

## **Prairie Capital Corvair Association**

**P.O. Box 454  
Pawnee, Illinois 62558**

# The Flat Six

May 2025

### 2025 Officers

President -Tim Mahler	(217) 793-3824	Vice-President Jim Allen	(309) 361-5351
Secretary-vacant	(Call Tim)	Treasurer-Glen Rittenhouse	(309) 472-3882
Membership-Chris Hall	(217) 691-6529	Historian/Inventory - vacant	
FlatSix Editor Tim Mahler	(217) 793-3824	Email	PrairieCapital@corvair.org

### Board of Directors

Shelby Berta (2026)	(217) 361-7089	Chris Hall (2025)	(217) 691-6529
Jim Collier (2025)	(217) 972-2285	Brian Nicholson (2025)	(217) 891-0808

## From the Prez

It's Show Time! Car show season is here. Unfortunately, the rain showers also have arrived, or so it seems. The newsletter includes some non-PCCA events this month, just to give us alternatives to PCCA meetings. Cruise-ins and Cars and Coffee events are indeed a fun way to get out of the house and an excellent excuse to drive our little waterless wonders.

PCCA and Show Me Corvairs will be attending the Pawnee Prairie Days Car show May 31, 2025. The Car show is just part of the festivities at the event. Carnival, arts and crafts, a BBQ contest and Antique Tractor show are also on schedule. Should be a fun day. Stopping by one or more RT66 sites may also be on the agenda, especially a photo op at the nearby RT66 Brick road. There is a registration fee for the car show. After the car show, there is a parade which you may drive your car in, just register day of the show.

PCCA will still have a business meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>. The SMCC/PCCA meet up is one of what I hope to be many extra events for PCCA. The president has another obligation May 10. I'll be in St Joseph Missouri to do a marathon. One of seventy-five I hope to do this year. It's kinda like collecting Corvairs, you just can't have one. They multiply in the garage, I think.



Ok. Get your Corvair out of the garage, drive it, wash it, enjoy it. Til then.

Happy Corvair-ing Tim

# Calendar of Events - 2025

PCCA Home Page may be found at <http://www.corvair.org/chapters/chapter627>

**Directions to the CPF Corvair Museum near Glenarm Illinois.** Take exit 88 from I-55, from either direction, head west – turn right if you are traveling south on I-55, left if traveling north. Follow the road as it curves to the left, south. Go straight at the stop light (turning right takes you to Chatham). The Museum is 1.3 miles from the stop light on the right hand side – just past the Double J campgrounds.



- May 10, 2025                    **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm.**  
                                      **LOCATION: the CPF Nationa Corvair Museum** in Glenarm
- May 20-23, 2025            CORSA International Convention in San Luis Obispo, California. See the CORSA Communique for hotel info, activities. Is an airport serviced by the larger airlines.
- May 31, 2025**                **SMCC and PCCA joint activity/picnic/car show.** Route 66 Brickroad  
                                      Pawneed Prairie Days Car Show. Expect driving tour to RT66 sites in the area.
- July 10-13, 2025            Detroit Homecoming, Ann Arbor Michigan. Another great event see write up in the March Newsltter. Has been attended and enjoyed by PCCA members in the past
- July 12, 2025                **PCCA Meeting 2:00-4:00 pm.**  
                                      **LOCATION: the CPF Nationa Corvair Museum** in Glenarm
- August 2                      Abe Lincoln Car Show at Cherry Hills Church (2125 Woodside rd) 8am to 4pm.  
August 4                      Old Settlers days of Hillsboro IL. Car show and county fair  
                                      Other activities August 3 through 8 including carnival and a parade Aug 8.
- September 6                **PCCA Meeting 1:00pm, Near Corvairs**  
                                      **LOCATION: Annual SOS Auto show near the State Capital**

For more Corvair Events Check the calendar on the CORSA Web site: [www.corvair.org](http://www.corvair.org)

Lincoln Railsplitter Car Club events (Full calendar is on the internet)  
Cruise-ins - 1-4 pm, all in Lincoln, IL. May 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 5<sup>th</sup> Evergreen Rentals (saturdays)  
Cruise-ins 4:30-8:30 pm, Fridays, May 16<sup>th</sup>, June 20<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup> on Pulaski St  
Cars and Coffee - May 24 8-11am, Pulaski st, June 28thm on Kickapoo St.

