

# The Vair Street Journal

The Newsletter of the Western Pennsylvania Corvair Club

March/April 2014



Never forget  
09-11-01

**Next Meeting:**

**May 27th, 2014**

**North Park Lounge Club House • Rte 8**

**1/4 mile north of the Butler, PA Turnpike Exit**

**Dinner 6:30 Meeting 7:30**

Above:

Another example of Corvair advertising from the 1960s. An artist's rendering of a 1964 Corvair Monza Convertible

# Thanks to the Ladies

In the last issue of the Vair Street Journal we were privileged to have *A Corvair Story*, written by Corvair buff, Darlene Kady who is a member of WPCC along with her boyfriend, Jeff Grahovak. Thanks again Darlene!

In this issue of the newsletter we have a story about another

woman who was featured in the Valley News Dispatch and Pittsburgh Tribune Review (from whom we have permission to reprint her story). Edwardine Saul joined WPCC last year and happens to own an Amphicar. An amphicar (amphi, short for amphibious) and like the meaning

of the word, an amphicar can travel on land and is equally at home on water. I think you'll be interested in Edwardine's amphicar story even though it isn't a Corvair story.

## March 24, 2014 Member Meeting Minutes

### Officers Present:

Don Cekus, President  
Jim Steigerwald, Vice President  
Jim Heatherington, Treasurer

### Board members present:

Don Baker  
Bob Heiber  
Jim Madden  
Steve Puskas  
Charles Lucas, Newsletter Editor.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Western PA Corvair Club was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by President Don Cekus.

In the absence of club secretary Pat Greenwald, Suzanne Heatherington was asked to take meeting minutes.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Don Cekus called upon Jim Heatherington to present the treasurer's report. Jim reported that the last checkbook balance was \$3,193.71. Since then there has been income in the amount of \$1,493.00 and expenses in the amount of \$1,557.87. This leaves a current balance of \$3,109.04. An accounting of Holiday Banquet financials

showed income of \$1,075.00 and expenses of \$1,485.10, revealing a club subsidy of the event in the amount of \$310.10. There being no questions for the treasurer, the report was accepted as presented.

At this time, the president reported on the Board Meeting, which took place on Feb. 24. A preliminary schedule of events for touring season is as follows: Irwin Annual Car Cruise in April, and the Happy Days Chevy Tour (1955-1985 Chevies) in May. In June, Jim Madden and Terri Washington plan a picnic in Harmony. The CORSA Convention is July 21-25 in Tacoma WA, and the Cekuses, Hiebers and Tedescos will extend this western trip with an Alaskan Cruise. They will do all their travel by train, and club members will be eager to hear a report on that adventure. Also in July, Tim Desmond will host a blueberry picking day. It may be the third weekend of the month, so we'll have to check the newsletter for the exact date. In August, Steve Puskas reported that there will be a South Butler County Car Rally, with food vendors at a cruise night. September will feature a wine tour, probably

an overnight event, hosted by Jim Madden and Terri Washington, and in October, Bob Heiber and Les Walter will lead the club on a Fall Foliage tour. Though this is a busy schedule, there is always room for a daytrip or two if someone wants to plan a tour to a local attraction.

Don Cekus then discussed the Holiday Party, which now must conform to a four hour time frame. This caught the club off guard in January, but now that we know about it, we'll have to determine how to plan the evening so it's not rushed. Thanks to Jim Madden for getting the Grant Ave. Bar, as it is perfect for our purposes.

Don Baker reported that a car that had belonged to Donna Mae Mims was sold at auction.

There being no other business to come before the club, Don Cekus declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,



Suzanne Heatherington



# It's a car! It's a boat! It's Amphicar!

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*Couple loved to take convertible out for spin on waterways*

BY **TOM YERACE**

When Edwardine Saul recently read a newspaper story about a California man inventing an amphibious vehicle, she wondered what the big deal was.

After all, Saul, 86, has had such a vehicle sitting in a garage since the late 1960s, an Amphicar model 770.

The German-made vehicle is the only civilian automobile that can drive in water that was ever mass produced, according to the International Amphicar Owners Club's website.

It was manufactured in Berlin from 1961 to 1968, under the Quandt Group, which still owns a controlling interest in BMW, according to another website for the vehicle's fans, [www.Amphicars.com](http://www.Amphicars.com).

Saul isn't sure in what year her Amphicar was made. She believes it was around 1968 when her late husband, John Edwin Saul, who owned a concrete plant in Washington Township, bought the car used when they saw it during a trip to Chicago.

