

Postcards from the Road



Over 50 years ago, Corvairs were nearly ubiquitous on U.S. roads. They were Chevrolets during a period when Chevrolet was the top-selling nameplate in the country. More than 1.8 million Corvairs were sold – 329,000 in 1961 alone. Consider that the top-selling passenger car of 2019, the Toyota Camry, sold 336,978 units that year, so a 1961 Corvair was at one time as prevalent on the road as a 2019 Camry is today.

Which is why postcards from the period often include Corvair in random street scenes. Corvairs appear in vintage postcards for motels, restaurants, resorts, roadside attractions, government building, car dealerships, historical sites and more, all by happenstance.

I've collected images of nearly 200 different ones. You'll see just a few of them scattered throughout this issue.
 –Bob Marlow

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, Long Lake, MN 55356. 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.

How I Got Started

Editor's Note: Club secretary David Malcolm has been asking members to submit stories of how they got started in Corvairs. Here's the next installment:

by Joe Maurella

In the summer of 1968, I decided to sell my '63 Fiat 600D. It had suicide doors, 4-speed transmission, 25 horsepower, and as the owner's manual suggested, if it could not climb a hill, try going up in reverse.



It was much smaller and lighter than a VW Beetle. During a year of parking the Fiat on the college campus, it was often carried by pranksters and placed in various locations. I found it on top of the auditorium steps, on the football field, and even when I parked it on the street, it was picked up and turned 180 degrees around.

I needed a bigger and heavier car.

I saw a '64 yellow convertible, black interior, 4-speed Corvair Spyder for sale. I never thought of it as an early or late model. It looked like Ken Schiffner's car (Remember him? Didn't think so... sorry, Ken). It was exactly what I wanted. An

economy vehicle that would stay put when I parked it at college. (Not to mention that it was a convertible and turbocharged).

I bought it for \$400. After the transaction was finalized, (I remember this plain as day) the seller wished me good luck and said "I topped off the tank and you are good to go." I was so excited. It was like Christmas in July. I just had to take it out for a spin. I found myself cruising down the Garden State Parkway with the wind in my hair and not a care in the world.

After 20 miles or so, a sputter, followed by another sputter, and then nothing, as the generator warning light lit the dash. I coasted to the shoulder of the road. A Good Samaritan stopped to help. He quickly assessed the problem and said I was out of gas. But how could this be?, I thought. It was just topped off. He told me he once had the same problem... a faulty gas gauge that always read full.

He gave me a ride to a gas station. There I found an empty 5 gallon oil can and filled it with gas (\$0.38/gal). He drove me back to my car, I put the gas in the tank, turned the key, and the car fired up.

As I drove home I thought of my good, bad and ugly experiences. The good, a stopper-by that helped me with my misfortune and would only accept a thankful handshake. The bad, how the seller misled me with having a full tank of gas. And the toll attendant. Yes the toll attendant. As I pulled away from his toll booth, I saw in my rear view mirror that I left him in a billowing cloud of thick oil smoke. Now that was ugly!

It was a simple time and enjoying life was all that mattered. Yep, I was "Hooked on Corvairs."

Send us your "How I Got Started" story!

On the cover page: A postcard showing a late model 2-door parked in front of The Gables Restaurant in Marshall, Texas, circa 1970.

At right, a 1960s postcard for Glenn's Diner in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with an early model 2-door parked out front.



NJACE Treasurer's Report Full Year 2020

Treasurer's Comments: 2020 was an extraordinary year, and many events had to be cancelled. Dues income was down from the previous year (\$1,531.00 vs \$1,085.00) but that can be explained by member fluctuation and people choosing to renew for 1 or 2 years.

We spent way less on food; there were only three monthly breakfast drawings, fewer tech sessions and no summer picnic. The entertainment for the holiday party was much less expensive. The NECC, which has been using our Post Office Box for years, is now sharing the cost with us.

Because of all of this, the loss of \$1,363.87 in 2019 became a gain of \$712.39 in 2020. Due to the lack of club activity in 2020, all members in good standing as of December 2020 will have their membership extended by one year, so no dues for 2021, except for new members joining in 2021.

