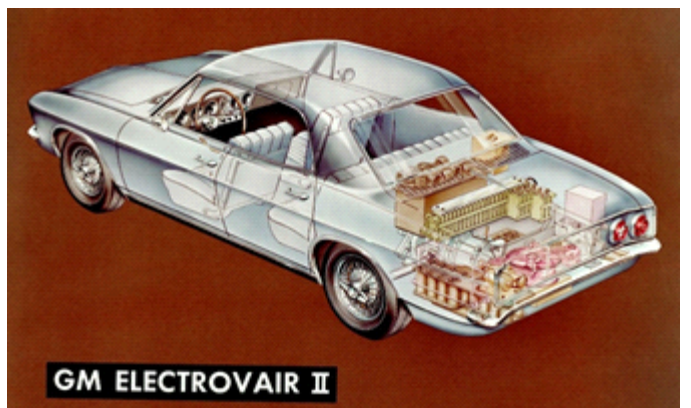
Chevrolet also built an electric concept based on the Chevette hatchback in 1978. It was named the Electrovette and was capable of traveling up to 50 miles at 30 mph (80 km at 48 kph), and had a top speed of 53 mph (85 kph).

Finished in light metallic blue, the ElectroVair II has been kept and maintained to this day and it can be viewed on display inside GM's Renaissance Center in Detroit.

Ordinarily, the ElectroVair II is on display inside the General Motors Heritage Center in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

THE REVOLUTIONARY
Corvair

ElectroVair II (and the original 1964 ElectroVair)



Remembering Mike Moyer

Mike Moyer, avid Corvair enthusiast and son of our long-time member and friend Jerry Moyer, passed away on November 30. Expressions of condolence may be sent to Jerry and Nancy Moyer at 7110 Jasper Street, Navarre, Florida 32566. Here is a message posted by Jerry's grandson Gage.

Hi Everyone,

This is Gage Moyer, Mike's son. There's no easy way to say this. My dad passed away earlier today. He was over in the Philippines for work and had contracted a nasty case of COVID-19. He fought hard for 40 days, 30 of which were on a ventilator, before he passed away.

I've never known a stronger, more hard-willed person. He is already very missed.

I want to thank all of his friends for being good to him over the years. He sure was a hard headed guy and we all loved him for it.

I will post again with information regarding the memorial service when the details have been finalized.

You can reach me (Gage Moyer) or his father (Jerry Moyer) via our Facebook pages.

November Meeting

We had our November meeting on Saturday November 20th at the Hub Cap Café inside the America on Wheels Museum.

Rich Greene, Bob King, Allan Lacki, Larry Lewis, Robert Marlow, Scott Oberholzer, Jeff Strausser and Dick Weidner were there. The proceedings began at 10:35 AM.

Secretary / Treasurer Dick Weidner read the minutes from our October meeting and gave a quick report on the club's bank account balance. From there, we had a rambling discussion covering several topics.

Dick Weidner explained how he mounted the air conditioning condenser on the bottom side of his engine lid, making it much easier to service top-side engine components such as the fanbelt, carbs and spark plugs.

Speaking of fanbelts, Bob Marlow described his move from Lavalette, New Jersey to Whitehall. He loaded his Rampside to the hilt to transport his collection of Corvair parts to his new home – and crossed his fingers to make sure he didn't toss his fanbelt.

It's pretty easy to change the fanbelt on a Rampside provided that the engine cover is accessible – which it wasn't. Dick Weidner, another Forward Control owner, said it's possible to access the fanbelt through the little drop-down door above the bumper, but it's a hit-or-miss operation.

Dick said that, years ago, he used to tighten the fanbelts on his Corvair as tightly as he possibly could. The result was that they flipped often. He learned that the best way to install a fanbelt on a Corvair is to leave them a bit loose.

Rich Greene led a discussion on Ralph Nader. Rich has had his Corvairs on display at many car shows over the years and almost always gets asked to explain the Nader controversy. So now, he brings fact sheets to hand out when he shows his Corvairs. The fact sheets explain how NHTSA cleared the Corvair of the handling problems that Nader accused Corvairs as having in the book "Unsafe at Any Speed".

Al Lacki pointed out that Nader based his accusations on testimony made by plaintiff's attorneys who were suing GM for damages caused in Corvair accidents. But that testimony was one-sided and did not account for circum-

stances involved in the crashes. When GM began to fight back in court, it won almost all the cases brought against it because the plaintiffs' testimony was weak. In one of the two cases where the jury ruled against the Corvair, the judge threw the verdict out, deeming the plaintiff's evidence as "gibberish". In the other case, the driver was clearly intoxicated after having spent four hours driving at a local watering hole.

