

Prairie Capital Corvair Association

P.O. Box 454
Pawnee, Illinois 62558

The Flat Six

November 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

Fall has arrived – the temps were still in the 80s late in the month of October, but as I write this, the highs are now only in the 60s. Great driving weather. And the trees in central Illinois have decided to start showing their fall colors. It may be brief, so get out there and enjoy the show while you can.

The November PCCA meeting will be at the MCL Restaurant in Springfield. Show up around 5:00pm and grab supper. Sometime around 6:00pm we will have a brief meeting and tally the election ballots.

December is the PCCA Christmas get-together – back to a Saturday meeting at 1:00 pm at the same location – the MCL Restaurant. I am hoping to do something different this year – but those plans haven't solidified in my devious little head yet. If you have ideas, let me know, I can be easily persuaded for something that is fun to do.

Hope to see you at the November meeting and again in December. January starts a brand new year with Chris at the helm. It should be epic

Tim



Eva McGuire's "Blurpy" Corvan leaving a Fall tour stop for apple cider. The "Willow Run Corvair Club" was on its annual Fall Road Tour driving the scenic roads in Michigan. The fall colors were showing, Eva reported 10 Corvairs participated in this year's tour.

Calendar of Events - 2025

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



November 6, 2025 **PCCA Meeting** – Current plan is to meet at the MCL Restaurant on Wabash in Springfield IL. Arrive 5:00pm, get supper, meeting rooms in the rear. Meeting will be after most everyone has eaten dinner – estimated at 6:00 pm – or until Chris shows up.
MCL - Located at 2151 Wabash Springfield IL

December 13, 2025 PCCA Christmas get together, luncheon. 1:00pm til 4?
MCL - Located at 2151 Wabash Springfield IL
Directions: Take the IL4, Veterans Pkwy exit off I-72 and head North (right). Turn right at the intersection with White Oaks Mall (Wabash)
Turn LEFT at the first light AFTER the mall. There is a left turn lane.

Need to do something “fun” this year. Put your holiday thinking caps on.

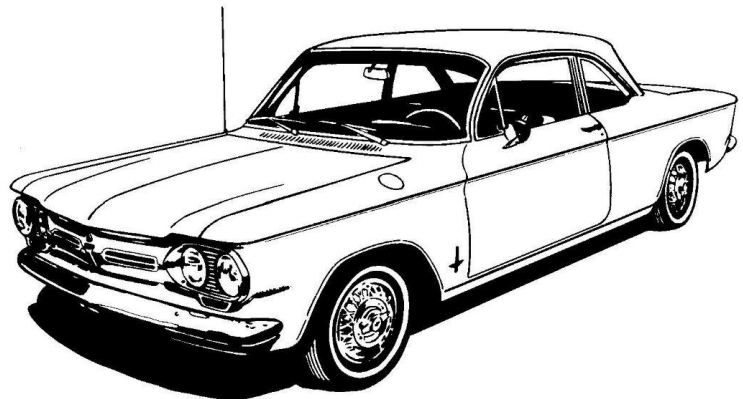
January 8, 2026 PCCA Anniversary month. January marks PCCAs 49th year
PCCA Meeting Arrive 5:00pm, get supper, meeting rooms in the rear.
Meeting will be after most everyone has eaten dinner – estimated at 6:00 pm
LOCATION: MCL - Located at 2151 Wabash Springfield IL

For more Corvair Events Check the calendar on the CORSA Web site: www.corvair.org

CPF National Corvair Museum Hours Should be posted at the museum, subject to change,
Saturday, November 8, 2025 10 AM to 4 PM Sunday, November 9, 2025 10 AM to 3 PM

Please remember to vote

– see ballot on p 9 – or just send an email to prairieCapital@corvair.org indicating your preferences. Thanks Tim



Rantoul Museum Tour and Corvair Show.

