

# Corvair Chatter



## Meetings (4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays)

### Next meeting:

- Thursday, June 25 2026
- 5:30pm Social / 7:00 pm Meeting
- Brookfields Restaurant  
4343 Madison Ave.,  
Sacramento, CA (at Highway 80)

## Membership Dues 2026:

Membership Dues of \$20 are due annually in January.

Venmo:



**Cash/Checks:** Send to Dean James  
Make checks payable to CCRC

Please contact CCRC Treasurer Jim Kindley for additional questions.

## Features

1. Message From the President
- 2-3. Latest CCRC News – Mtg Minutes
4. Information
5. Events & Activities
- 6-8. Article

## Board Members

<b>President</b> .....	John Heiser
<b>Vice President</b> .....	Chris Medeiros
<b>Secretary</b> .....	Laurie Daniels
<b>Membership / Web</b>	Dean James
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	Jim Kindley
<b>Sales &amp; Acquisition</b>	Wes Nicholas
<b>Newsletter Editor</b> ...	Laurie Daniels
<b>Historian/Photos</b> ....	Michael Nyberg

## Finding Us

[www.northern-california-corvairs.com](http://www.northern-california-corvairs.com)

Facebook; [Classic Corvairs of River City](#)

Instagram; [classiccorvairs\\_rivercity](#)

(Maintained by: Dean James)



**WEBSITE QR CODE**

## Message From The CCRC President

Greetings fellow Club members and friends: Hope everyone is doing well and hope everyone is looking forward to this years Club activities, tours and events. The Plymouth Cooper Wine Tour was a blast! Great turn out and the club decided to have lunch at another winery. What a beautiful day, nice weather and thank you all for organizing and attending this tour!

The Clubs Picnic BBQ has been rescheduled with a proposal to go to Coloma State Park. Will discuss at this months Club meeting. Will also discuss the upcoming tour to Sutter Creek including a tour of the Knight Foundry. This Foundry is the last water-powered foundry and machine shop and a National Historical Mechanical Engineering Landmark. Second Saturday tours include the docent's firing up the forges, demonstrations of the machinery and casting.

For those that like to have their birthday announced in the Club newsletter, Please let us know the month and day. Our membership roster has missing dates.

For those that we didn't list in the previous newsletters,

## **Happy Birthday!**

Cheers and see you at the club meeting on the 25th.

John



# Latest CCRC News

## Meeting Minutes: May 28, 2026, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm by President, John Heiser.

Minutes of meeting on April 23, 2026, as presented in the newsletter, were unanimously approved.

**President's report** by President John Heiser:

- Club shirts and hats available for purchase at cost before and after the meeting from John Heiser. Members receive 2 free T-shirts after attending 2 meetings. Cost for items is as follows:
  - T-shirts \$21
  - Henley shirts \$29
  - Crew neck shirts \$23
  - Hats \$16

**Treasurer's report** by Jim Kindley for April, 2026.

**Sales and acquisitions report** by Wes Nicholas. CCRC website has inventory of parts for sale.

**Membership report** by Dean James: 48 members paid to date for 2026. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2026, please pay Dean James or Jim Kindley ASAP.

**Vice-President's report** by John Heiser (Chris Medeiros absent):

5/11 - The American River College (ARC) Auto Tech Fundraiser and BBQ was a great event with a lot of people in attendance. The facilities are impressive – like a dealership, with training facilities for SMOG, transmissions, alignments, and other general automotive repairs. The lifts and tools are state of the art, and the program is highly professional. CCRC had five or six Corvairs in attendance. It is a great technical school, available for a fraction of the cost of private auto tech schools. Congratulations to Ben French and his team.

The Delta Cruise was enjoyed by a nice group of three Corvairs.

CORSA is planning for the 2028 Convention in Sacramento, and will need support with manpower and money. The AutoCross will need timing equipment (already secured), cones, staff for timed rallies and tours.

6/6 – BBQ/Picnic will be a pop-up event at Miller Park (Sunset and Kenneth), Citrus Heights. There are tables and BBQ pits available.

**New Activities and Events: See pages 5**

# **Latest CCRC News (cont.)**

## **Ongoing events:**

### **LOCAL CARS & COFFEE EVENTS**

- Sacramento Hollywood Park Auto Club-Classic Cars meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 10:00 am at Leonardo Da Vinci School, 4701 Joaquin Wy, Sacramento.
- Carmichael Bel Air Sunday Cars N Coffee, meets every Sunday, 7:00 am to 10:00 am at 4005 Manzanita Ave., at the intersection of Fair Oaks Blvd. and Manzanita Ave., and near the corner of Cypress
- Folsom Cars and Coffee – Town Center, El Dorado Hills, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- Grass Valley Cars & Coffee, 7:00 am to 10:00 am, Saturdays at Target parking lot, West McKnight Way and Highway 49.

