

November 2014

# the *Fanbelt* njace

new jersey association of CORVAIR enthusiasts

## What are These Men Doing?

## Where is This Car Going?



Photo by Al Kotkin



Photo by Roberta O'Neill

The answers to these  
and other mysteries  
will be found  
in this newsletter.

## Why is This Bolt Broken?



Photo by Ken Schiffner

**Breakfast Meeting at the Empire Diner, Saturday, November 4.**  
**We are continuing to seek nominees for 2015 club officers!**  
**Tech Session at Ashley's Auto Body to follow the Breakfast.**

## Road Trips!

by *Brian O'Neill, President*

The coming year offers a couple of great opportunities for some spectacular road trips. It may seem early in the game to be planning for next summer, but I propose that we spend this winter getting our cars ready for trouble-free adventures.

The 2015 CORSA convention is being held in Knoxville, Tennessee, in June. A few years ago a number of us convoyed down to the convention when it was in Lexington, Kentucky. Aside from a small linkage problem on one of the carburetors on one car the trip was without incident. Without mechanical incident, at least. Donna Ashley did get cited for speeding!

The 2015 convention offers a great opportunity for another road trip. The old saying that there is strength in numbers is absolutely true. So we'll get together and take a run down there. The convention is in mid-June. The weather should be absolutely gorgeous. And who knows what adventures we will find on the road.

The other potential road trip is to run up to Massachusetts to attend the "Fall Classic at Clark's," the all-Corvair show conducted by Bay State Corvairs every two years at Clark's Corvair Parts in Shelburne Falls. A good number of us made this trip in 2013 had an absolute blast.

I'm slightly embarrassed to say I was the only one who had trouble on that trip. In a freak occurrence, a small piece of a knife blade that was lying on the road punctured one of the tires on my convertible, and I didn't have a spare! But as a hedge against mechanical problems Al Lacki was driving my truck with an empty trailer. We loaded the car on the trailer then drove a few miles to the next exit for our scheduled lunch stop and were very lucky in finding a local tire shop that was able to fix the tire quickly. So you see we can handle almost any emergency.

So as noted above, I propose that we spend this winter getting our cars ready for these road trips. Yes, the events are many months away but if you're even remotely interested please let me know. I'd like to form an informal group that

would work with each other over this coming winter to be sure that when hit the road either to the convention or the car show (or hopefully both) the trip will prove to be without incident.

Stay tuned for more details.

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## Dead Ringers Lost in Translation The Accidental Tourist and other Movie Titles Brought to Mind by the Fall Foliage Tour

by *Bob Marlow*

NJACE's 2014 Fall Foliage Tour was conducted under ideal weather and unusual circumstances.

It began when Activities VP Rob Wanhouse walked in to the restaurant at the start of the tour... and then walked in again ten minutes later. Turns out, Rob has a twin brother, John, and Rob pranked us all by sending John in first.



John & Rob... or Rob & John

Photo by Frank Hunter

It was then announced that John, being familiar with the area through which we would be touring, had put together the route for us. The route was to include seven covered bridges, plus a Farm Market, Frenchtown, and other locations great for visiting on an Autumn afternoon.

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Fall Tour, continued

John did an excellent job laying out the route, but his printouts of MapQuest directions did a poor job of leading us along it. We found only five of the covered bridges, we never made it to the Farm Market, we got to Frenchtown only by following a car equipped with GPS, and we made more stops along the side of the road to reconnoiter than I can count.



Photo by Frank Hunter

We could blame John for our getting lost, but the fact is that most of us were just driving without paying much attention to the directions. We had fun, we saw brilliant Fall colors, and we all made it to the Cock & Bull restaurant in Peddler's Village for an excellent post-tour meal. All's well that ends well.

At one point I was laughing out loud because I, near the back of our caravan, was watching the front of our caravan pass me in the opposite direction! A block later I then executed the same U-turn.



Corvairs in every direction!

Photo by Frank Hunter

23 people with ten Corvairs (plus one VW and one generic rental car) participated, and it would have been 24 people and 11 Corvairs had not Ken Schiffner's Corvair let him down en route to the starting point (see next article). The model mix included early model coupes, late model coupes and convertibles, and two FCs.



Two Views of NJACE at the Cock & Bull

Photos by Gloria Peles



So there remain at least two unvisited covered bridges and a Farm Market, fodder for a future tour. It's getting close to when most of us put our Corvairs away for the winter, and the tour was a great end-of-season drive. Thanks, Rob! I mean, John! Um, both!