Sunday June 23rd 2013 Tim Mahler

Wow. The Rantoul Aerospace Museum has made great progress since PCCA was there last some 10-12 years ago. Yes, it could still use some upgrading, but the planes were nicely presented. I was impressed. A nice show with old cars and old planes is just a lot of fun.

Larry Claypool was the emcee for much of the afternoon, interviewing the various car owners including a 1951 2-door Kaiser sedan, a 37 Chevy with rumble seat and others. From the Corvair world, Circle City Corvairs drove over in 6 Corvairs and a few support vehicles. Chicago Corvair Enthusiasts topped the list with 14 Corvairs. PCCA was well represented with 5 Corvairs. There was another Corvair from the area in attendance, but I did not readily recognize the name nor address nor was I ever able to find him/her to talk to them.

Jim Allen was interviewed about his early years as a service technician (mechanic) and about his 1961 Lakewood. Tim was interviewed to represent PCCA and to talk about his Fitch Sprint, in this case his 1966 red Sprint. Also in attendance was Dick and Neta Moon in their Blue Moon 1965 Convertible, Larry and Gloria Jahn in the very nice 1963 Spyder Convertible. Notably, we met again with Gene Schmidt who arrived in his 1963 red coupe. The PCCA group had a nice day discussing nothing much at all. The breeze felt great as we sat in the shade of the tail of a C130 Cargo plane.



Glen Rittenhouse follows sales on Bring-a-trailer. Last month he spotted these Corvairs (6) listed on the site.



1964 V8 Conversion. Notes: rusty, sloppy conversion. Sold for \$5,099



1965 500 coupe limited restoration, good price sold \$8,000



1964 Spyder convertible. Good deal for buyer, nice stock. Sold \$7,200



1960 Monza coupe. Clean, seems like a good price. Sold \$7,500



1962 Spyder Convertible. Good price for nicely modified 1st year convertible Spyder. Sold \$12,250



1961 Rampside. (Very) Basic trim package. Great condition. \$17,000 note: painted bumper, no stripe

CAR and DRIVER

OCTOBER 1964 • 50 CENTS

They're here!
all the new
1965's

ROAD RESEARCH REPORT
CHEVY'S
ALL-NEW
CORVAIR
we love it!

NEW CAR ISSUE
FULL TECH SPECS

BUICK · CADILLAC
IMPERIAL DODGE
OLDS · PLYMOUTH
MERCURY CHEVY
FORD · CHRYSLER
LINCOLN PONTIAC
AND RAMBLER



Special Report:
we compare
the new '65
DODGE
PONTIAC
& **FORD**

ROAD TEST
PLYMOUTH'S
'FORMULA S'
BARRACUDA

ROAD TEST
271 HP
Mustang
FORD BUILDS A
FASTER FASTBACK

Meet the Maker Creator and Corvair Historian Eva McGuire has been busy posting articles on the Corvair on her "Meet the Makers" Facebook page. Eva has been kind enough to repost many of those articles to the Prairie Capital Corvairs Facebook page. I really appreciate her efforts and stories.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN - CORVAIR STYLE...

Who says Corvairs can't get dressed up for Halloween? Here's a Corvair powered car (known as the Reactor) that has appeared on several popular 1960's TV shows including Batman (as the Catmobile), Bewitched (as The Reactor), and Star Trek (as the Jupiter Eight).

This unique vehicle was designed by Ben Delphia and built by the famous Gene Winfield in 1965 at a cost of \$20,000! That would be equivalent to around \$205,000 today. It's power source is from a 180hp turbocharged engine from a 1965 Corvair Corsa. Everything in this car is functional. Cool, huh? (Air-cool)!

Gene Winfield purchased The Reactor in 1999, restored it, and it still exists today making appearances at various car shows. I was honored to meet Gene Winfield at the Detroit Autorama show several years ago. Sadly, Gene Winfield passed away on March 4, 2025 (97 years old).

Eva "Corvair Lady" McGuire
Corvair Historian/
Creator Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair



Yes, this car was even in the show Bewitched. (we think it's a misprint that the car had 425hp. From what we know, it's a 180hp. However, others who have looked at the engine state that it's more like a 150hp turbocharged engine and observed it has a fan/generator from a 1962 or 63 Corvair.