*story continues on page 4*



*Edwardine Saul of Washington Township says she and her husband always took a paddle with them when their 1965 Amphicar was in the water*



*It looks like something Q might fashion for James Bond — the undercarriage of the Amphicar features two propeller for water use.*



*The Amphicar steering wheel and dashboard are not ornate on the model owned by Edwardine Saul.*

## About Amphicar

- Manufactured by the Quandt Group in Berlin from 1961-68.
- A total of 3,878 were manufactured, with more than 3,000 sold in the United States.
- Amphicar cost \$5 million to design in the late 1950s and is totally watertight.
- Rear-mounted engine is the same used in the Triumph Herald, 1147cc, 43 horsepower car
- Standard shift 4-speed transmission built by Hermes drives rear wheels through unique land/water gearbox that allows independent or simultaneous operation of wheels and propellers.
- Propelled through the water by two nylon propellers behind the rear bumper; front wheels act as rudders in the water.
- Amphicar is capable of more than 7 knots on water and 70 mph on road — thus the Model 770 name.

Sources: International Amphicar Owners Club website: <http://www.amphicar.com/>; Wonderful World of Amphicars, <http://www.amphicars.com/>

# It's a car! It's a boat! It's Amphicar!

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"I think he paid only \$2,500 for it," Saul said. "Really, I couldn't see why it wasn't more popular. It didn't cost that much."

According to the owners club website, 3,878 of them were manufactured. They sold for between \$2,800 and \$3,300.

From 1961 to 1967, a little more than 3,000 of them were imported into the United States. But, the website said the company ran into trouble in 1968 when new regulations from the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation went into effect and became barriers to the Amphicar. It was a financial blow because 90 percent of its market was in America. The company stopped production, the website said.

"Riding in it was fine, but driving it was hard," Saul said. "I only drove it a couple of miles. He (her husband) thought it was too difficult to control."

"It goes good on the water, but it's kind of like a truculent turtle on the highway," she said.

For that reason, the Sauls used it far more on the water and always towed the two-door convertible to area waterways.

"We took it up to Crooked Creek a few times and up to the Kinzua Dam," Saul said.



"When we took it up to Kinzua the first time, you had to pay a launch fee of \$3," she said smiling at the memory. "When I went in and told the man what I wanted, he said, 'That is so cute, I don't want to charge you the \$3.'"

## Required 2 Licenses

She said because of its dual purpose, the Amphicar has to have a motor vehicle license and a boat license.

While the Sauls liked the way the Amphicar performed on water, Edwardine said they always made sure they had an oar in the vehicle — just in case.

The Sauls had a love and appreciation for cars and motoring.

Edwardine even got to drive the car of record-setting NASCAR driver and team owner Kyle Busch during a recent visit to the NASCAR speedway in Charlotte, N.C. She has the certificate and photos to prove it.

A large garage houses several vehicles collected by her husband, who died in 2002, including a 1928 Dodge, a 1929 fire engine

and a three-wheeled 1955 Messerschmitt.

But none are quite as unusual as the cream-colored Amphicar with red-and-white interior.

Although Saul can't remember the last time the car was driven, it appears to be in relatively good condition but apparently not to her standards.

"It would be worth about \$60,000 mint, but, remember, it's far from mint," she said.

An articulate woman who loves to wear red hats and clothing, Edwardine Saul gets down to basics when she talks about her Amphicar.

"What it is, is a bathtub on wheels," she said with a smile.

*Tom Yerace is a staff writer for Trib Total Media. He can be reached at 724-226-4675 or tyerace@tribweb.com.*

*Read more: <http://triblive.com/neighborhoods/yourallekiskivalley/>*

The Western Pennsylvania Corvair Club thanks the Tribune Review for their permission to publish this story.

## 2014 Events Schedule

<b>May</b>	11-15..... Happy Days Tour .....	Bardstown, KY .....	Jim Heatherington
	27..... Meeting .....	North Park Club House, Rt 8	
<b>Jun</b>	?..... Picnic .....		Jim Madden
<b>Jul</b>	15..... Meeting .....	King's Restaurant, Harmarville	
	19-20..... VGP Car Show .....	Schenley Park.....	Don Baker
	21-25..... CORSA Convention.....	Tacoma, WA	
<b>Aug</b>	?..... Theater .....	Jennerstown .....	Jim Heatherington
<b>Sep</b>	?..... Wine Tour .....	New York State.....	Jim Madden
	23..... Meeting .....	North Park Club House, Rt 8	
<b>Oct</b>	?..... Fall Foliage Tour .....	Bob Hieber	
<b>Nov</b>	?..... Bayernhof Museum.....	Ohara Township.....	Don Cekus
	25..... Meeting .....	King's Restaurant, Harmarville	
<b>Jan</b>	11, 2015... Holiday Party.....	Grant's Bar.....	Jim Madden

## The Collier Collection at the Revs Institute

Don Baker brought something to my attention that he thought might be of interest to WPCC members. It's the Revs Institute for Automotive Research, Inc., in Naples, Florida. Though not a hop skip and jump from Pittsburgh, however, if in the future if you happen to be in the Tampa Bay or Fort Myers area of Florida, this certainly seems like it would be a worth while field trip.