Checking Balance
as of January 1, 2020 \$2,444.94

Income:

Dues	\$1,085.00	
Checking Interest	1.54	
Parts Donations	45.00	
Parts Auction (net)	431.44	
	<u>\$1,562.98</u>	
		+ \$1,562.98

Expenses:

Holiday Party(net)	\$ 635.00	
Food & Parties (net)	97.00	
Post Office Box rent	108.00	
State filing fee	30.50	
NECC Dues	20.00	
CORSA fee	35.00	
	<u>\$ 925.50</u>	

Checking Balance
as of December 31, 2020 - \$ 925.50
\$3,082.42

CD Balance
as of January 1, 2020 \$4,926.35

CD Interest for the year + 74.91
\$5,001.26

CD Balance
as of December 31, 2020 \$5,001.26

Total in all accounts as of January 1, 2020	\$7,371.29
Total in all accounts as of December 31, 2020	<u>\$8,083.68</u>
Operating Gain for 2020	<u>+ \$ 712.39</u>

What does "net" mean? It means that the event(s) had both income and outlays, and that I've combined them. So, for 2020:

The Holiday Party:

We collected \$1,485.00 from the attendees. Our outlay was \$1,670.00 for the caterer and \$450.00 for the entertainment, so the cost to the club was \$635.00.

The Parts Auction:

Income from commission and donations totaled \$670.00. Food for the event (coffee, donuts and drinks) came to \$238.56, so the club netted \$431.44. (Some food and supplies were also donated and are not accounted for.)

Food & Parties (excluding the Holiday Party and Parts auction):

In 2020 we spent \$50.00 on pizza and drinks for a single tech session (about typical for a tech session) and \$47.00 on three breakfast drawing (remember those?) for a total of \$97.00. It's really an expense, not a net, but that is the breakdown. I still have the heading of "Food & Parties" because we used to put all of the food items in the category, before I started breaking out the Holiday Party, Parts Auction and summer picnic separately.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Tim Schwartz, Treasurer*

In Aberdeen, Washington, around 1964 or so, a postcard photographer captured two Corvairs in a single shot (along with a cool 1930s car entering the intersection from the left):





A Game for our Zoom Meeting

During last month's Zoom meeting we had some fun with a game we called "Which Came First." NJACE members are a knowledgeable bunch when it comes to Corvairs, as very few incorrect answers were given.

During this month's Zoom meeting, to take place on Saturday, March 6, we're going to have a different game: "Corvair Jeopardy."

Each member will, in turn, be given a Corvair-related "answer" and must provide the correct "question." For example, for the answer "5½ by 13" the question would be "What size were the wheels on Corvair cars?"

Just like last month you'll get a point for each correct "question" and nothing for each wrong one but it will all be for fun because no one will be keeping score and there are no prizes or penalties.

Our Zoom meeting on the 6th will also include our first business meeting of the year, but as we all know our business meetings are fairly informal and never lengthy.

So join us online via Zoom at 9:00 AM on Saturday, March 6. We'll send out the meeting link a few days beforehand.

I Spy With My Little Eye...

Part of the fun with vintage postcards is spotting other interesting cars in the images. For example, this postcard of a street scene in Brattleboro, Vermont, shows not only a Corvair but also a first-generation Willys Jeepster in the street and a 1958 Edsel parked waay down the block...



In many of the postcards it's hard to see the Corvair, and it's a little bit like the game of "Where's Waldo." Consider this one, depicting the Houston Astrodome and much of its parking lot. There is both a '65 2-door and a Greenbrier in the shot.

Make Plans for the Swap Meet!

What: NJACE All-Corvair Spring Swap Meet

When: Saturday, May 1, 2021, 9 AM - 3 PM,
rain or shine!

Where: Outdoors at the New Beginnings Bible
Church, 104 Bartley Flanders Rd, Flanders,
NJ 07836



No vendor fee! No admission charge!
(Donations will be accepted for the benefit of the
church.)

Sellers, reserve your space (it's free!) by
sending your name, phone number, and email
address to club Secretary David Malcolm at
david.s.malcolm@verizon.net.

Extra Attractions: Music – Door prizes –
50-50 raffle – Refreshments on site. Enter the
best/funniest/ugliest mask contest!

All applicable COVID protocols will be
enforced. Wear a mask and practice social
distancing. Persons not complying will be asked
to leave.

To download our flyer, visit
<http://www.corvair.org/chapters/njace>

ZOOM with us



Our February Zoom breakfast will take place
on **Saturday, March 6, at 9:00 AM**. You
can join on your computer, tablet, or
smartphone.

This month's meeting will include a formal
business meeting (typically lasting less than ten
minutes) followed by a "Corvair Jeopardy" game
as explained on Page 5.

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.

Join us! Saturday, March 6, 9:00 AM.

NJACE Officers for 2021

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Have You Seen This?