Gene Winfield posing with his creation. Gene purchased the Reactor in 1999 and restored it. It still exists and makes appearances at various car shows.



The "Reactor" with Captain Kirk (William Shatner)



On the set of the 1960's TV show "Batman" with the "Catmobile."

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 207.

THE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SERIES Mike Dawson

Distributors

The primary (low voltage) portion includes the ignition voltage ($>12V$), resistor voltage ($<6V$), coil primary winding's, ignition points and the condenser.

The secondary (high voltage) portion includes the coil secondary, distributor cap, rotor, coil wire, plug wires and plugs.

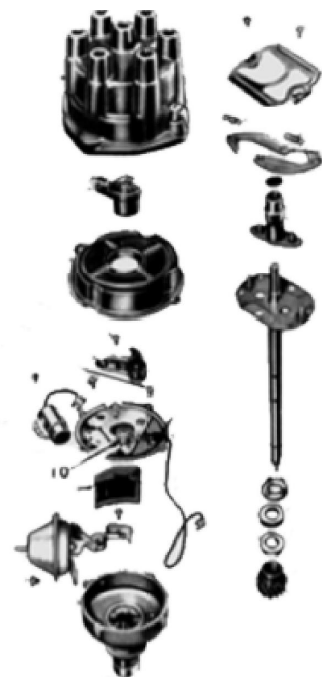
Spark Advance Systems (Non-Turbo)

The Corvair engine uses three advance systems to control the firing of the spark plugs: initial advance, mechanical advance and vacuum advance. The distributor has a seven digit number on the side of the housing. Use this number to make sure you have the correct distributor for your engine. There are graphs for all distributor numbers and there are also illustrations and individual part ID numbers to identify the individual parts. See Clark's publications and the CORSA Tech Guide.

1. Initial timing is set with the engine at a normal idle and no mechanical or vacuum advance involved.
2. Mechanical advance is added to the initial timing as engine speed increases by means of flyweights on springs that rotate the distributor cam as centrifugal force increases. It will begin to occur at different RPM for different engine/transmission/years. Maintenance of this area is important as well as being sure the parts are correct.
3. Vacuum advance (**non turbo**) is added to provide better gas mileage as a function of how you use your accelerator. This advance is not available when your foot is on the floor and maximum advance is available when you coast or use a light pedal. It does not affect power and should not affect idle.

A Corvair vacuum advance receives "ported" vacuum which is a slot in the venturi **above** the throttle plate position at idle: if you are getting vacuum to your advance unit at idle you have a carburetor balance problem or engine performance issue. The throttle is open too far at idle and has uncovered the port for the vacuum advance. A unit that moves too quickly can cause pinging at part throttle.

A vacuum advance can cause minor surging in manual transmission cars when you are at the balance point between acceleration and deceleration. It can also cause a sensation where at very light throttle the engine speeds up when you let up on the pedal and slows down when you barely step down on the pedal.



Remember that the Corvair engine was designed for gasoline formulation from over half a century ago - carburetor calibration and ignition timing specifications are merely a guide.

