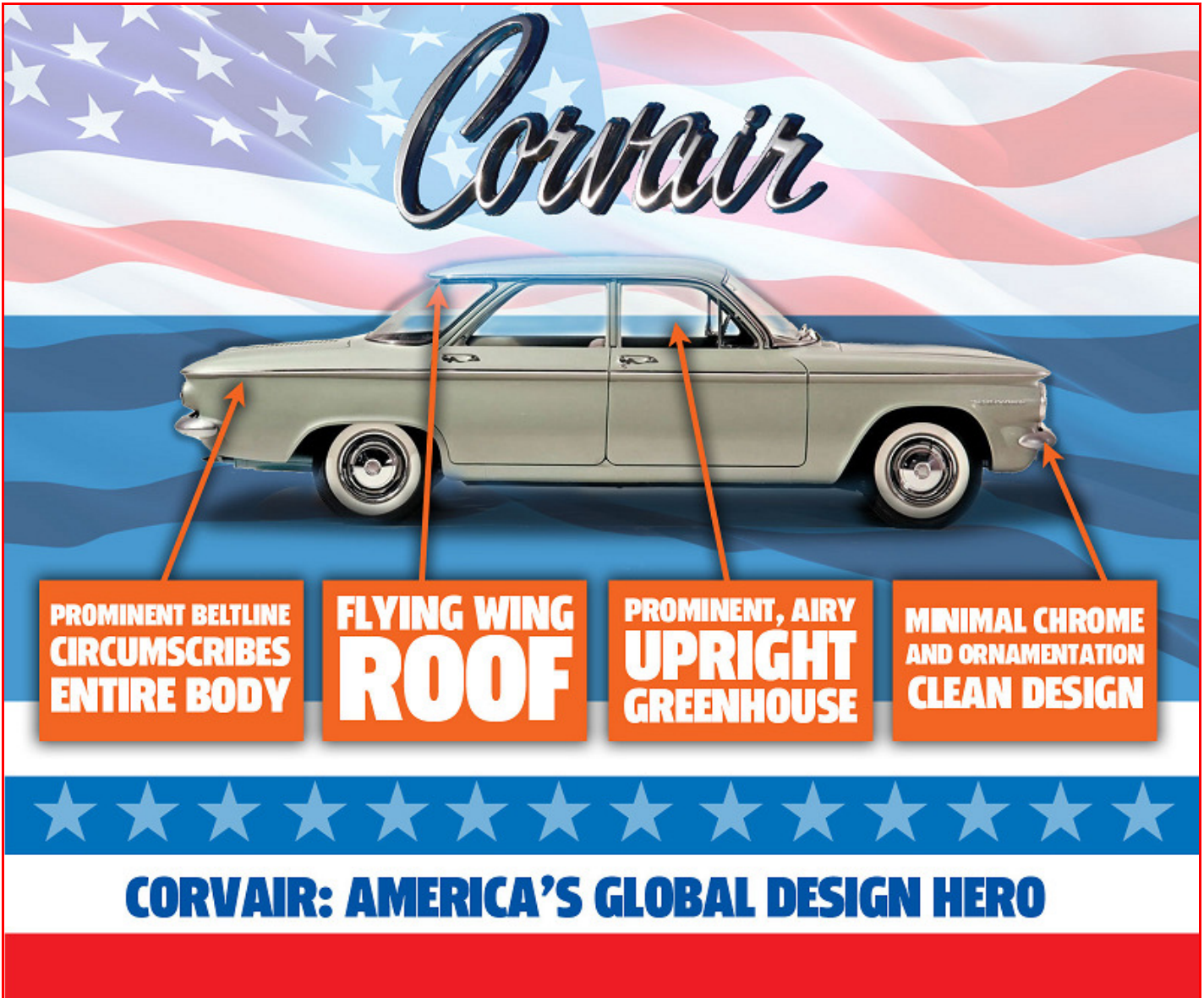


November 2020

# the *Fanbelt*

new jersey association of CORVAIR enthusiasts

★ 50th Anniversary 1970 - 2020 ★



## Corvair

**PROMINENT BELTLINE  
CIRCUMSCRIBES  
ENTIRE BODY**

**FLYING WING  
ROOF**

**PROMINENT, AIRY  
UPRIGHT  
GREENHOUSE**

**MINIMAL CHROME  
AND ORNAMENTATION  
CLEAN DESIGN**

**CORVAIR: AMERICA'S GLOBAL DESIGN HERO**

**Find out what Jalopnik had to say about our favorite car  
in this issue**

*The Fanbelt* is published monthly by the New Jersey Association of Corvair Enthusiasts (NJACE), Inc. P.O. Box 631, Ridgewood, NJ 07451. Deadline for contribution is the 20th of each month. Classified-style advertising of interest to Corvair owners is available, free of charge, to all persons. A commercial ad can be placed in an issue of the Fanbelt for \$50 per full page, \$30 per half page, \$20 per quarter page, and \$10.00 per business-card. (Generally, classified advertisers are those offering individual cars and/or a limited number of parts, while commercial advertisers are those offering services and/or parts from stock. NJACE reserves the right to make this determination). All advertising must be PC-compatible or type-able copy.

NJACE is a chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), Inc., P.O. Box 68, Maple Plain, MN 55359. Meetings of NJACE are held periodically at locations and times as announced in this newsletter and on our website. All interested persons are welcome. Additional events and activities are held throughout the year. Membership in NJACE is open to individuals and families. Information and applications are available at any meeting or by writing to NJACE, P.O. Box 631, Ridgewood, NJ 07451, or by visiting [www.corvair.org/chapters/njace](http://www.corvair.org/chapters/njace).



## America's Least American-Style Car Was Also One of America's Most Influential

That was the headline on Jalopnik in July of last year, for a story highlighting the worldwide design influence of the first-generation Corvair.

The images at left go a long way in telling the story.

Jalopnik, an online publication, describes itself as “a news and opinion website about cars, the automotive industry, racing, transportation, airplanes, technology, motorcycles and much more.” It’s an accurate description, and while the opinions may at times clash with your own, the articles are usually interesting, mostly well-written, and in the case of this Corvair story, right on target.

You can find the original article at this link:

<https://jalopnik.com/americas-least-american-style-car-was-also-one-of-ameri-1836093845>

If you question how groundbreaking the Corvair was in 1960, consider that the car’s launch was only two model years removed from the ostentatious chrome-laden 1958 land yachts, and that full-size Chryslers retained massive tailfins through 1961.

While the Jalopnik piece focuses on the original Corvair, a case can be made for the second-generation Corvair exerting design influence as well. It debuted alongside a full-size 1965 Chevrolet that shared what is today described as “design language,” a style that was an obvious influence on the 1967 Camaro and other cars as well.

The cars identified in Jalopnik’s graphic at left do not represent an all-inclusive list; there are quite a few others that show a clear design influence from the original Corvair. The Corvair was, as the image on page 1 states, “A Global Design Hero.”

*Images courtesy Jalopnik G/O Media, Inc.*



# Tempting Fate

by Andrew Backer

I've never been a particularly superstitious person. I walk under ladders, I smash mirrors willy-nilly, but folks I'm here to tell you to never tempt fate.



A bit of backstory first. A couple years ago, I noticed a 1963 Monza Coupe parked out on the street in Brooklyn near my work. It sat there for months, tempting me, calling to me every time I walked past it on my way to the coffee shop. Eventually I succumbed.

I tracked down the owner, who told me it had been sitting since '78 in a Georgia barn. He trailered it up North with plans to work on it, but never got around to it. I bought it and began a year-and-a-half-ish process of getting it back on the road. I got it running, replaced the gas tank, the brake lines and the master cylinder, and I welded in some patch panels to the floor pans.

I got plates last November, and I've been puttering around the city ever since. It's even been my daily driver this summer. A big shoutout here to fellow NJACE member Taylor McKimens, who introduced me to the club, and who's been incredibly generous with his time helping me get the car sorted.

In late September, I was invited up to spend a weekend playing music with some friends in beautiful Claryville, NY, in the foothills of the Catskills. Claryville's a 130-mile drive from my home in Brooklyn, but my Corvair made it up there beautifully. She stayed cool in heavy traffic on the FDR, she glided smoothly over some particularly nasty pavement on Route 17, and she even managed to pull up the steep gravelly hills in Claryville (albeit in second gear.)