Cool Cruisers Event Schedule (again, full schedule is on the internet)  
May 4, Motorheads, Sunday, 1 to 4pm  
At Motorheads, Wednesday, 5:30-8:30 - May 14, June 4, June 18, July 2, July 16, July 30

## **2025 CORSA Internation Convention News                    May 20-23rd, 2025.**

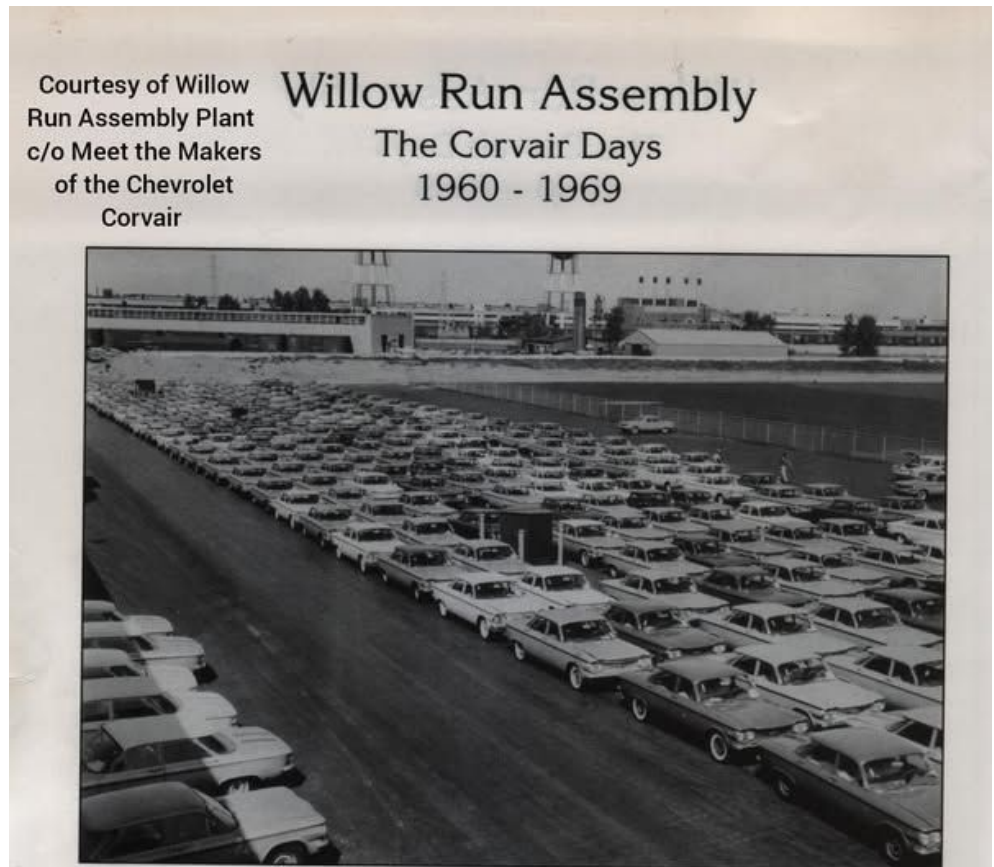
San Luis Obispo, California is the new location of the 2025 CORSA International Convention. The Embassy Suites is the host hotel. **May 20-23rd, 2025.** San Luis Obispo is a historic town with unique shopping and many wineries in the area. Hotel room prices are \$139 for a king and \$149 for a double suite, (prices not including taxes and fees.)

We are looking forward to seeing everyone there. Questions? Contact the club office: (630) 403-5010

# Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair

By Eva McGuire Corvair Historian/Creator Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair  
(Photos courtesy of GM)

This day in Corvair History... On April 11, 1958, the secret that General Motors would build a small compact car at the Willow Run Assembly Plant in Ypsilanti Twp., Michigan, was leaked out by United Auto Worker, Dave Mann.



I have a small story to add to the leaking news of the Corvair being made by GM at the Willow Run Assembly Plant (where most were built). Several former Willow Run UAW auto workers, who were there back in the day when those first Corvairs rolled off the line, told me that the Corvair Plant Manager had ordered lots of heavy material to be carefully placed on the fence around the perimeter of the Willow Run Plant to ensure no one (especially the press) could see what was going on inside the parking lot area.