There was also talk about the experimental rear-engine V8 Corvair that GM engineers toyed with. Rich said he's like to see photos of it. Obviously, it never made it into production.

There was also talk about using kits to convert Corvairs to electric power. GM built one or two "ElectroVairs" back in the 1960s. Although these were just experimental vehicles, a few conversion kits have recently come onto the market for a wide variety of cars. Bob Marlow said he checked out one of them and found that it would cost upward of \$70,000 to convert his Rampside.

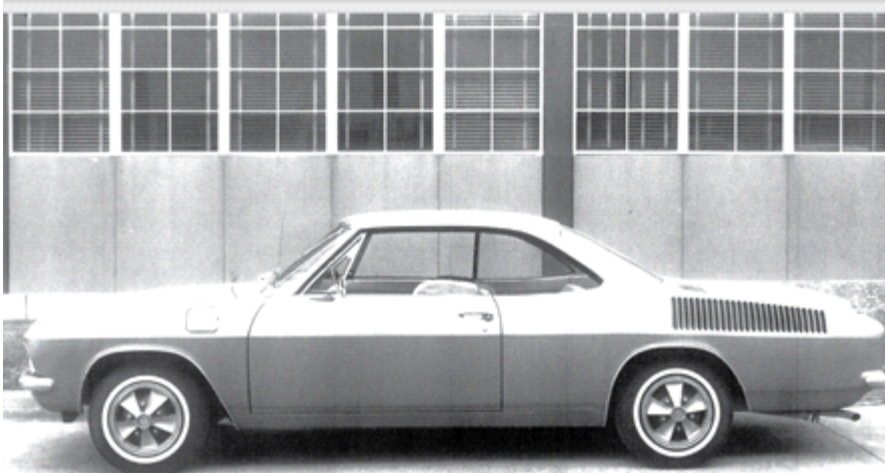
Like 'em or not, electric cars are here to stay and businesses are preparing for an onslaught of them in the near future. Scott Oberholzer pointed out that the Red Robin fast food store in Tilghman Square Plaza installed electric vehicle charging stations and he's expecting Wal-Mart to do the same. Scott is a long-time fan of electric propulsion. He built an electric bicycle when he was a kid.

Bob King and Bob Marlow talked about trailer hitches for Corvairs. Apparently, the factory offered trailer hitches for late-series Corvair cars but never for Forward Control Corvairs. Strange!

Everybody agreed that we should skip December and have our next meeting in January; January 15th to be specific.

We also agreed that LVCC should be-
(Continued on page 6)

Chevrolet's Stillborn V8 Corvair

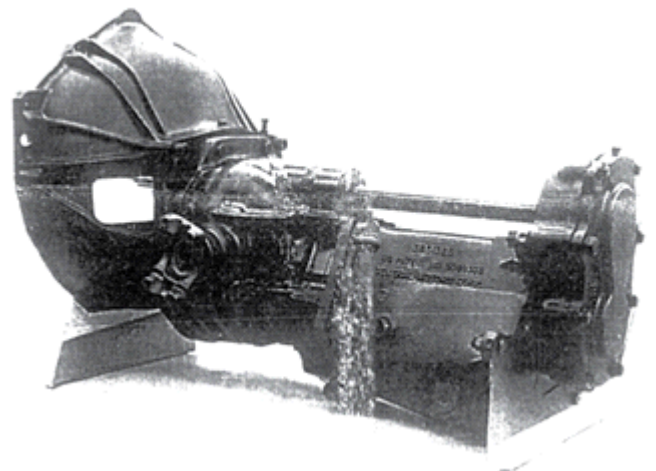
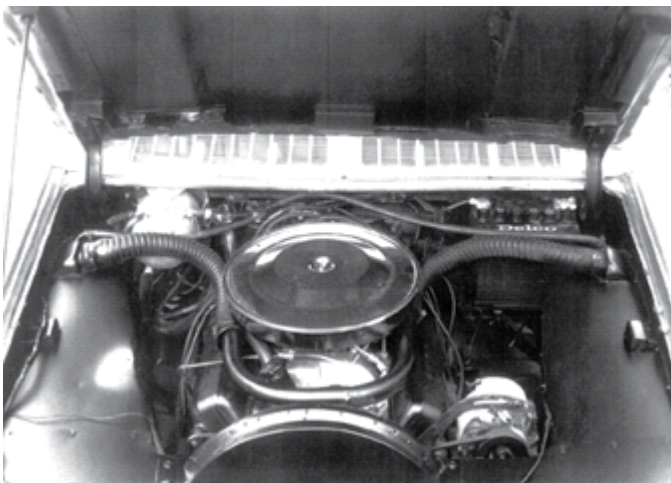


Corvair V-8 by Chevrolet



Corvair historian James Rice wrote a feature article about the prototype V8 Corvair developed by Chevrolet Engineering in 1965. Technical details are described in detail.