It was a lovely weekend – we played music, we ate delicious Armenian food like there was no tomorrow, and we all went out for rides in the Corvair. It was on one of these rides that tempting fate comes into the equation. One of my passengers, a non-initiate in the ways of decrepit



old cars, asked if mine was a hassle to maintain. "Not really," I told him, "this car's never once left me stranded!"

Keen readers may notice several issues here, but I'll highlight two. Firstly, I was laying down a thick, meaty slab of hubris. Secondly, my Corvair wasn't equipped with any wood trim on which I could have knocked for luck.

Act two of this Greek tragedy starts on my way back to the city on Sunday night. I noticed the GEN/FAN light come on, and immediately pulled over and popped the hood. I expected to see a thrown fan belt, but it was right where it should be. I gave the engine some revs and the light went off, so I got back on the road. A mile later, the light was back on. I stopped again, this time looking for any loose connections on the generator. I didn't find any, but I noticed that the wire on one of the brushes was frayed, down to just one or two strands of copper. It looked like it had gotten snagged up in the commutator bars.

Well, I drove the car to a FLAPS [*Friendly Local Auto Parts Store –Ed.*], which unsurprisingly did not have generator brushes for a '63 Corvair in stock. What they did have was the world's most anemic soldering gun and some 10 gauge wire.

I made kind of a hash of repairing the brush, but my multimeter was showing continuity between the brush itself and the terminal outside the generator, so I slapped everything back together and started 'er up. No luck. The GEN/FAN light was still on, and I wasn't getting any voltage out of the generator.

*continued*

*Tempting Fate, continued*

At this point, I conceded defeat for the night. I took a cab back to my friends' place, tail tucked between my legs, and waited for morning.

The next day, I called around and got a good steer to a real old-school auto electric shop in the area. I headed straight over there, afflicted generator in hand. This place was a sight to behold. Every square foot of the shop was piled high with alternators, starters, generators, etc.. They took my generator apart and told me the real issue was that I'd burnt out the windings. Their theory was that the bearings went bad, which not only caused the brush wire to snag, but had caused the armature to flop around and short against the housing. In other words, the generator was toast.

It was time to call in the cavalry. I gave Bob Marlow a ring, and NJACE sprung into action. People were advised of the situation, and in no time flat I had not one but three spare generators waiting for me at Ashley's Auto Body, courtesy of Dave Cavagnaro. I even had some good advice from our President, Brian O'Neill on the best route to get there. (What's the better bet with no charging – the slightly shorter route or the flatter route?) I can't thank everyone enough – It was so much more help than I was expecting!

At the FLAPS, I had my battery fully charged, and bought a spare one too. My plan was to drive on one battery until the car died, swap them out, and use the second battery to get to the nearest place that would let me charge them both. I kept my headlights and radio off, signaled turns with my arm, and tried not to use the brakes too much, lest the taillights drain the battery. In fact, the biggest draw on the battery apart from the coil was the light on the dash telling me the battery wasn't charging.

As it turns out, I didn't need the second battery at all. I made it all 81 miles on the first battery, which still had 12.6V of juice in it when I got to Ashley's. I suspect I could have made it 100 miles easily on just the one battery, which is pretty incredible.

At Ashley's, Larry helped me test the generators. We picked the best of the bunch and

I had it swapped in in no time flat. I'd gotten some practice over the last 24 hours. With 13 furious volts charging my battery I made it back to Brooklyn without further incident!



*A boxful of generators... a beautiful sight!*

The moral of my tale is this: Don't tempt fate, but if you do, NJACE are the folks you want around to help you weather its wrath.

“Don’t tempt fate,  
but if you do,  
NJACE are the folks  
you want around.”





## Not an Ordinary Corvair



**R**ecently, longtime NJACE member and current CORSA Director Al Lacki corresponded with a new CORSA member, an antique car collector from Cirencester, England. This gentleman's collection includes a Wankel-powered NSU Ro80, a 1966 Toronado, a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II, a Fiat 130 coupe, a Lancia Gamma sedan, a 3-door Range Rover, a Renault Caravelle, two Lancia Flaminiats . . . and a newly-acquired Corvair.

*But not just any Corvair. This particular Corvair was assembled and sold new in South Africa!*

*The new owner, Martin Buckley, was having some difficulty identifying the car properly for the UK licensing authorities. Al forwarded Mr Buckley's questions to Corvair Historian Dave Newell, and Dave provided the following fascinating information:*

South African Corvairs are a rare breed and have an interesting history.