Although the addition of new items to our “classified ads” web site, <http://garagekey.blogspot.com/>, has slowed, it has not stopped. Recent additions include items that are available for immediate purchase or for purchase at our Spring Swap Meet on May 1st.

Wheelcovers and custom wheels, for example. Check out the selection of wheels and tires under the “Used Parts” tab on the site.



While there, check out the cars and the new parts, too!

Have a Corvair or something Corvair-related to sell? Placing an ad on the site is FREE. Just send good photos and complete description to us at vairtec@optimum.net.

CANCELED

In 2020 it became necessary to postpone the annual CORSA convention, set to take place in San Diego, to this year. Of course this was due to the pandemic, but it was the first convention postponement since annual conventions began in 1971.

Unfortunately, on February 15 of this year, the CORSA Board made the difficult but correct decision to cancel the convention entirely. Why? Well, despite progress with vaccines the pandemic is still very much with us. The hotel in San Diego at which the convention was to take place has been closed to the public for many months and is being used to house health workers.

While the hotel has indicated that it intends to re-open on July 1, large gatherings such as any convention are still restricted or prohibited in San Diego County, with no indication as to when such conditions may be lifted. Simply put, it became obvious to the Board that moving ahead with the convention was neither prudent nor feasible.

But there may be a somewhat silver lining. At this

point, the mini-convention planned for May in Springfield, Illinois, is still a ‘go’ and the organizers have extended the schedule and added events that happen typically at the annual convention. Planning is being done with COVID protocols taken into account, such as limits on indoor activities.

There are still aspects of the mini-convention which in this writer’s view are still optimistic if not ill-advised, such as a banquet, but there is plenty to be enjoyed in socially-distant outdoor settings. Among them a car show, a swap meet, an autocross, a road rally, and a very distinctive event: A Corvair “fly-in” for Corvair powered airplanes at a nearby airport. Organized by William Wynne, who is the authority for adapting Corvair engines for aviation use, plans call for displays of aircraft power plants and, weather permitting, flight demonstrations.

Information on the Illinois event can be found on the CORSA web site, <https://www.corvair.org/>.

So, what about future conventions? With the cancellation of the San Diego event, the next CORSA convention is set to take place near Atlanta, Georgia, next year. Everyone is optimistic that circumstances will permit the event to go forward by that time. 2023 will see the convention move to Wisconsin, and for 2024 a return to the west coast is planned – perhaps right back in San Diego.

–Bob Marlow



In this postcard image, a Greenbrier stops at Stuckey's, a chain of roadside convenience stores that appeared in the Southeastern states well before the term "convenience store" was a common phrase. Stuckey's were a staple of American roads during the Corvair's production years.

Stuckey's originated in the early 1930s in Georgia when W.S. Stuckey, Sr., had a successful pecan harvest from the family orchard and set up a shed alongside the road. Suffice to say, sales were good.

In 1937, Stuckey constructed his first "real" store. Stuckey's wife, Ethel, created a variety of homemade pecan candies, including pecan log rolls. This first Stuckey's shop added a restaurant, then a novelty section, and then gas pumps. The final addition was a teal blue roof which would later become the company's trademark. Soon Stuckey's was opening additional stores in Georgia and Florida.

After World War II, as the post-war baby boom flourished and families undertook more long-distance auto travel, Stuckey's continued to grow. The stores were constructed along major highways and frequently were paired with Texaco gas stations, as well as restaurants and restrooms. Stuckey's built a candy factory to supply what eventually became more than 350 Stuckey's stores.

Concentrated in the southeast, southwest, and midwest, Stuckey's could be found as far northeast as Connecticut, and as far west as Oregon.

The company's 350+ locations dwindled to fewer than 75 in the late 1970s under new corporate ownership. The growth of the interstate highway system played a role in the decline, as the new roads bypassed the traditional Stuckey's locations.

But the company later returned to family ownership and there has been a bit of a rebound, because today Stuckey's has over 115 franchise stores in 17 states. Ethel "Stephanie" Stuckey, granddaughter of W.S. Stuckey, Sr., is the CEO.

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, March 6**, at 9:00 AM. This month's Zoom session will include a brief business meeting and a "Corvair Jeopardy" game.

Mark your calendar for **Saturday, May 1**, for our first planned in-person event of 2021, the Spring Swap Meet in Flanders.

As always, watch our Facebook page, our email messages, and this monthly newsletter for updates.

Postcards such as those seen in this issue are often found in antique shops and estate sales, and I've found many of them online. When I find them online I just cheat and download the online images.

—Bob Marlow