After the first day of production on July 7, 1959, many of the newly made 1960 Corvairs were being held in storage until they could be carrier transported by rail and truck to Chevrolet dealerships awaiting to be purchased by excited buyers on their official public introduction date of Oct. 2, 1959. It was a big deal back then to keep newly made vehicles under wraps until they were unveiled to the public, but this car was especially unique due to it being the first American mass produced compact car with new features of an air-cooled rear mounted aluminum engine, integrated transaxle, four-wheel independent suspension, and GM's first unibody constructed car. The Corvair's unibody construction

meant the body and chassis were integrated into a single, lightweight structure.

That being said, it was relayed to me that a reporter was found snooping around the plant grounds and found a poked out hole in the fence material and was able to take a photo of the fender portion that was pressed up against the fence of one of these new cars. Was this fender discovery an accident? Nope!

I was told that the Plant Manager himself had that hole poked out on purpose and in that specific spot so that someone (namely, a curious reporter) could discover a small portion of this car with the hopes of them publishing a sneak peek photo. The manager was careful not to reveal too much so more excitement would be generated making people more curious and wanting to purchase one of these cars.

We don't know if that photo was ever published in the local newspaper. I doubt it was as the workers saved items like this; but it definitely created a local buzz among the plant workers through word of mouth. Vairy clever marketing. It makes me wonder if the manager did that of his own accord or did that idea (or directive) come from higher up PR officials within General Motors? Hmmmm. You decide.

**\*BONUS FIRST HAND STORY...**At one point, there was no more room to store the first several thousand newly made 1960 Corvairs at the plant before the launch date of October 2, 1959, so they transported the overflow of cars to be stored at the GM Milford Proving Ground until they could be shipped out to dealerships. One day at work, auto worker Dominick Orlando, (the gentleman who started the first made Corvair) was approached by Bob Hatfield, the Assistant Superintendent of the Willow Run Plant. Dominick was in the Department of Traffic at the time. Bob and Dominick both had a love of fishing and had previous talks about their favorite pastime. On this particular day, Bob asked Dominick if he still owned his fishing waders because he wanted to take him out to Milford. Bob didn't give Dominick any details of what was happening. Dominick told Bob that he did, indeed, still have his waders and got excited thinking that Bob was going to take him fishing because Cass Lake was near Milford...but that wasn't the reason.

When Dominick and Bob arrived at the GM Proving Ground, Dominick saw something that he said he'll never forget...approximately 250-300 Corvairs drowning in a lake! Apparently, some of the Corvairs that were parked were stored in a dry lake bed that hadn't seen water in many years, and there had been a terrible rain storm that occurred drowning the cars. When Dominick saw these cars, Bob then asked him, "Do you know what these waders are for now?" Dominick responded with an affirmative deflated mutter, "Uh huh." According to Dominick, they had guys pulling these Corvairs out and; at one point, they even tried using snorkels on the exhaust pipes in attempts to start some of the cars while under water! Dominick stated, "You're trying to start a Corvair using a snorkel? Come on, guys!" Dominick was not amused. He also mentioned that he sat in a few of those drowned Corvairs in the middle of the lake bed trying to start them and the water level covered his lower legs and knees, and even went up to the seat level!

Another former Willow Run worker, Dave Polmounter, was also sent to the Proving Ground with other plant workers to help fix and restore the drowned Corvairs. After putting in a regular shift at the plant, Dave told me they would take workers from different departments at Fisher Body, transport them by bus out to the GM Proving Ground, and work under tents. Dave stated that some of the cars started and some didn't. His department had to change all the trim including floor mats, seats, door panels, and even some of the headliners had to be replaced because of water damage. They did manage to fix all the Corvairs and they all got sold...

**\*BELIEVE IT OR NOT...**The 1960 Corvair was officially first introduced to the world in Europe at the Paris Auto Show on October 1, 1959, (one day prior to the U.S. launch). Europe saw it first! I'm sure there was press at this show (including GM Photographers) who took pictures, but; back in those days, you couldn't send a photo that quickly to the U.S.A. (not like today)...so introducing the Corvair to the U.S. market the following day on Oct. 2, 1959, guaranteed that no photos were leaked out until after



that U.S. launch date. I'm sure that GM/Chevrolet purposely made the decision to showcase their new compact car in Europe as they didn't want to miss out on such an opportunity to introduce this unique Air-cooled Wonder at a prestigious auto show where a lot of new production and concept cars were introduced. I will even go so far as to speculate that GM possibly chose the date of Oct. 2nd to officially launch the new Corvair to the U.S. market because of the Paris Auto Show starting on October 1st.