Corvairs were assembled in several countries outside of the US by various plants belonging to General Motors Overseas Operations (GMOO) which was based in New York City. The cars began life as a set of parts to build 12 cars, which was boxed at and shipped from Chevrolet's export boxing plant in **Bloomfield, New Jersey**.

Each "car" in the set was referred to as a CKD or "Completely Knocked Down" unit. This was a traditional term for a disassembled or unassembled car.

In the case of General Motors South African (GMSA), the sets of parts didn't include

upholstery, door trim panels, tires, battery, glass, sealants and any other bits which GMSA could procure locally.

Although the CKD kits were manufactured and boxed by Chevrolet, the assembly process was not done by Chevy or Fisher Body. GMSA did all of that, from welding up the bodies to the special paint colors, mostly chosen from contemporary Opel colors.

GMSA Corvairs had only one vehicle identification tag which was screwed (not welded) to the body sheet metal on the left side of the engine compartment. There was no VIN plate on the left front door post. The serial numbers began at 00001. Martin Buckley's car is 1960 GMSA vehicle # 87776P. All 1960 model cars and trucks assembled by GMSA up to that point (Chevrolet, Pontiac, Vauxhall, Opel, Bedford and Holden) were included in that total. The "P" stands for the Powerglide automatic transmission.



The "SA" of course stands for GMSA, but the "R" in "SAR" has been a puzzle. "P", "N", "R" and (blank space) have also been seen in that position.

There was no hidden serial number on South African Corvairs as on US cars. A loose metal tag with the serial number stamped on it has been found inside the left front door of one South African Corvair but it is not known whether other cars had this tag.

*continued*

### South African Corvair, continued

GMSA stamped the same serial number on the engine block, after or sometimes *over* the US production date and code which were already stamped on the block at the Tonawanda, New York, engine plant.

The model year of Mr Buckley's car is technically 1960 even though it was first sold in 1962. Initially GMSA ordered 109 CKD packs of twelve 1960 Corvairs (you had to order them in batches of twelve!). These included both the deluxe series 700 Sedan, model 769, and the base 500 series 569 Sedan.

Besides the non-US colors, GMSA Corvairs differed from their US and Canadian built cousins in several ways, especially in their unique and colorful interior trim, which in model 769 included leather upholstery (never offered in the US) and carpeting (never offered in North American 700s). In what few South African Corvairs that have been documented there has been seen red & white and green & white interiors so far. South African model 569s used cloth upholstery and had rubber mats on the floor.

South African Corvairs had red reflectors mounted on brackets on each side between the tail lights and backup lamps and clear reflectors mounted between the headlamps on each side. South African 769s had backup lamps, folding rear seats, windscreen washers and rear door armrests, all of which were optional stateside. A set of fitted luggage was offered as an accessory but no heater was available.



The Corvairs sold much slower than hoped, so no more CKD kits were ever ordered by GMSA. Price was a factor but the Corvair's left hand drive was the big stumbling block. South Africa was and remains a country in which one drives on the left-hand side of the road, and the Corvair was never engineered for right-hand drive.

401 cars were built during the 1960 model year, 720 during 1961 and 184 for 1962, giving a total of 1,309 cars. All of these cars were 1960 models, and so no South African ID tags that are stamped 61 or 62 have been seen.

It appears that what makes a South African Corvair a '61 or '62 model is when it was first registered, per the guarantee book. There's confusion as to which South African Corvairs were leftovers from the initial runs during the 1960 model year and those assembled during the '61 and '62 model years. Other than perhaps paint colors or suppliers there appear to be no differences between the three model years.

Dave Newell noted that he is aware of another South African Corvair in the UK, a car that was imported in 2010. It was white with a red roof as built originally, but the UK owner had it repainted in silver so as to resemble his first Corvair which he bought from the Governor of Gibraltar in 1966!





## Fall Foliage Tour 2020

Yes, it happened, on a nice early Fall day, we finally got together (while staying apart) for our Fall Foliage Tour.

More than 30 members and friends (and one dog), with 11 Corvairs (and 7 water-pumpers) toured the country lanes of Morris and Somerset Counties, passing some of the wealthiest and most beautiful estates in New Jersey.

While a few drivers made a wrong turn or two, no one really got lost and everyone arrived at the 400-acre Natirar Park in Gladstone for a picnic lunch.