**Old Business:** None

### **New Business:**

- Ironstone Concours d'Elegance – September 26, 2026 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Ironstone Vineyards, 1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys, CA. Registration fee is \$125.00 which includes entrance and lunch tickets for 2. CCRC will reimburse \$75.00 per car that shows up.
- Website additions/corrections
- Someone having dinner at Brookfields popped his head in to let the membership know about a '63 Corvair and trailer available for sale for \$7,000 at Imperial RV Park, 5935 Auburn Blvd., Citrus Heights.

### **Tech Presentation:**

Larry Forman led a discussion about a diesel pusher that cost \$1,500 to replace. He explained that a steering pump is difficult to get out, and requires a special tool. However, a low-cost alternative is an offset extension wrench (\$40.00 on Amazon), allowing an adapter attached to the wrench to reach a remote bolt. He suggested it might also work on connector rods.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

# Information

## Corvair Resources (Online)

Q&A - [www.corvaircenter.com](http://www.corvaircenter.com)  
[www.corvairforum.com](http://www.corvairforum.com)  
Parts - [www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com) (Clark's)  
[www.californiacorvairparts.com](http://www.californiacorvairparts.com)  
[www.mikescorvairparts.com](http://www.mikescorvairparts.com)  
[www.rockauto.com](http://www.rockauto.com)  
Sale - [www.jaxed.com](http://www.jaxed.com)  
[www.corvairtrader.com](http://www.corvairtrader.com) (Parts & Sales)  
Resources –  
<https://www.corvair.org/chapters/corvanatics>  
Car Building – <http://autoexer.skiblack.com>  
Fun-[www.youtube.com/user/davemotohead1](http://www.youtube.com/user/davemotohead1) /  
[www.deansgarage.com](http://www.deansgarage.com)

## CCRC CLUB MEMBER ASSISTANCE:

In order to get more cars on the road, the club leadership is offering assistance to members who have Corvairs that need help to get them running. This help will be in the form of technical expertise, mechanic labor, and possible financial assistance. If you have a Corvair that needs work, **contact the Corvair Club at [ClassicCorvairs@gmail.com](mailto:ClassicCorvairs@gmail.com)** and give details on what you require in the way of assistance.

**\*A committee will review the requests and select the best candidates. Remember the goal is to get more Corvairs at our club events. Those chosen will be expected to participate and help the club increase the number of cars that we put on display.**

## LET US HEAR FROM YOU:

**CORVAIR CHATTER Newsletter** - Members can write articles and send photos and articles they wish to have included in the newsletter. Email to Laurie Daniels at [lauriedanielsca@att.net](mailto:lauriedanielsca@att.net) or Wes Nicholas at [Nicholas.tds@gmail.com](mailto:Nicholas.tds@gmail.com)

**Club Activities** - You may have some great ideas for club activities. We want to hear them! Better yet, we'd like you to participate in the planning of your activity idea. Email ideas to Chris Medeiros at [cmedeiros@mac.com](mailto:cmedeiros@mac.com)

**Club T-Shirts & Hats** - Members attending 2 meetings receive 2 shirts for free. T-shirts and hats are also for sale \$21/shirt (\$23/shirt tall sizes) (Henley shirts are \$29). Hats are \$16.

## CLASSIFIED – Corvair Parts for Sale



-or- Click Here: [CCRC - Classified \(northern-california-corvairs.com\)](http://northern-california-corvairs.com)

## Welcome New Members

### Birthdays (Current & Upcoming)

#### June Birthdays:

Joe Aguirre Michael Brassil Russ Magee  
Paula Alves Catherine Eastburn  
Marie Higley Susan Peterson Susan Shoen

#### July Birthdays:

Dee Smirlis Sherry Lozano

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# Events & Activities

Full Calendar of Events available on <http://northern-california-corvairs.com>

## Ongoing Events:

**Sacramento Hollywood Park Auto Club -Classic Cars:** Meets every 3rd Sunday 10:00 am at Leonardo DaVinci School. CCRC Club Member started this gathering, so let's join in.

**Carmichael Bel Air Sunday Cars and Coffee.** 4005 Manzanita Avenue at the intersection of Fair Oaks Blvd and Manzanita Avenue near the corner of Cypress. Time: 7:30am to 10:00am.

