

## Prairie Capital Corvair Association

P.O. Box 454  
Pawnee, Illinois 62558

# The Flat Six

October 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

Writing this column early in the month - because I expect to be on the road running again near the end of the month. It's a form of therapy. I enjoy watching my grand nephew run cross country too. Always fun to watch the younger generation enjoy sports - or the Corvair (old car) hobby.

Hopefully, by the time the editor finishes the newsletter, there will be a full slate of candidates to lead PCCA into 2026. My term as president is set to end this year. I have been at the helm for two years this go round. Time another president for a year or two. I'll continue as the slated secretary cause I take notes regardless.

The October tour to Atlanta Illinois has been POSTPONED until the Spring. Why? Partly because of low responses to who was going to attend BUT mostly because the tour lead (me) wanted to see his nephew run Cross Country Sectionals that day. I can visit museums anytime, but only get to see kin run a few times. Atlanta features some interesting museums, visit solo if you're in the area.

The weather is great outside. Get your Corvair out and drive the neighborhood, attend a cruise or just give it a bath. The SOS show had three or four individuals talk to the Corvair owners showing their Corvairs. Each got some PCCA info and I think two if not three new members may be in the works. If we aren't in view of the public, the public doesn't know we exist. So wash you Corvair along a busy street, you may have trouble finishing the process because of all the sightseers asking questions, but what a fun problem to have.



A 1968 and 1962 Fitch Sprint picture is from 2003.

# Calendar of Events - 2025

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



Sept 26-28, 2025      Route 66 Mother Road Festival. Downtown Springfield IL  
Cruise Friday night, Car Show Saturday and Sunday.  
Info: [WWW.route66fest.com](http://WWW.route66fest.com)

**October 11, 2025**      **PCCA Fall tour to Atlanta Illinois - POSTPONED**  
POSTPONED  
Will try to arrange a date in the Spring when hopefully more members will be able to attend – OR we may decide to go somewhere else – Send your thoughts to the PCCA board - or to Chris Hall or Tim Mahler. Let us know. We will try to make it happen.

October 18, 2025      Fall Festival and Car Show - ROCHESTER, Illinois.  
Gates open 8am, judging noon, awards 4pm    Entry fee \$20(show) or \$15 (Display)

**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.

December 13      Usual date for PCCA Christmas Luncheon – need location – restaurant. Ideas?  
Backup plan is to meet at the MCL Cafeteria at 1:00pm. Need to do something “fun” this year. Put your holiday thinking caps on.

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

Cool Cruisers Event Schedule, full sched on internet <https://coolcruisersclub.com/car-show-calendar/>  
Sunday, October 5, 2025 1-4:00 pm at Motorheads, Springfield - 600 Toronto Rd

**CPF Corvair Museum Hours**      Should be posted at the museum, may change,  
Saturday, October 4, 2025      10 AM to 4 PM      Sunday, October 5, 2025      10 AM to 4 PM



Joe Tex PCCA tour. Arranged by Bill and Shelby Berta back in 2003 pictured are Tim's 62 Fitch Sprint, Jim Allen's maroon Coupe and Jerry McKenzie's well optioned 65 4 door. The first two have new owners.



# September – SOS Auto Show

The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SOS Vehicle show was held September 6 in downtown Springfield. 3 current SOS Members met at the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Walmart and caravan to the show so we could be parked as a group. All three were in the new Corvair 65-69 class (CR-2) which made it easier for the judges later in the day.

One other Corvair was present - a white 64 Corvair (Class CR-1) owned by Gary and Sharon Clark of Springfield. Yes, they received several invitations to join PCCA and may. It is a very nice convertible which may be getting a new top - or at least a different colored top. The Mrs would prefer a black top with the red interior. OK. The 64 won first in its class.