## Spring in the Fall

by Ken Schiffner

So, it's Saturday... time to get the convertible started and head out for the Fall Foliage Tour. Beautiful, cool, Fall day... the car is running beautifully. Plus, I wanted to know who the "Special Mystery Guest" is. I'll take Route 287 South... that will work... little traffic.

I get to the overpass of Route 80 with Route 287 and suddenly... Bang! Clunk! (Almost like a Batman movie). Quick glance in the rear view mirror... sparks. Lots of sparks. Noise. Lots of noise. So I pull off the highway. Muffler bracket must have let loose I figure.

I get out of the car (careful to avoid the speeders in the "slow" lane). Mufflers look fine, just the normal rust. Hmmmm... passenger side rear wheel has a lot of negative camber, better look underneath.

Not good. The end of the transverse leaf spring on that side is sitting on the ground. Where did the bolt, nut and isolators go? I look back up the highway... no sign of parts. Close look at the spring shows that end had ground itself along the highway (wouldn't you know it happened on the hard concrete portion of the overpass, not the softer asphalt section). The end of the retainer bolt was broken clear off. Not at the cotter key hole but well above. (See the photo on page 1 and below.)



Photo by Ken Schiffner

That is a Grade 8 bolt, good for thousands of pounds tension. How did that break? Heck, rubber isolators are also there so where did the force come to break the bolt? (If you are in a

hurry and/or to avoid disappointment, an answer to that question does not follow).

Time to make some phone calls. First, AAA. Good, they'll get to me soon. Second call, to NJACE. Who might have a spring I could buy. I know, I'll call Bob Marlow, he had a '64, maybe he has one. Answering machine... left a message... Bob likely is on his way to the Tour.

I'll call Frank Hunter and ask him to tell folks I won't be able to get to the Tour. Tim Schwartz calls back (I guess Frank was riding along with Tim). Where am I they ask? I tell them, but let them know the problem, my day is not going well. Hope they have fun on the Tour.

AAA comes and carts the convertible back to my garage. Off load. Problem is, the dragging spring gets caught on the garage apron. Need to make a ramp. Done. Vehicle in the garage. (I could have removed the whole spring assembly but I'm not allowed to work on a vehicle other than in the garage... condo rule).

I go inside, get lunch, and send an email to Steve Calandra. He's a great guy, maybe he has a spring. Message comes back, he thinks he has one, he'll look. Go online with Clark's, order new end hardware.

Phone call arrives from Tim Schwartz (now at the Tour). Bob says he has one, and that I can have it. Wow!

I exchange emails with Bob and then on Tuesday I drive to Annandale to pick up the spring. Bob kindly also offers suggestions as to how to install the spring with limited exposure to personal injury.

At this writing, I'm waiting for the parts from Clark's. The spring has been cleaned up and the paint is drying.

Thanks to everyone who "sprang" into action to help me!





## Hubris, Clumsiness and Old Rusty Car Parts

by Allan Lacki

I am happy to inform everybody that we were able to rebuild Al Kotkin's shift linkage at the October NJACE Tech Session all in one day. Almost.

Al Kotkin has a beautiful 1965 Corvair Corsa convertible, but his shift linkage had been kaput ever since he bought the car last year. So, during the summer, we decided to do a complete rebuild on Al's linkage, from front-to-back.

Before starting this project, we knew that the shift coupler was shot and that the shift tube bushings were likely in need of replacement. These are typical things that ail shifter action on manual transmission Corvairs, so lists were made and parts were procured ahead of time. We came to the Tech Session prepared with a rebuilt shift coupler, new shift housing shims, flanged bronze bushings, and an assortment of screws and nuts.

The big day came and, after hoisting Al's car up on Larry Ashley's lift, we dropped the tunnel pan and removed the shift tube. We unbolted the shift coupler and pulled it off the shift rod. Yep, the coupler was wobbly and the original plastic shift tube bushings were missing. As expected.

The next step was to slide the shift rod out of the shift tube. Good grief, it was jammed! The tube still had the original cardboard liner inside, and it was bound up by dirt and rust. So, Brian O'Neill and I huffed and puffed and wiggled the rod out of the tube an inch at a time. The cardboard liner was finally free. We threw it in the trash.

Now, we could install the bronze bushings in the tube, so Tom Ludwig and I proceeded to press them in. They fit nicely, so we secured them in place with miniature set screws and lock nuts. Great!