The Collier Collection houses over one hundred significant automobiles built between 1896 and 1995. The automobiles on display at Revs are some of the rarest and most important cars ever



built at anytime, anywhere. They are the ones that variously blazed technical pathways, redefined aesthetic standards, made history, and changed the world.

The Revs Institute is located just 2 hours south of the Tampa Bay Area, an hour from Fort Myers and 2 hours west of the Miami

area, with easy access from Interstate 75.

General admission-\$17  
 Docent-led tour-\$20  
 Faculty, students & active military \$12  
 Children under 8 free  
 Opened three days a week - Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday

The Revs Institute for Automotive Research, Inc. is located in Naples,

Florida. The address is:  
 2500 S. Horseshoe Drive  
 Naples, Florida 34104  
 (239) 687-REVS

Learn more at:  
<http://revsinstitute.org>



## Tech Tips from the past

By Larry Carley - Reprinted in part from COUNTERMAN

There are numerous gaskets in the engine, and all are important, of course, but the HEAD GASKET's job is essential. It seals the combustion and compression gases where they belong. Any leaks or a failure can have serious consequences.

Sometimes a head gasket might be replaced without considering what might have caused the failure. Replacing the gasket solves the symptom for a while', but not the cause. Unless the real problem is found and fixed, the new gasket may also fail. Any of the following things can cause a head gasket to fail:

- **LOSS OF CLAMPING TENSION.** This could be from bolt stretch, damaged, dirty, or corroded head bolt threads, or improper torquing (too much, too little, or incorrect torquing sequence).
- **WARPAGE OF THE HEAD OR CYLINDER SURFACE.** This problem is common with aluminum heads. They can warp when improperly torqued (as above), or from overheating.

- **EROSION OR CORROSION AT THE GASKET SEAT AREA.** Aluminum expands and contracts at a greater rate than the cast iron cylinders. That collective movement can produce a scrubbing action which can wear away metal, leaving a rough surface which may not seal properly.
- **DETONATION.** The high pressure hammer-like blows produced by detonation (spark knock) can cause head gasket failure as well as damage to pistons, rings, rod bearings, [and heads]. A build up of carbon deposits on the pistons and in the combustion chamber can raise compression pressure enough to cause the fuel mixture to self-ignite under load. When the ignition wave fronts collide, a hammer-like blow is dealt to the piston - this is detonation. The cure in this case is to remove the deposits. Excessive turbo boost pressure from a defective or misadjusted wastegate for restricted exhaust flow in the Corvair can also raise compression to detonation levels. And over-advanced ignition

timing can be a further cause of detonation. Consider the recent case of an incorrect distributor vacuum unit on a Spyder engine which advanced timing instead of retarding it

- **EXCESSIVE COMBUSTION PRESSURE.** If the cylinder head has been resurfaced during a valve job or other repair, the reduced volume of the combustion chamber may have raised the compression ratio to the detonation level. Unless a thicker gasket is used, or modifications have been made to increase the chamber volume, gasket failure could occur.
- **IMPROPER INSTALLATION.** Failing to properly clean the head and cylinder wall surfaces; installing gaskets against surfaces which are too rough, scratched, pitted, corroded; incorrect torquing, all can lead to head gasket failure.