Problem Areas

- ☐ Points should be a light gray on both surfaces; any black or dark purple on one face indicates high heat and an insulated condition which will cause no start or misfire. This can be a result of dirt on the points, a bad condenser or a wiring problem that has bypassed the resistor circuit. A crossed wire at the starter solenoid or a defective solenoid can keep the bypass circuit energized. Condensers must have the correct capacitance to match the coil. A Corvair condenser should have .18-.23 MFD.
- ☐ The breaker plate has gone through several design changes to correct problems. The pivot point on all the original Corvair plates would wear so badly that the dwell and timing would wander continuously. In rare cases electrical contact is lost due to the loose pivot. When the Vega emerged, their best feature was an improved breaker plate with a bushing instead of a pivot pin plus a light spring tension to help keep the advance arm from fluttering. Later improvements came from Dale Manufacturing, and Clark has a rebuilt unit.
- ☐ A badly worn (from lack of lubricant) distributor shaft where the cam rotates will cause dwell fluctuation and timing changes. Try moving the cam on the shaft back and forth with your fingers; any noticeable movement means replacement of the distributor since both parts wear out. At this point, also check the upper shaft bushing in the housing for wear by moving the center shaft from side to side. There is no lower bushing, the housing acts as the lower support. Also, try twisting the rotor clockwise, it should move a small amount, stop, and spring back crisply when you release it. Sluggish movement means there is an advance problem, usually just cleaning and lubing will solve the issue.
- ☐ Check the distributor driven gear for wear and that the pin securing it to the shaft is tight. Pins can shatter or loosen.
- ☐ If a rotor is difficult to remove and someone jerks upwards on it hard, it will bend the mechanical advance retainer and allow the weights to fly out against the housing, locking the timing at a significant advance. Aluminum filings also appear as the weights eat through the housing.
- ☐ If your coil is mounted horizontal, it can leak oil out of the tower over the years and overheat to failure. A coil can also fail from the bottom rubbing on the sheet metal until oil leaks out. Check the installation in the bracket.
- ☐ Check the vacuum advance for proper function -- the diaphragm can rupture or you can have the wrong one. The turbo which has a pressure retard and looks like it doesn't move when you rev the engine (it only works under boost). People think it is bad and they will replace it with a vacuum advance which gives you maximum advance at idle and then retards the timing when you try to accelerate. See the following table of vacuum advance units for non-turbos:

Unit Number	Degrees Advance (Turbo Pressure Retard Not Included)
199	12
217	11
229	12.5
230	13
248	10.5
370	10
410	12.5

These units will have different calibrations with respect to the amount of vacuum needed to start the advance. If you have tip in pinging (light acceleration), you might try a different unit, delay the advance with a vacuum delay valve, or limit the total advance by restricting the arm movement.

Items to keep in mind:

When installing the distributor in the engine, understand that the brass distributor gear was cut from a length of stock and that it will not be the same for every car in terms of where the vacuum advance ends up when the timing is set correctly. There was an alignment mark chiseled into the distributor/rear housing for correct alignment, but that only counts if you have the original brass drive gear and breaker points that are manufactured identical to the original Delco units. Where the vacuum advance ends up is unimportant as long as it fits in the space and the other alignments are correct. If you have A.I.R. or A/C, an adjustment in the wire positions in the cap or a change in gear alignment will be necessary. The important thing is that when the points just start to open, the rotor is pointing to the correct terminal in the cap.

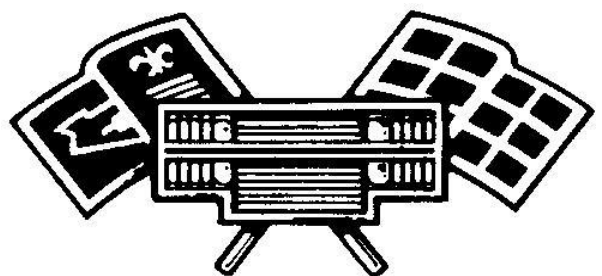
Installation of a Pertronix (or similar system) will eliminate breaker plate problems and point replacement, but you still must have the weights, springs and cam operating properly for correct advance to occur.