Next step: Insert the shift rod back into the tube. Uh-oh! The rod was not only rusty, but also bent! Tom straightened the tube, but that wasn't enough. So, we took turns filing, sanding, and polishing the shift rod to make it fit. This

went on for an hour or two, but still, the shift rod was binding inside the bronze bushings. And then, disaster struck!



*Mike Sharp  
at one end...*



*Al Lacki  
at the other...*

Photos by Al Kotkin

The rod got so tightly bound inside the tube that I snapped the cast iron cup off the rod! Now what? Larry Ashley came to the rescue! He fired up his welder and welded it back on. Whew!

At that point, I resorted to the meat-axe approach! (As if I hadn't already). No more sandpaper! No more polishing! I grabbed up Larry Ashley's grinder and ground the rust and bumps off the shift rod. And that did the trick. With a bit of grease, the rod slid into the tube with the new bronze bushings.

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H, C, and ORCP, continued

OK, now we were ready to replace the rubber bushings on the shift tube stabilizer rod. To do this, it's necessary to remove a retainer nut on the end of the rod. So I shot it with PB Blaster rust penetrant and attempted to loosen it up.

Well, I more than loosened it. I snapped the nut right off the rod. It broke so easily! Oh well, you can drive a late Corvair without the stabilizer rod, at least temporarily. I made amends with my conscience, realizing that I'd have to order a new one from Clark's and install it at a later date. Who would have thought something like this would happen?

The next step in the project was to remove and rebuild the shifter housing that sits on the floor of the car. The shifter housing consists not only of the shift lever, but also a spring-loaded ball-and-socket arrangement. The motion of the ball-and-socket is guided by two hardened steel pins. Usually, the pins are worn flat, and this is another one of the things that ails shifter action on old Corvairs. It's an easy thing to repair. Simply press out the pins, flip them around, and press them back in again.

Brian and I put the shifter housing in a vice, carefully, removed the housing's retainer, and took a peek inside. Probing away the grease, we got another surprise: one of the two pins was completely missing.

Now what to do? We wanted to flip the pins, but there was only one pin to flip! Again, Larry Ashley came to the rescue. He generously offered to donate one of his spare Corvair shifter housings. We were skeptical at first. It was mounted on top of a coffee can and a wooden base; apparently somebody attempted to convert it into a kiddie toy! But time was running short, so, Brian O'Neill and I opened it up to see if we could salvage the pins.

Well, not only were the pins salvageable, they were in perfect condition! In fact, the whole shifter housing was in good condition. So, we cleaned it up in the parts washer, gave it a dollop of grease, and put it in Al's car.

Finally, we could see the light at the end of

the tunnel, or so we thought. When we put the shift tube assembly back into Al's car, we found that the shift coupler was not as long as it was supposed to be! The rebuilt coupler was for a '66-'69 Corvair, not a '61-'65 Corvair. Who knew they were different? Ack!

Well, in spite of it all, the shifting action was 100% better, and Al drove home from the Tech Session with a smile. Later in the month, I ordered a new stabilizer rod and the proper shift coupler from Clark's and installed them for Al at Brian's Garage Mahal. So now, the job is really complete.

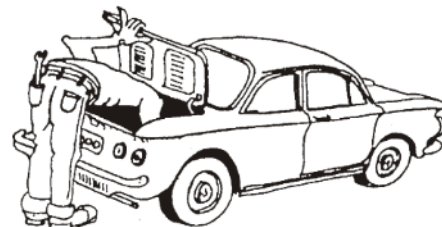
Incidentally, Clark's sells only one kind of factory-style shift coupler for 1961-69 Corvairs. It's the one with the longer shaft, which is exactly what we needed in the first place.



Photo by Clark's Corvair Parts

The short coupler that I originally bought for Al's car was from another vendor. It's made for a '66-'69. Anybody need a shift coupler for a '66-'69 Corvair? I swear, I didn't break it!

*[Editor's Note: Following this tech session Al Kotkin and his wife completed the October 18th Fall Foliage Tour in smooth-shifting trouble-free fashion.]*



## That Was Slick!

by Brian O'Neill

In the story above, Al Lacki tells of the big project during our October tech session. The other major project that day was the replacement of the harmonic balancer on Larry Dombal's car. Do you think that changing a Corvair harmonic balancer requires the engine out of the car? Or maybe if the rear grill is removed and the engine lowered, it just might give enough room to get a puller on the balancer? Well, wrong on both counts.