Two other potential new members also talked to Jim Collier and I near the late model Corvair later in the day. Both received invitations to PCCA. The gentleman who just purchased a 61 Loadside from Western Missouri is likely to join the club soon. The Loadside is a nicely restored car that will be great on the show/cruise circuit even if its utility back in the day was dubious versus the Rampside. He was interested to learn just how rare (low production numbers) that the Loadside had (2,475 in 61 and just 369 in 1962 before being discontinued.)

Jim and Beulah Collier's marooned, AC'd 1965 Monza Coupe won the CR-2 Corvair class. Jim has maintained the corvair quite well over the years. I learned that Larry Claypool was the mechanic to install the Factory AC on Jim's Corvair. The AC Condenser is the 66 style which sites up against the fire wall vs the 65 style which dominated the top of the engine.

Tom and Carlene's 66 Monza convertible should have received 2<sup>nd</sup> place by my notes. They went home early to attend to their grandkids. When Tom arrived, show volunteers thought it was his Corvair leaving a trail of oil on the roadway. It wasn't. The oil trail proceeded the Corvairs by at least 21 vehicles. Now, Tom's Corvair does have an oil leak, it's exact location is still being investigated (Oil pan or top cover are the prime suspects) The amount of oil under the car was minimal, I checked.

Tim Mahler showed his 66 Fitch Sprint Coupe, red, Corsa trim and received third place. Tim's car older restoration is definitely showing its age, but it is still a lot of fun to drive. Jim Allen rebuilt the Sprint's engine a few years ago, which adds to its fun to drive characteristics.

Jim Allen was slated to attend but Bernie took a misstep and hurt her knee. Health first. Jim had volunteered to be a judge this year along with Brian Nicolson and Chief Judge Mike Hall. Tim volunteered to take his place. First time I have helped judged the SOS Show in 25 years. I should have done it sooner. I was teamed up with Brian and the judging went very smoothly. Consider volunteering yourself – whether at this show, another



Gary Clark's 64 white convertible



Tom Curry's 1966 red convertible



Jim Collier's 1965 AC coupe



show or CORSA Concours. There is a lot to be learned by being a judge especially what to look for when prepping your car for a show.

Overall, the show handed out 212 car numbers which included a dozen or so motorcycles and 2 tractors (both by young exhibitors - high school I think) It was a nice show and the weather was ideal, 70s with partly cloudy skies. The Boy Scouts had their "food truck" on site and the visitor center was open so there was no need for smelly potta-potties. A great day.

Below are some of the editor's favorite cars at the Sos show



Tim Mahler's 66 Fitch Sprint



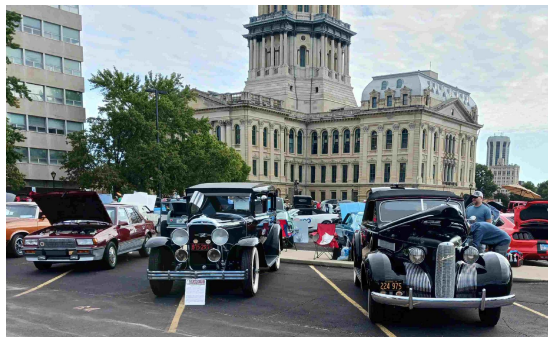
From Russia, 1969 Moskvich 408E, imported to US in 1014



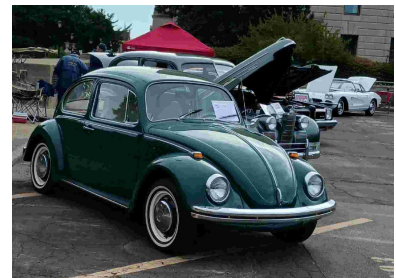
A 72 Buick Riviera - such a long hood



1914 Model T oldest car at show



The big cars from that golden era



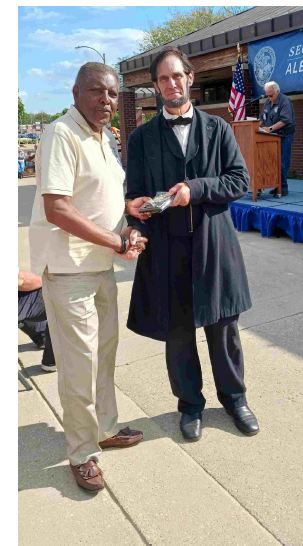
Well of course, a VW Beetle



Rich Grooms MG



An innovative way to show one's underside - make part of the bed liftable to show the workings.