**\*CORVAIR LAUNCH A SUCCESS...**The Corvair design was well received worldwide and was considered a new revolutionary benchmark in styling with its simple unbroken wraparound belt line which became known as the "Corvair Line." This line visually divided the car into upper and lower sections with various downward dips and curves. Other car manufacturers took design cues from the Corvair for their own vehicles such as the British Sunbeam, early Fiats, Lancia Fulvia Coupé, Daf 44 and Volkswagen T34 Karmann Ghia and the 1961 NSU Prinz were just a few good examples of incorporating partial Corvair lines.

By: Eva "Corvair Lady" McGuire, Corvair Historian/Creator  
Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair  
#preservingcorvairhistory

(Photo of plant parking lot courtesy of General Motors and Willow Run Assembly Plant)

\*Please contact the writer of this article to obtain permission for reprinting. Thank you.

Glen Rittenhouse follows sales on Bring-a-trailer. Last month he spotted this Corvair listed on the site.



Project car, yet parts may be worth more then selling price - \$1,250



Reasonable priced for both buyer and seller. Win/win. Sold for \$12,250



Nice Car, tastefully modified. Buyer may have come out better then seller on price. Sold for \$22,000



1961 Rampside sold for \$19,250. Good price for this truck. Closer inspection shows rust bubbles under the paint.



1963 Monza Spyder Convertible. Nice car, well equipped, priced right. Sold for 26,000

**Repeat AD:** Mike Hall is trying to reduce the size of his Corvair fleet. This includes a 62 Spyder Coupe, a 65 red coupe, and a late model 4 door. It also includes a Parade ready Rampside equipped with PG - good for parades. These are all show ready although maybe note top notch Concours, they would all score well. Give Mike a call – work out a deal – and have fun playing with your new toy.

Heart of America Corvair Owners Assn is a great group. Plus they have this wonderful tech person who write great tech tips. This is from HACOIA web site, tech articles by Mike Dawson. Article number 196. As a parts replacer (not a mechanic), I always thought it was me unable to re-install the brake parts.

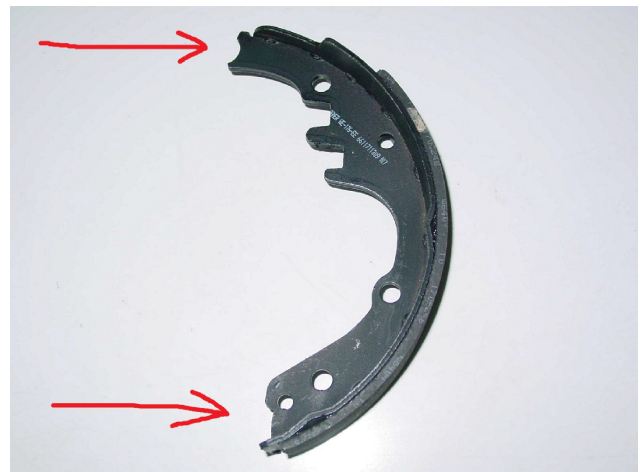
## THE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SERIES Mike Dawson

### Early Model Car Brake Job Issues

I have encountered the following issues when servicing brake systems on early model cars, they are annoying but solvable.

Almost all 189 shoes are 100% new, however, the thickness of the friction material and the correctness of the metal frame varies. This can make installation of the drum impossible. Be prepared for the following:

- The hole for the rear parking brake lever pivot may need to be drilled out (3/8").
- On cars with self adjusting brakes, the hole for the adjuster lever pivot may need to be drilled out (3/8"). That is the hole to the rear that the hold down spring and nail occupy.
- The friction material may be too thick or the metal frames may be stamped wrong which makes it impossible to install drums. You will have to use a cut off wheel or grinder to remove some material from the radius that fits against the anchor pin (both shoes). You may also need to remove some material from the two slots at the bottom where the star wheel attaches:



Any new wheel cylinders should be checked for the following:

- They should be disassembled before installation and check to see if they have assembly lube. I have found some cups and pistons that were completely dry and stuck fairly firmly in the bore. Lube with brake fluid.