The article was published in the September 2017 issue of the *CORSA Communique* magazine and it's still available to *CORSA* members on the *CORSA* website.



come a formal member of the America-On-Wheels Museum. As follow-up, Dick Weidner completed a membership application form for the club and presented it, along with a \$150 donation, to Rich Greene. As head docent, Rich will ensure that the application is processed and that the donation check is deposited in the museum's bank account.

Our meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM.

A Cautionary Tale from Rich Ribble

Edited by Bob Marlow. Rich is an NJACE member living in Texas.

Recently, Rich needed to remove the gas tank from his red 1963 Spyder convertible for the first time in 33 years. He did so because he had determined that the fuel return hose connection at the top of the tank was dripping fuel. "33 years of ethanol turned it into mush," Rich reported.

At the same time, Rich decided to investigate why, for most of those of 33 years, the fuel gauge would stop moving a bit below the one-quarter mark. "If you wiggle the wheel and the needle no longer moves, you need to visit a fuel dispensary" This was a lesson learned from a one-mile walk he once took.

So he removed the fuel sender, and

thought something did not look right. Sure enough, the float was installed facing in the wrong direction. It hit the inside of the tank at about the one-quarter point. This caused him to remember a scratching sound at the front of the car sometimes, which he now realized was not suspension, not sway bar bushings. It was the float hitting the side of the tank.

So while the fuel float can be installed facing in either of two directions, only one of those directions is correct. But Rich didn't tell us how to tell the difference. We'll let this photo, found online, be our guide. Hey, if it is on the internet it has to be correct, right?

Checking Clutch Shafts & Discs by Mike Dawson

Editor's Note: This article appeared in VairCor, the official newsletter of the Prairie Country Corvair Association and was written by Mike Dawson.

When you are performing a clutch rehab, one of the checks that should always be made is to ensure the clutch shaft is perfectly straight and that the clutch disc turns true and slides easily on the clutch shaft splines.

My usual way of checking has been to insert the shaft into the transaxle, slip the clutch disc onto the shaft splines

and turn the differential by hand using the side gears. The end of the shaft should not wobble and the disc should only have a slight wave as it turns.

If either has excessive movement or the disc does not slide easily, you may not be able to get the clutch to disengage without using the entire pedal travel or the transmission may grind going into reverse plus generally shifting hard. And you can also get excessive wear in the pilot bushing from shaft wobble.

The shafts get bent when the engine is removed while leaving the transaxle in the car or, when the transaxle is removed with the engine still in the car. The clutch shaft will usually hang up in the pilot bushing and the shaft pulls out of the transaxle for its full length as one component is pulled away.

If alignment is not perfect while doing this or something slips, you can get a bent shaft that is hard to see. Then there is the guy who may have grabbed a shaft from the shop floor thirty years ago and used it for a pry bar.

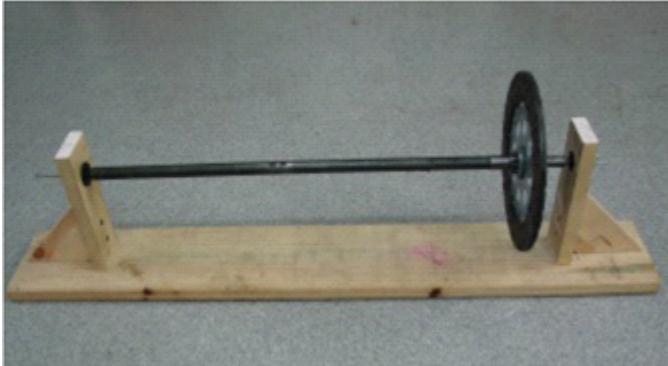
The shafts will bend and they are hard to check rolling them on the counter. I have found two that were bad enough to cause shifting issues so a check while it's out is important.

During a recent clutch job I needed to check the shaft but I did not have an assembled transaxle to use as noted above. The solution for easy checking took less than an hour to assemble and worked perfectly.