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.

This story was posted back on August 4, 2025 on John Fitch’s birthday. Oddly, it is also my day of birth (many years later). I owned two documented Fitch Sprints - One I bought from Bill Pierson, a 1962 Sprint (pictured below new owner), the other came from Juneau Alaska - a 1968 Sprint. I sold both to the gentlemen who bought the Fitch Phoenix so they are in good hands. Like all things, occasionally I do miss them. Robert Landers has a 65 Sprint with most if not all the Sprint Options.

# Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair

By Eva McGuire Corvair Historian/Creator Meet the Makers of the Chevrolet Corvair

THIS DAY IN CORVAIR HISTORY...(AUGUST 4, 1917) John Cooper Fitch was born. John Fitch is famously known for modifying early and late model Corvairs into "Fitch Sprints" and creating the one of a kind Corvair based 1966 "Fitch Phoenix." Fitch was a former race car driver and also the first American to successfully race vehicles in Europe in post war era. He was also an engineer, consultant to General Motors, former Corvette test driver, first general manager of the Lime Rock Park race track, and a WW2 P-51 pilot who had a fascination and love for these air-cooled Corvairs ever since they came out (even test driving some prototypes in 1959).

Fitch developed engine, chassis and body modifications to convert Corvairs into looking like a European race car (at a far lesser cost) in what he called a “Fitch Sprint.” He offered a Spring Kit accessory package where he installed and sold these items through his repair workshop in Falls Village, Connecticut, or at an authorized Chevrolet dealer. You could purchase the Spring Kit and accessories separately for personal installation, but the Fitch Sprints that have the original sales paperwork for the conversion from Fitch's shop may have a greater value versus those who just mail ordered and added items to their Corvair.

One of the notable visible options on a Fitch Sprint was the “Ventop,” a fiberglass overlay for the C-pillars and rear of the roof that gave the car a flying buttress profile. Other items includes upgrades to the shock absorbers and springs, adjustments to the wheel alignment, quicker steering ratio, alloy wheel, metallic brake linings, wood rimmed steering wheel (leather available for an additional \$9.95) and other minor alterations which would convert an ordinary Corvair into a Fitch Sprint.



The Phoenix with John Fitch at the wheel



1962 - John Fitch and his 62 Fitch Sprint

Mr. Fitch was fortunate to live a long life enjoying his car creations until his death on October 31, 2012, at the age of 95. We continue to appreciate his Corvaire Fitch Sprints as they are now Vairy collectible automobiles. Enjoy the post photos showcasing examples of Fitch Sprints, the 1966 Fitch Phoenix, and vintage ads.

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

\*Please contact author for permission to reprint article in newsletters, magazines, or blogs, etc., at [corvailady@gmail.com](mailto:corvailady@gmail.com). Thank you!

For more detailed information regarding Fitch Sprint options, click on the highlighted link below:

[https://en.everybodywiki.com/Corvaire\\_Fitch\\_Sprint](https://en.everybodywiki.com/Corvaire_Fitch_Sprint)

For more detailed information regarding the Fitch Phoenix, click on the highlight article link below (includes an interview with John Fitch):

<https://www.autoevolution.com/.../fitch-phoenix-the...>



1962 Corvaire Monza Fitch Sprint Bryan McCarthy of Bearded Mug Media

1962 Fitch Sprint with window treatment - this is probably the only Sprint with that reduced glare window treatment. Corvaire was restored and owned by Bill Pierson years ago.