2020 has been a challenging year in many ways, and so it was nice to see so many folks and have a brief return to relative “normalcy.”



Some of the Corvairs...

... Some of the people



## Minutes

of the  
General Membership Meeting  
Saturday, October 3, 2020  
Conducted via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 AM by President Brian O'Neill.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the Minutes of the September 5th 2020 meeting as printed in the September newsletter were approved.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the Treasurer's Report for the period ending September 30th as distributed via email was approved.

Activities Report: Bob Marlow provided an update on the information for our Fall Foliage Tour scheduled for October 10th. Bob has driven the route and has added a mid-tour stop. We will meet in Bernardsville Center at 10:30. More information is in the October *Fanbelt* and on the club web site.

Old Business: None was brought forth.

New Business: Upon motion duly made and seconded it was approved to pay the \$20.00 dues to the Northeast Corvair Council.

Nominations: Nominations for 2021 club officers is open until the election to be conducted during the December meeting. They may be made at any meeting or sent to the Secretary. Tim nominated himself for Treasurer. Scotty nominated the current slate of Officers. There were no other nominations put forward.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 AM.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
David Malcolm, Secretary

A post-meeting general discussion was truncated by the 40-minute Zoom meeting limit. Since it appears that the need for Zoom will continue, the club officers have made purchase of the option for sessions of unlimited length.

# ZOOM with us



**N**o time limit! For November we will continue our series of breakfast meetings via the Zoom online platform.

We got cut short last month but the club officers have since obtained the option for Zoom meetings of unlimited length!

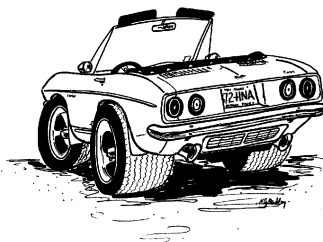
Our November Zoom breakfast will take place on **Saturday, November 7, at 9:00 AM**. You can join on your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

This month's Zoom meeting will include another informal "formal" business meeting for the club, and will afford another opportunity for nominations to be made for club officers for 2021.

As before, in advance of the meeting we will send a link via email. Just click on the link, or copy-and-paste it, to join the meeting at 9:00 AM that Saturday.

As we have done recently, we'll take a few minutes after the "formal" meeting for a general discussion, to give everyone an opportunity to speak, ask questions, and tell us what they're been up to lately.

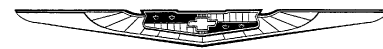
Join us! Saturday, November 7, 9:00 AM.



## NJACE Calendar of Events

The ongoing pandemic continues to have our in-person activities largely on hold. Our monthly ZOOM online breakfast meeting will take place on Saturday, November 7th, at 9:00 AM.

As always, watch our Facebook page, our periodic emails, and this monthly newsletter for updates.



## NJACE Classified Ads

for November, 2020

***NJACE Classifieds online!** We've built a web page with multiple color photos of the cars being offered for sale, along with descriptions more detailed than what we usually publish in this newsletter. Parts and accessories too! Updated regularly! Go to <https://garagekey.blogspot.com> and scroll down each page to see everything. You can click on most of the online photos to enlarge them. If for any reason one of the contact links does not work, let us know!*

### New This Month:

- Gary Rubin is offering his updated and customized 1965 '500' Sport Sedan. Gary is an NJACE member living in Lake George, NY. In addition to the email link on the *Garage Key* web site, you can contact Gary at 914-799-5455.
- Frank Johnson's 1965 Corsa convertible has been sold, and the buyer is the popular New Jersey-based car show DJ "The Golden Gup!"
- Sale is pending on Larry Ashley's 1965 Corsa coupe, to a buyer just over the border in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

*Don't forget to check out the Parts and Miscellaneous pages, too!*



## Before the Mustang

by Bob Marlow

It is often said, correctly, that the Corvair inspired the Mustang. The original Corvair Monza, introduced in the middle of the 1960 model year, featured bucket seats and four-on-the-floor. Lee Iacocca, credited as “the father of the Mustang,” acknowledged the Corvair Monza as a chief influence on the development of the Mustang.



1960 Corvair Monza Club Coupe

But the Mustang made its debut in 1964. Ford needed something to compete with the Monza sooner than that, and so just like the basic Corvair spawned the Monza, the Falcon spawned the Futura.