There are 5 different clutch shafts used over the years so I built an adjustable lathe setup (spun by fingers) that will accept the shaft at the two original lathe machining points. Threaded rods with 45-degree points sanded on to them and positioned exactly the same distance from the base provide a perfect check. I can now quickly check shafts that I'm servicing as well as those in inventory. If you need one checked, give me a call.



Mike Dawson's Clutch Shaft & Disc Jig



The above setup can check any clutch shaft and disc.



The threaded rod adjusts for variations in shaft length.



The angled (i.e. pointed) tip serves as a pivot point for the shaft-disc assembly. A drop of oil provides smooth turning.

CORSA Membership Deal - Last Call

Hey, are you one of those lone wolf guys who refuses to join CORSA? Well, time is running out to take advantage of CORSA's special \$25 membership deal.

For \$25, you get a full year membership which entitles you to an online subscription to the fabulous CORSA Communique magazine and all the other benefits of CORSA membership, including

- Monthly meet-ups on Zoom with presentations by leading Corvair experts,
- Access to CORSA's online tech article search function,
- Access to CORSA's publication archives, and
- Admission rights to our annual international convention.

But to take advantage of the \$25 offer, you need to hurry. It expires at the end of this month – December 31, 2021. After that, the price goes back up!

And please remember that CORSA's general liability insurance policy covers our LVCC chapter meetings and events like Das Awkscht Fescht. (Timed events like autocross are not covered).

Win a Corvair!

...and support the Corvair Preservation Foundation and the Corvair Museum!

This is a great opportunity to get behind the wheel of a Concours-quality 1961 Corvair Monza Coupe...and for only a \$10 raffle ticket investment! But of course, the more raffle tickets you buy, the better your chances of winning.

The raffle runs through June 4, 2022 with the drawing taking place on June 5, 2022.



You can buy your raffle tickets online at www.corvair.org or in-person at any LVCC meeting. Simply see your newsletter editor, Allan Lacki.

Air Gun **by Rick Norris**

Blow gun - no, not the one from the Amazonian jungle tribes - but mine did come from Amazon online. And it's made by Vacula.

Vacula, wait what? Yes VACULA. Like DRACULA. That is the name on my air nozzle.

What's an air nozzle? You know, it's that air powered device used to inadvertently blow important small items into some third-dimension world where you will never see them again.

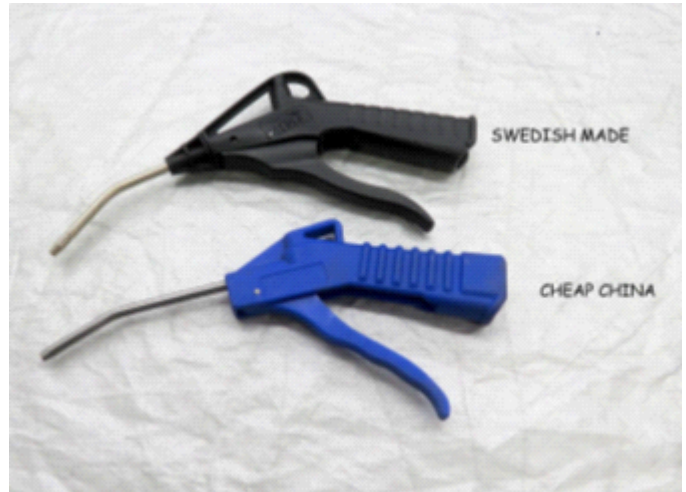
At the working end of my bench, I have an air gun attached to a coil hose. It's more than handy for everything from clearing off the bench to blowing errant leaves out of my shop and dust off the race car. It has no regulator on it, so the full force of my 175-psi air compressor is available.

My original Vacula blow gun was getting worn, especially at the tip. It was also involved in a small fire I created in the waste basket while doing a bit of welding but that's a story for another time.

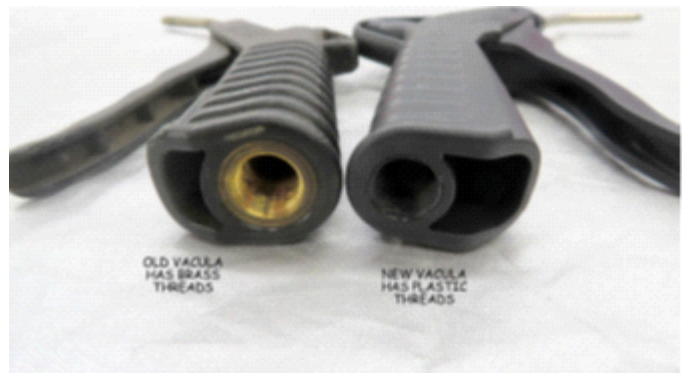
On an impulse buy while cruising the local Hobo Freight, I decided to buy a replacement. So, after attaching the air gun to my hose and putting it into use the very first thing I noticed was, it works like a light switch. It is either off or full on! Dang!