1965 Corvaire Corsa Fitch Sprint Bryan McCarthy of Bearded Mug Media

Rear view of a 1965 Fitch Sprint

**FASTBACK 904 VENTOP OPTIONS**

For a striking addition to the '65 Corvaire coupe, aside from the stunning new appearance which the long sweeping lines of the FASTBACK create, it shades the rear window and rear passenger seat from the sun. The double roof thickness forms an insulated air layer to further cool the car interior. The conformation of the Fastback closely resembles the new road-racing championship cars — the Porsche 904 and the Ferrari 275 LM, and achieves the same efficient air flow and high speed stability for the Corvaire. Creates a truly distinctive car for the individual.

KIT	INSTALLED
\$89.50 Ready to paint. * Ready to paint and install.	\$89.50
\$102.00 Painted Black Satin, to go with any color. Ready to install.*	\$102.00
\$102.00 Painted Black Satin, with Stripping painted at John Fitch & Co.. Stripping to be done at local paint shop at extra charge. *	\$125.00

The bottom Fitch looks like the demo Sprint now in the National Corvaire Museum



Robert Landers enjoying his 1965 Sprint at the VIR road course back in 2002

**CORVAIRE**  
**THE ONLY WAY TO GO!!**

# PCCA Elections – for 2026

Below is the slate for PCCA officers and board members that I have been able to confirm. Filling the treasurer position has been problematic even though it is not that difficult. Members are getting older and moving to warming climes which is part of the problem. Please consider volunteering to be an officer or board member even if the slate is full. The club is in need of new people to lead us for the next year or three. Send Tim an email or a text message or give him a call. Please. 217-793-3821 email [prairiecapital@corvair.org](mailto:prairiecapital@corvair.org) The Elections will be held at the November meeting for the 2026 calendar year.

The ballot will be in the November Newsletter, as a separate email to members or both.

Tentative Slate thus far –      President - Chris Hall                      VP - Brian Nicholson  
   Treasurer - Mike Hall                      Secretary – Tim Mahler  
Board - Shelby Berta is the current 2 year person.  
         Jim Ori (Springfield)   Jim Allen (Peoria area)   Looking for one more

## **PCCA meeting notes for September 6, 2025. Submitted by acting secretary Tim Mahler**

PCCA did not have sufficient members available to reach a quorum. We had 4 members plus 1 officer showing their Corvairs. But Mike Hall and Brian Nicholson, also present, were unavailable to up the number of members for a meeting. Mike and Brian are heavily involved in making the SOS Vehicle show happen so were quite busy.

Tim did go around asking those members present if they were interested in doing the October 11 road tour to Atlanta Illinois. He received 3 maybes because the members did not know what other possible scheduling conflicts may exist. Tim sent a club list email asking cause he too has alternatives for that date if he doesn't lead the tour.

Treasurer Glen Rittenhouse did send a Treasurer Report. Beginning Checking balance was \$4,494.93 (July 10, 2025), Savings \$5.00 and Cash on Hand \$170.13 for an total ending balance September 6, 2025 of \$4,670.06/ There was no activity against any of the accounts. (Editor notes that a newsletter expense was finally sent to Glen after this report was produced. Editor needed more postage stamps \$78 for 100 which will be reflected in the next treasurer's report).



2000 Covered Bridge Tour, eastern Indiana - PCCA and CCC joint tour. Plenty of first generation Corvairs on this tour

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 203.

## THE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SERIES Mike Dawson

### SAE Papers: Corvair

At the annual meetings of the Society of Automotive Engineers in January, 1960, 1961 and 1962, GM presented technical reports on the development of the Corvair car, the FC series and the Corvair Spyder ('62). If you have not looked through these fascinating documents, you should add a reprinted copy to your next order from Clark's' Corvair Parts. The part number is C5477 and has the incredible price of \$0.75. Other sources for the papers are significantly higher and I could not readily find an on line copy to download free. There are approximately 75 pages depending on how it was copied.

While researching an item recently in those papers I again got caught up in the development history, and I read it all again. Below are a just few notes that I kept just as a tease for those of you who have not read them before.