The Ford Falcon Futura first appeared for the 1961 model year, and was at first nothing more than an ordinary Falcon two-door with bucket seats, a console, and a small bit of special exterior trim.



1961 Ford Falcon Futura

By 1964 the Falcon Futura had additional features, including a sporty hardtop design. But the Falcon-based Mustang was in the wings, and when it took the stage it stole the show. Just as the Mustang clobbered the Corvair in the marketplace, it kneecapped sales of the sportier Falcon derivatives as well.

Chevy's answer to the Mustang, the Camaro, was launched for the 1967 model year. The Corvair Monza went out of production in May, 1969; the Falcon Futura soldiered on through December of that same year.

A curious footnote: 1960 Corvairs have a concave front panel; 1961 models have a convex panel. 1960 Falcons have a concave front grille; 1961 models have a convex grille.

Also, when in 1962 John Fitch began modifying Corvairs for greater performance he gave them the name “Sprint.” When in mid-1963 Ford added a V8 engine option to Falcons they gave them the name “Sprint.”

### NJACE Officers for 2020

President, Brian O'Neill  
Phone 973-729-5586  
Email [bmoneill@juno.com](mailto:bmoneill@juno.com)

Vice-President, Nick Ford  
Phone 201-572-5797  
Email [mb05203-64110@yahoo.com](mailto:mb05203-64110@yahoo.com)

Secretary, David Malcolm  
Phone 201-635-9696  
Email [david.s.malcolm@verizon.net](mailto:david.s.malcolm@verizon.net)

Treasurer, Tim Schwartz  
Phone 201-447-4299  
Email [tim@bristolnj.com](mailto:tim@bristolnj.com)

Activities VP, Steve Calandra  
Phone 201-836-6621  
Email [stevenjchevair@gmail.com](mailto:stevenjchevair@gmail.com)

Publicity VP, Bob Marlow  
Phone 201-444-1859  
Email [rwmarlow@optimum.net](mailto:rwmarlow@optimum.net)

## A Word From Speedy Gonzales

**A**s a fast-moving mouse, I am here to tell you that you had better move fast, too, if you want to protect your Corvair from rodent damage this winter.



As the weather turns colder we little critters seek warm and dry accommodations, and old cars are excellent at providing both. It's a cinch for us to get into your garage, because we can slip through spaces quite a bit smaller than you'd think. The typical modern overhead garage door leaves plenty of gaps large enough for us.

So, yes, you can try to seal up those gaps as best you can, and you will improve how well your garage is insulated from the cold. This is a good thing, both for your energy bills if you have an attached and/or heated garage, and for our winter comfort – because we're still going to get in.

Once we're in, we're going to be thrilled to find that you own a Corvair. Corvairs are GREAT for winter nesting! Not only do Corvairs have insulation material behind the back seat and batting material in the seats, most of them have similar material right in the engine compartment. We love building our nests out of that material.

But the extra gift that Corvairs offer is all that sheet metal engine shrouding. Man, do we like to build our nests under the top shroud, on top of the cylinders and cylinder heads. It's warm, comfortable, protected, and if we don't go overboard with it you won't even notice our presence.

Yes, eventually next summer your Corvair will overheat and drop a valve seat because of all the stuff we left behind, but that's your problem, not ours.

And I haven't even begun to discuss our appetite for the coverings on electrical wiring, nor our, um, bathroom habits.

So what can you do about it? Some NJACE members have tried mothballs, which are reasonably effective at keeping us out of your Corvairs. But mothball odor impregnates every soft surface inside the car such that it never goes away. The smell will not only keep us out, it will keep you out, too.

Dryer sheets such as Bounce or Snuggle smell far nicer, so much so that some of us even like to use them in our nests. So, despite internet recommendations that dryer sheets will keep us out, they won't.

More effective is mint oil, the kind you can find at health food stores, applied to fabric and left in the car. It smells nice to you but not so much to us.

But the proven best solution is a product specifically developed for this purpose. Called Fresh Cab, it is available at Tractor Supply and online, and it is proven to work. A potpourri-like mix in what appear to be oversize tea bags, it is packaged four bags to a box. Place all four in your Corvair, two in the passenger compartment and one each in the trunk and engine compartment, and we will not take up residence in the car.



Your Corvair will thank you. My friends and I will not.