Two Methods For Installing a Distributor

1. If you want to remove the distributor from a running engine for service, you can simply use chalk to mark the position of the rotor and the position of the vacuum advance on the sheet metal. You could also mark the position of the housing against the rear cover casting for setting the exact same timing. Remove the distributor and simply put it back in the same position. Do not turn the engine over or you will be required to use method number two.
2. If you start from a rebuilt engine or one with the engine rotated after the distributor was removed, you need to find TDC on #1. With #1 plug out, bump the engine until you feel compression pop your finger; now you can see the timing mark on the pulley approaching the timing tab. Set the mark at 16 degrees on the tab (or whatever you want), take the distributor and point the rotor just before #1 position in the cap (it will rotate clockwise as you mesh the gears). Adjust the vacuum advance to an acceptable place (lots of room unless you have A.I.R. or A/C.), and install the distributor in the housing. As the distributor gear engages it will move the rotor position to line up with #1 terminal. When the distributor is bottomed in the housing it will probably not have engaged the oil pump. At this point, gently hold down on the distributor while you bump the engine over. The shaft will drop in to the oil pump. Once again move the pulley around until you are back at #1 with the timing mark at 16 degrees and rotate the distributor counterclockwise until the points just start to open (You could check this with a test light). Now check that the rotor points to #1 and the vacuum advance is in a desirable position. Recheck your work, start engine, check dwell and adjust timing with your light if necessary.

Remember that the timing mark can show up either at #1 TDC or at #2 TDC if you can access that wire (or the plug) easier. Also the spark occurs when the points just start to open. And finally, you can vary this installation method to work with any wire placement and gear alignment as long as you meet the timing requirements.

Also important, adjusting the initial timing will not change the dwell, but adjusting the dwell will change the timing.



Prairie Capital Corvair Association (PCCA) Membership Form
January 1, 2026 thru December 31, 2026

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

2026 PCCA Official Ballot

President ☐ Chris Hall ☐ Other _____

Vice President ☐ Brian Nicholson ☐ Other _____

Treasurer ☐ Mike Hall ☐ Other _____

Secretary ☐ Tim Mahler ☐ Other _____

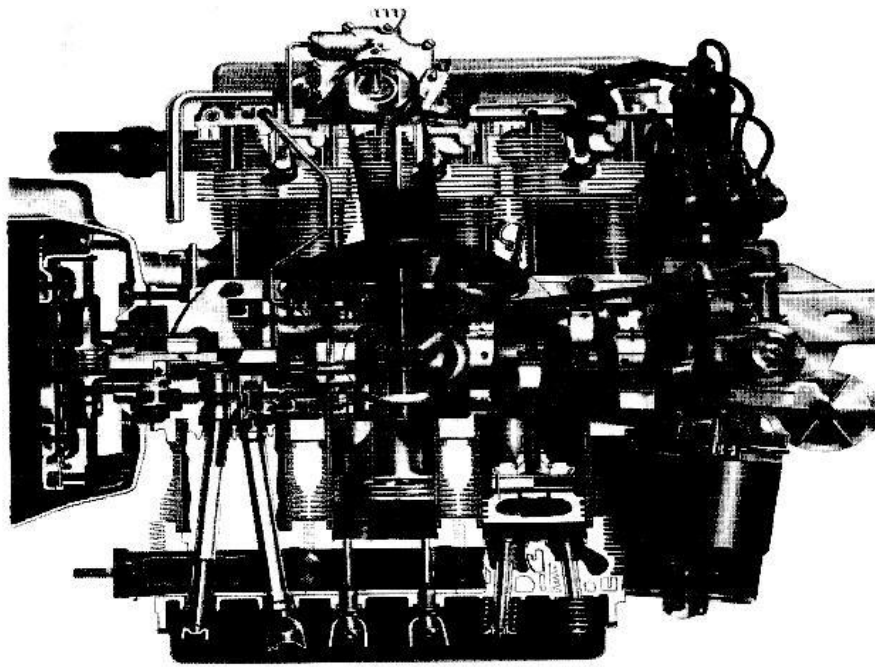
Board of Directors

One Year Term ☐ Jim Allen ☐ Other _____ ☐ Other _____

Two Year Term ☐ Jim Ori ☐ Other _____

Bring ballot to meeting, or email choices to Tim Mahler - prairieCapital@corvair.org Who will get them counted the ballots. NOTE: We do need one more candidate for the Board. Thank you.

The Flat Six



**Prairie Capital
Corvair Association**



**Prairie Capital
Corvair Association
P.O. Box 454
Pawnee, IL 62558**