#### 1960 Engine

Lifter and push-rod rotation is assured by means of spherical face lifters running in bores which are angled at 1-4 minutes. (bore angle was changed in 1964 with the new camshafts)

Valve seats were shrink fitted 0.002 – 0.004.

#### Engine Weights Comparison:

	Corvair	Chevrolet 6 Cylinder
Bare Engine	256	540
Cooling	25.1	78.7
Induction	15.9	12.9
Accessories	32.9	52.9
Exhaust System	18.7	20.8
	348.6	705.3

Total Aluminum is 92 pounds (28%) with a volume of 52%

**The Powerglide transaxle** was required to complete 100 WOT low to reverse shifts on dry pavement with no failure. At the beginning of Corvair production there had been 6,800,000 Powerglide units already in service with estimated mileage over two hundred thirty five billion miles.

And for those that love technical charts and data there is lots of info on things like Suspension Geometry, Front Anti-Dive, Rear Anti-Lift, and charts like the one showing the relationship of I.M.E.P. to head temperature. I had to look that one up: Indicated Mean Effective Pressure.

**FC series vehicles** (vans in particular) were totally unacceptable when completed and test driven in windy conditions. Tire suppliers came up with a new tire just for the FC series, designated 7.00-14 SP; (Special Purpose) low profile and was the beginning of low profile tires across other series.



The FC series were specifically designed to be able to fit in to a standard home garage, which cancels the much later claim that vans such as the Caravan were the first van designed for home garages.

**Turbo Engine** papers are full of turbo specific changes to the Corvair engine, such as the matched control system of air cleaner, special muffler and pressure retard that controlled boost, eliminating the need for knock sensors and waste gates (unless you autocross with the air cleaner and muffler removed, allowing uncontrolled boost).

The turbine/compressor spins up to 80,000 rpm.

The turbo engine was designed for 99 octane gasoline available in 1962.



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

Very nice 1965 coupe sold for \$20,250. Well optioned, stock maintained. Fairly priced

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

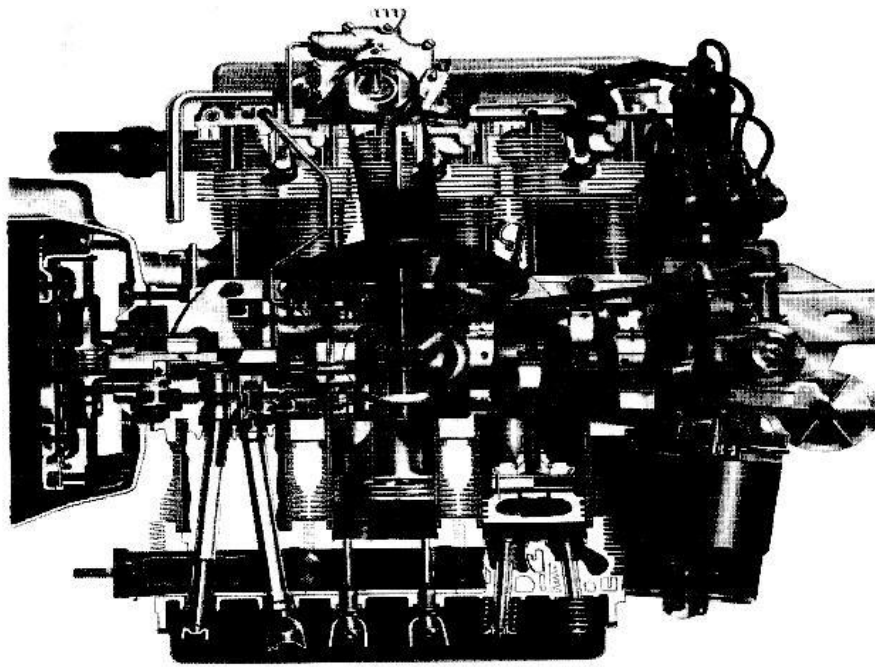
Cars, Corvair and other \_\_\_\_\_

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

# The Flat Six



**Prairie Capital  
Corvair Association**



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