Larry's 1964 convertible had a really bad balancer. It was so close to coming apart, Larry had the car flatbedded to Ashley's for the tech session. David Main volunteered to head up the replacement project. (Well, okay, he did make eye contact.) He claimed that he could do the job with even lowering the engine!

He was right. Using the slick tool designed by Russ Davis of Blue Chip Machine in Virginia, David had the balancer replaced in no time. Larry had a brand new balancer and a new rear main seal ready to go, and so David and other members on hand installed them both easily and Larry was back on the road.



The Blue Chip Machine Harmonic Balancer Tool

To add to Larry's driving pleasure Ken Shifftner worked his magic and balanced the carburetors on the car. I then drove the car back to Larry's and it ran strong! As an added thrill I caught up with Al Kotkin driving his '65 Corsa convertible on the Interstate. We rode side by side for a while at 75 MPH garnering waves and thumbs up.

At the tech session we consumed a lot of pizza and stayed until almost 5:30 that evening. It was one of the best ever tech sessions. If you're not attending these tech sessions, you really ought to. Besides learning how Corvairs work, you will enjoy the pizza and the camaraderie. We have another one coming up this Saturday.

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## HOT & COLD

No, that's not the weather forecast for the month. It's the theme for November's Tech Session. We will be taking a look at both heating and air conditioning in Corvairs.

The **HOT** part will focus on a late model convertible. After many years of languishing in the back building at Ashley's, the Monza convertible belonging to Jack Rogers is being brought back to life. On this car we will be inspecting the heater ductwork, replacing the heater hoses, and giving pointers on how to increase the heat output of any Corvair. You'll learn a lot about your Corvair's heating system by checking out this car.

The **COLD** part is a project to check and recharge the air conditioning setup on Brian O'Neill's 1965 CORSA convertible. In 1965 A/C wasn't available on a CORSA but Brian has added it. First we will check out the wiring to make sure everything is in order. After the wiring is okayed Larry Ashley will demonstrate how an automotive air conditioning system is checked for leaks and charged.

Not too many Corvairs have air conditioning but your modern car does, and much of what we'll be doing applies to any air-conditioned vehicle.

Join us for another fun and informative tech session. It's this Saturday, November 1, at Ashley's Auto Body on Hillside Avenue in Flanders, following our monthly breakfast.



## Minutes

### General Membership Meeting

#### October 4, 2014

#### Parsippany, NJ

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM by President Brian O'Neill. Upon motion duly made and seconded the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted and published in the newsletter.

Treasurer Tim Schwartz detailed recent income and expenses and reported an ending balance of \$8,643.72. Upon motion duly made and seconded the Treasurer's report was accepted as presented.

Activities VP Rob Wanthouse reported on preparations for the Fall Foliage Tour starting in Flemington on Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### Old Business:

Brian O'Neill reported on the Air-Cooled show and the popularity of the NJACE engine stand. Approximately 19 Corvairs attended the show. On the engine stand, the engine mounts are to be adjusted so that race with headers can fit on the stand.

#### New Business:

Upon motion duly made and seconded it was approved that NJACE renew its membership in the NECC (Northeast Corvair Council) with payment of \$20 annual dues.

Al Lacki reported that in the October issue of the CORSA Communique NJACE received votes for its website in the annual awards article.

Brian O'Neil issued the call for nominations for 2015 club officers. Nominations can be submitted by e-mail, regular mail, and in person at the next two breakfast meetings. Ballots will be available at the December breakfast.

October 2nd was the birthday of the Corvair, and it was noted that on that day Tony Gervasio did a commemorative drive.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 AM.

Tim Schwartz won the drawing for a free breakfast after three other names of persons not in attendance were drawn.

A Tech Session on rebuilding shifter tube in

Al Kotkin's car and harmonic balancer replacement in Larry Dombal's car is to follow at Ashley's Auto Body.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Frank Hunter, Secretary

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## 2015 Call for Nominations

At our breakfast this month we will continue to accept nominations for club officers for 2015. Our club elections are held each December and we use October and November to round up candidates.

Most of our current officers have served in one or more offices for *years*. Most of them remain willing to continue, but the club is always made better by new blood. Volunteer candidates are welcomed! And, if you are not prepared to volunteer but know a member that you believe would make a good officer, place their name in nomination.

Nominations can be made in person at the breakfast this month or next, or you can submit a nomination by mail (to PO Box 631, Ridgewood, NJ 07450) or by email (to [FDHunter@juno.com](mailto:FDHunter@juno.com)).

In addition to the four traditional offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, we also have an Activities Vice-President and a Publicity Vice-President.