	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	E-MAIL
1	Artzberger, Bill & Joan	305 Golf Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15229	412-364-6842	BILLA305@comcast.net
2	Artzberger, Jim & Sandy	1300 Cattail Lane, Sewickley, PA 15143	412-749-1432 c:412-855-1313	Artzberger1300@comcast.net
3	Bachman, Jack & Joyce	402 Elfinwild Lane, Glenshaw, PA 15116	412-486-2478	quebapa@aol.com
4	Baker, Don & Joanne	12461 Larimer Avenue, North Huntingdon, PA 15642	724-863-3770	dcbakerscca@yahoo.com
5	Brier, Dick & Carol	493 Sleepy Hollow Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228	412-563-4591	
6	Bucklew, David & Peggy	112 Carnegie Street, Butler, PA 16001	724-282-1725	dbucklew@zoominternet.net
7	Butalla, Franz & Helen	172 Rubena Road, Greensboro, PA 15338	724-966-7815 c:724-984-3233	hbutalla@gmail.com
8	Cekus, Don & Mary Ellen	197 Browns Hill Road, Valencia, PA 16059	724-903-0990 C:412-952-3190	corsal@zoominternet.net
9	Costantino, John & Clare	305 3rd Street, Freeport, PA 16229-1141	724-295-2575	
10	Dandois, Dick & Marie	11844 Route 286 Hwy W., Homer City, PA 15748-7803	724-726-5606	dindy6@verizon.net
11	Desmond, Tim & Michele	107 Hivue Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15237	412-761-3926	TDES123@netzero.com
12	Duva, Vincent & Louise	195 Browns Hill Road, Valencia, PA 16059	724-898-1604	vinceduva@gmail.com
13	Foltz, Kurt	194 Pinecrest Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15237	412-486-2969	kurtfoltz@gmail.com
14	Friend, Al & Carole	6000 Great Oaks Drive, Export, PA 15632	C: 724-433-0839	a.c.friend@comcast.net
15	Goehring, Earl & Diane	140 Whitestown Road, Harmony, PA 16037	724-452-8823	goehringearl@yahoo.com
16	Greenwald, Pat	415 Crestview Drive, Plum, PA 15239	412-795-5719	pggreen233@netzero.net
17	Gundlach, John, Gayle & Laura	228 McKay Road, Saxonburg, PA 16056	724-352-4205	ggundlach@zoominternet.net
18	Hackl, George & Marlene	420 , Hulton Road, New Kensington, PA 15068	724-224-0482	
19	Hamlin, Charlotte	2207 Arbor Glen Court, Sun City Center, FL 33573	813-633-6684	hamlinchar@aol.com
20	Heatherington, Jim & Suzanne	128 Sharp Road, White Oak, PA 15131	412-672-0914	sheatherington128@gmail.com
21	Hieber, Bob & Donna	1679 Brodhead Road, RR3, Moon Twp, PA 15108	724-457-9712	bob@thehiebers.com
22	Izzo, John & Dolly	725 Providence Drive, Plum, PA 15239	412-793-2058	daizzo@yahoo.com
23	Kady, Darlene	163 Edgewood Street, Aliquippa, PA 15001	412-292-1906	dkdy3@yahoo.com
24	Kreisel, Curt & Elana	1141 Sunrise Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15243	412-561-1845	curt.kreisel@wolterskluwer.com
25	Lucas, Charles & Sarah	236 W. Marigold Street, Munhall, PA 15120-2233	412-462-6735	chaslucas@gmail.com
26	Madden, Jim	232 Harrison Street, Evans City, PA 16033	412-726-8093	jrmadden66@aol.com
27	Matenkosky, Walter & Susan	702 Spring Street, Latrobe, PA 15650	724-537-8922	wmatenkosky@hotmail.com
28	McDonald, Paul & Joyce	258 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001-2711	724-287-5671	jam40258@zoominternet.net
29	Morgan, Robert & Margaret	344 Ridge Road, New Brighton, PA 15066	724-846-6040	
30	Puskas, Stephen	221 Green Manor Drive, Butler PA 16002	724-284-3721	spuskas@embarqmail.com
31	Pflugh, Ronald	102 Kemar Drive, Butler, PA 16002	724-282-7895	rpflugh@zoominternet.net
32	Saul, Edwardine	1084 Watt Road, Apollo, PA 15613		
33	Schlarman, Jack	800 Erdner Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15202	412-734-2905 C: 412-251-2054	dixie1935@aol.com
34	Sirkosh, John M.	3002 Nottinghill Drive, Moon Township, PA 15108	412- 264-4839	jmsirk@comcast.com
35	Smith, William and Rosella	214 Saddlebrook Drive Indiana, PA 15701	724-840-8509	was35@comcast.net
36	Steigerwaldt, James	506 Quail Drive, Cranberry Twp, PA 16066-4074	724-776-0935	Jimstg@zbzoom.net
37	Sweet, John & Charlotte	1264 Walnut Street, Stoneboro, PA 16153	724-376-4335	js189@zoominternet.net
38	Tedesco, Bob & Polly	4741 Curry Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15236	412-881-8577 C: 412-584-8668	bptedesco@aol.com
39	Tyger, John, & Barb	8399 Rte 954 Hwy. N., Creekside, PA 15732	724-397-2043	jtyger@directv.net
40	Walter, Lester	100 Thompson Lane South, North Huntingdon, PA 15642	724-863-8437	timerles@aol.com
41	Watkins, Kerry & Linda	209-1/2 S.Third Street, Youngwood, PA 15697	724-925-1962	
42	Wilson, Gregory & Patricia	508 Bigham Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15211	412-481-6864 C:412-608-6454	wilsongl57@comcast.net
43	Yobst, Robert & Rosalie	518 Brookdale Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15215	412-963-9943	

If you would like to correct or update your listing, please forward the correct information to:

Charles J. Lucas • 236 W. Marigold Street • Munhall, PA 15120-2233 • or phone: 412-462-6735 • or e-mail: chaslucas@gmail.com

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