- I have found all of the new front wheel cylinders I have purchased have the bleeder valve installed at the wrong angle making bleeding almost impossible. Use a replacement valve from Dorman (484-145) which is smaller and shorter, available at all parts stores. See picture to the right for comparison.



The valve on the right may be too close to the spindle.

In both early cars and FC spring kits I have found some of the return spring ends that would not enter the hole and required slight bending or slight drilling of the hole. Some brake drums (old and new) may not have the adjuster slot plug punched enough to allow removal. I had to use a drill press to open the holes up for use of an adjuster tool. The '62 and earlier models adjusted through the backing plate and do not need the slots.

## May 31 SMCC/PCCA joint adventure

The Show Me Corvair Club and PCCA are planning a joint activity for May 31, 2025. The plan is to meet at the Pawnee Prairie Days festival and car show. The festival also includes a BBQ cook off, crafts and a carnival. Plus a stroll to downtown Pawnee would find many other nice shops and eateries for those wanting to stretch their legs.

A parade is scheduled for later in the afternoon or a drive to the brick road of old RT 66 could be in order. The last surviving covered bridge is not too far away either. The possibilities are wide open.

**2025 Pawnee Prairie Days Car Show**  
**Curry Funeral Home Parking Lot**  
**407 Carroll Streets (Route 104) Pawnee IL**



**Saturday, May 31, 2025**

Registration – 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Judging begins at – 11:15 a.m.

Awards Presented – 2:00 p.m.

**Entry Fee Only – \$15**

**Registration Includes Lunch (1 lunch per registrant)**

**AWARDS FOR TOP IN EACH CLASS (CLASS LIST ON BACK)**

**Best of Show**

**Queen's Choice**

**Mayor's Choice**



**Directions:** Take I-55 Exit 82. Go east on State Route 104 into Pawnee. Stay on Route 104 (Carroll St.) east and the car show is at corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Carroll.

## 2025 PAWNEE PRAIRIE DAYS CAR SHOW SHOW CLASSES

<u>Class A</u> 1900 - 1975	<u>Class G</u> Corvette	<u>Class N</u> Mustang
<u>Class B</u> 1976 -2009	<u>Class H</u> Ford	<u>Class O</u> Oldsmobile
<u>Class C</u> 2010 - Present	<u>Class I</u> GM	<u>Class P</u> Pontiac
<u>Class D</u> Chevy	<u>Class J</u> Import	<u>Class Q</u> Hot Rod
<u>Class E</u> Camaro	<u>Class K</u> Jeep	<u>Class R</u> Street Machine
<u>Class F</u> Corvalr	<u>Class L</u> Mopar	<u>Class S</u> Truck

\*Street Machine - vehicles with more than 3 modifications from original dealer-purchased condition (as determined by Show Staff).

\*Mustang, Corvette and Camaro modified will be placed in Street Machine class.

- Dash plaques to first 100 entries
- Classes will be added or cut as needed, as determined by car show staff
- This is a community show with all proceeds benefiting the Pawnee Prairie Days
- Please – No Alcohol allowed on property
- No holding of parking spaces – In order to park together you must come in together
- Judging Committee – all ties will be decided by Car Show staff
- Food and drinks available on site
- Pawnee Prairie Days town festival approximately 1 block across street (carnival, rides, games, more food and drinks)
- Canopies allowed on the grass area
- Questions call Mike Hall @ (217) 494-7105, or Rich Grooms @217-306-1809

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_  
 Make \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Liability Release (must sign): I do hereby release the Pawnee Prairie Days Association and its members from all liability by reason of any injury to persons or property which I might suffer, either while in attendance of said show, or on my way to or from said show.

Signature\* \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* If under 18 years of age parent or responsible guardian must sign entry form.