I thought for a minute I could live with that, but I was wrong. That's when I went searching online for a real Vacula hoping they were still available.

As it happened, they were and in many different models. I clicked on all the right buttons and ordered two. I have learned if you really like something and need another copy buy several because the next time you need it there will be none.



Top: Genuine Vacula air nozzle. Bottom: Cheap knock-off from China.



Left: Rick's original Vacula air nozzle had brass threads. Right: The threads on the new one are made of plastic. Oh well. But unlike the knock-off version, this one works fine.



Well, no matter what the name suggests, this item does not suck... I went batty without it though... You will have to draw your own conclusions...

Classified Ads

Special Notice: Jerry Moyer recently called me to reminisce about his son Mike and to talk about Mike's estate which includes a huge inventory of Corvair parts. It includes two trailer-fulls of parts he bought from Earl Jones a year or two ago. And Mike had his own collection of parts before that.

Jerry mentioned that it includes three engines mounted on engine stands. He thinks they are ready to install.. And there are shelves full of cylinder heads. But most of all, there are totes full of parts and they aren't labeled. Mostly used parts. Probably few NOS parts. There are also three complete Corvair cars, two of which are in very nice condition.

They are located in a barn located on a property that Mike owned in Milton, Florida - a few miles away from Navarre where Jerry & Nancy live.

Jerry needs to sell them to settle Mike's estate. The buyer would have to come to the barn and pick them over to see what's there. There is no list. And Jerry feels he doesn't have the knowledge to identify them as to model or year.

If you can help, please contact Jerry. His phone number is (215) 206 7628 and his email address is moy38@yahoo.com

For Sale: 3817287 Turbo Head. 1 NOS in original box 62-63 passenger side Turbo head (the important one!) . Can be used on driver side with minor modifications. Here's how to do it: Plug oil return line port to valve cover base, (little pressure there), then plug vacuum advance threaded hole with a common pipe plug. Then drill hole and tap for vac\boost gage line use on driver side. \$500.00. See how many of these are around! Bob King kcorvair@ptd.net. Carbon County Pa.

For Sale: New Parts: Brakes hoses, air filters, oil filters, tune-up parts, brake shoes, shocks, tail light lenses, gaskets, plugs, cables, choke pull offs, electrical switches, gas filters, caps, backup switches, suspension parts, engine bearings, valves, emblems, exhaust, turbo parts, patch panels, early bezels, head studs, 140 exhaust extractors, Y pipes, mufflers, fuzzies, clutch cables, lower bracket, heim joints, models, magazines, CORSA magazines, Hot Wheels, Racing Champions cars and much, much more. Contact Larry for pricing. Used Parts: Too many to list. Larry Asheuer Call 267-994-1569 or email: a-lcorvair@msn.com

For Sale: Now offering Corvair head work. Valve-seat grinding, Pro Flow grinding/ polishing, cleaning-cutting head gasket surfaces, de-flashing , thread repair. (I have measurement equip to confirm correct gasket surface depths). HV carb rebuilding. Top engine cover modifications for one gasket, no more leaks! Sound proofing interiors, gas tank replacements, as well as rear and front axle bearing units. Late rears in stock! Bob King kcorvair@ptd.net or text/call to 610-442-2873.

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.

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(413)625-9776 www.corvair.com email: clarks@corvair.com



Clark's Corvair Parts has been supporting the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club for years by donating door prize items for our display at the annual Das Awkscht Fescht auto show.

We'll Meet Here!



Saturday January 15 at 10 AM in the Hub Cap Café, located inside the America On Wheels Museum. You do NOT need to pay the usual admission fee. Simply explain that you are with the Lehigh Valley Corvair Club, courtesy of Rich Greene.



Date: Saturday November 20, 2021
 Time: 10 AM
 Place: America On Wheels Museum
 5 North Front Street
 Allentown, PA 18102



Located near the Lehigh River, where Hamilton Street meets Front Street, the museum is both easy to find and easy to get to. Spacious parking beside the building offers plenty of room for even large groups.

LVCC Officers

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