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## Mark Your Calendars

### Saturday, November 1

**Breakfast at the Empire Diner**  
Nominations for 2015 Officers

### Saturday, November 1

**Tech Session at Ashley's Auto Body**  
Hot and Cold Tech Session

### Saturday, December 6

**Breakfast at the Empire Diner**  
Elections for 2015 Officers



**NJACE Breakfast  
at the Empire Diner  
Route 46 East, Parsippany  
1st Saturday, Each Month**

## NJACE Classified Ads November 2014



**For Sale: 1961 Lakewood.** 3rd owner, mileage approx 39,000.

The body and interior are all original except for headliner, carpets and kick panels, those are all new from Clark's. The floors were replaced by previous owner and are solid. Previous owner also painted the car. The original tube radio works.

Mechanical repairs include: All steering linkage replaced with Clark's parts, all new brake lines, wheel cylinders, brake hardware, hoses, replaced master cylinder with rebuild from Clark's, new springs and shocks from Clark's, new A arm bushings, new U joints, new driver side rear axle and wheel bearing, rebuilt starter, new ignition switch, coil, rotor, points, etc., all wiring harnesses replaced with Clark's harnesses, gas tank cleaned and has new sending unit, new speedo cable, transmission replaced with 1969 Powerglide, four Khumo tires installed in 2012, rebuilt generator, muffler replaced, new heater hoses, new Clark's carburetors, push tube seals replaced, Clark's finned oil pan installed.

Car comes with spare rear axle shaft and wheel bearing from California Corvairs.

Things that have to be addressed: Car needs to

be warmed up to get reverse to engage, tranny will need a rebuild, or swap eventually, rear passenger door hinge needs to be repaired (damaged hinge).

This is a nice, solid little car and very low mileage. We would love to keep it but with two teens learning to drive we need space and \$ for insurance. I think it's an excellent example of an unrestored (pretty much), but working, driveable Lakewood.

Will ask \$7500 for general public but \$5,500 for a CT, MA, NJ, NH , LI, club members. Will throw in car cover for an extra \$50.

Contact Jim Forgey, phone 203-668-3971, email [jforgey4@yahoo.com](mailto:jforgey4@yahoo.com)



*by Ray Coker*

The inaugural NECC track day at NJ Motorsports Complex in September was a success, not only because of the number of Corvairs on hand but because the facilities and the track personal left a positive impression on everyone who dared to try a new place.

I'm sure the car owners who were there will tell everyone about the fantastic time they had and those listening will be jealous and wished they had attended.

The drivers meeting began at 8:30 on Monday morning with lot laps for each racing class following soon afterwards. The 2.4 mile road course challenged even the most experienced drivers until they got to know the ins and outs of each corner and the passing zones. From then on it was "pedal to the metal."

After several hot laps each driver had time to return to the pit area, make adjustments, add fuel, wipe the smiles off their faces and return to the

*continued*

No Speed Limit, continued

track for more fun laps... um, I mean hot laps.

The drivers quit practicing at 12:00 for lunch and final adjustments on their racing machines then waited their turn to showcase their best in the timed lap's events. In the timed laps each driver was given a warm up lap then two laps under full throttle with hopes of turning in their best times.

There were 28 drivers signed up. There were twelve Corvairs, two Mustangs, two Porsches, one Maserati, one Corvette and one VW GTD Diesel and each one got their money's worth.



Corvairs on the grid at NJMP.

The best lap time of the day was turned in by David Ameen in a 2013 Mustang GT 450 HP 6-speed with a time of 1:35.31. The best lap time in a Corvair was 1:45.06 by Dan Schmidt. That Corvair was flying and with wings I bet it could have.

The people that chose to arrive a day early and spend the night had a choice of staying at a motel off site or staying in a motel owned by the track and located directly on the track straightaway. My friend and I along with several other NJACE members stayed in rooms by the track and it was **AWESOME**.

Motels I have stayed in during my life had guard rails in front of your room as soon as you walked out onto the walkway, not only to provide safety but also to provide views of pools,

gardens, court yards, parking lots etc. This hotel also had guard rails for safety but the view you saw was the *race track*. We were directly above the pit lanes and the straightaway racing surface.



Kerwin Nailor's good-looking track Corvair.

For car guys or gear heads it was the perfect view, nice enough for several of us to spend a second night there hanging out on the walkway, leaning on the railing staring at an empty dark race track and an incredible sunset. Sometimes it just doesn't get any better.



Brian O'Neill's Reliable 6-Zero. It did run!