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**Prairie Capital Corvair Association (PCCA) Membership Form**

**January 1, 2025 thru December 31, 2025**

Type of Membership      Individual      \_\_\_\_\_ \$17  
   Family      \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 (2 adults at one address plus children under 18)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Apply a \$5 discount for receiving the electronic version of the newsletter and other correspondence.  
If joining after July 31, dues are: Individual \$8.50, Family \$10.00. If applicable, the discount is \$2.50.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/ 2nd Adult \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, ST ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ CORSA Membership ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/ 2nd Adult \_\_\_\_\_

e-Mail Address(es) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/ 2nd Adult \_\_\_\_\_

Cars, Corvair and other \_\_\_\_\_

Other interests \_\_\_\_\_  
PCCA strongly encourages membership in CORSA. Do you want/need information about CORSA? Y / N

Return the completed form and dues to: Glen Rittenhouse, PCCA Treasurer 1804 Columbus Dr, Pekin IL 61554  
Please make checks payable to Prairie Capital Corvair Association or PCCA

**Have you renewed your membership for 2025 ?**  
**If you have forgotten, it's never too late to renew.**

Unfortunately, per the PCCA by-laws, the March meeting is the "voluntary resign" date for failing to renew. My last check with Treasurer Glen Rittenhouse indicated that these 4 members have not renewed for 2025. Bill Pierson, Gene Schmidt, Paul Drake and Larry Phillips.

**Detroit Homecoming**  
**July 10 thru July 13, 2025 Ann Arbor Michigan**

Not a Corvair convention but the atmosphere is really close. The Detroit club put on an excellent event that is not all that far from Illinois.

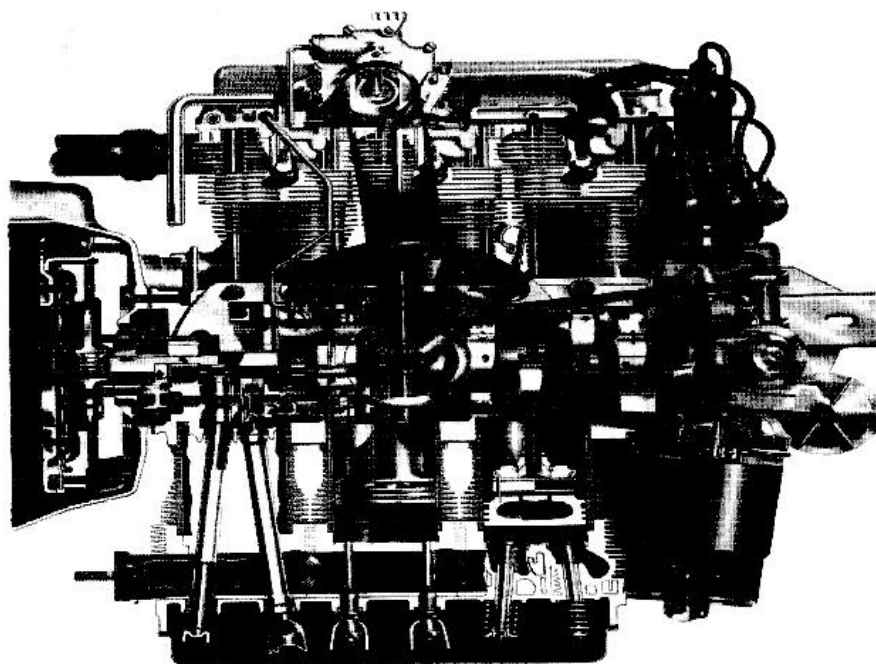
The Detroit Area Corvair Club "Homecoming" is from July 10th thru 13th in beautiful Ann Arbor, Michigan. If you have tried the rest, now come to the best annual Corvair event! To see more about the DACC visit our Facebook Group or write us at [hcinfo@detroitcorvairs.com](mailto:hcinfo@detroitcorvairs.com).

Here are links that will help to register and book your room for homecoming. Looking forward to seeing everybody  
Preferred "On-Line" Homecoming registration form here -->  
<http://detroitcorvairs.com/Homecoming2025.html>

"Print and Mail" Homecoming registration form here --> <http://detroitcorvairs.com/Flyer2025.pdf>

Thanks Bob Wittmann DACC Homecoming Registrar  
Book your hotel (discount group rates applied!) - simply adjust dates and # of guests  
Hotel URL: (Editor will send you the email upon request) it is also in the PCCA March Newsletter

# The Flat Six



# Prairie Capital Corvair Association



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P.O. Box 454  
Pawnee, IL 62558