**Folsom Cars and Coffee:** Saturdays -Town Center, El Dorado Hills. 7:00 am – 9:30 am.

**Red Bus Brewery:** Air-cooled drive-in gathering at Red Bus Brewery on Reading Street in Folsom –2nd Thursday of each month at 6pm. There will be specials on beverages and pizza.

**California Auto Museum:** See Jim Kindley-**FREE** tickets for members (1<sup>st</sup> come/1<sup>st</sup> serve-until gone).

## Current & Upcoming Events:

**JULY** TBD – California State Fair – CCRC Club Day

**AUGUST** 15 – Auburn Cruise Night – meet at In & Out Burger, Rocklin  
22 – CCRC Cruise – Cool Stop on Hot Night – evening at an ice cream shop  
TBD – SFBA/Valley Picnic at the Quarry in Fremont  
TBD – Vairs at The Vault – Napa – great food, wine and speakers

**SEPTEMBER** 11 – Auburn Cruise Night – meet at In & Our Burger, Rocklin  
12 – CCRC Cruise – Econo-Run  
26 – Ironstone Concours d'Elegance at Murphys, CA

**OCTOBER** 17 – CCRC Cruise – Sutter Creek, to include a scavenger hunt.  
TBD – Friday to Sunday – Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet

**NOVEMBER** 7 – CCRC Cruise – Care/Nursing Homes  
28 – CCRC Cruise – Apple Hill Tour

**DECEMBER** 6 – Christmas Dinner

**AND ADDITIONAL POP-UP EVENTS** on the spur of the moment by members – notify membership by email blast, and by putting the event on the website calendar!

# Chevrolet Corvair: Economy, excitement, extinction

Mostly unearned reputation stole the Chevrolet Corvair's promise

Mike Bumbeck



## A Sidewinder rocket engine is one way to test stability

In 1960 America, “compact car” meant a full-size car shrunken to fit on a 100-inch (or so) wheelbase. The 1960 Ford Falcon and slightly more revolutionary 1960 Plymouth Valiant, for example, both tucked the engine up front with a solid rear axle driving the rear wheels—just like their full-size Fairlane and Dodge Dart big brothers (yes, the Dart was a full-size car in 1960).

The Chevrolet Corvair was something else entirely. Hitting the road in 1959 as a 1960 model, the Corvair represented a sharp departure from domestic-automaker convention: An 80-hp, air-cooled aluminum flat-six engine ran behind a transaxle, way in the back, and the car featured unit-body construction and swing-axle rear suspension.

The Corvair was the future, or at least it looked a lot like the future.

As “compact” was synonymous with “thrift” in 1960, Chevrolet did a lot with a little. Cost for a two-door Corvair was about \$2,000 in '60 (which adds up to a little over \$16,000, adjusted for 2015 dollars), putting the Corvair then, as now, into economy-car territory.

Chevrolet opted for a rear-engine, rear-wheel-drive design to, in part, remove the intrusion created by the transmission tunnel in a conventional front-engine/rear-drive car (something the industry’s adoption of the front-engine, front-wheel-drive configuration would also solve), and Corvair’s versatile architecture was soon spun into a coupe, sedan, wagon and even van.



### '64 Monza Spyder

Sure, cost factors—along with the gnashing of accounting and engineering—resulted in a car that could have been better, but the Corvair drove into the world as it was. And at the time, it seemed to have a long, successful road ahead of it; production numbers topped 250,000 in '60.

Except for one little thing: The Corvair, like any rear-engine car, could, in fact, oversteer enough to get a driver not familiar with rear-engine driving dynamics in some rear-first trouble. Combine unexpected oversteer with a swing-axle independent rear suspension, and things could get ... surprising.

A factory recommendation of 15 psi front, 26 psi rear tire pressure was issued, but tire pressure warnings, as they so often do, went unheeded. An unfortunate lack of a standard front sway bar—economy-car cost-cutting, naturally—didn't help matters. And accidents happened.

Yet the public didn't seem to mind—at first. Production neared 340,000 in 1961 and 1962, and remained relatively strong beyond that as Chevrolet continued to refine the Corvair and shuffle the model range.

The Corvair was not conceived as a particularly sporty car; four-door Corvairs were the first off the line in 1960, followed by the two-door club coupe. The majority of 1960 cars were equipped with the optional two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission. But the introduction of the Falcon/Valiant-analogous Chevy II economy car in 1962 gave the Corvair room to move toward performance—a direction it was already drifting toward with the successful debut of the Corvair Monza concept at the 1960 Chicago Auto Show. And so what was launched as a versatile and economic platform for a new kind of economy car began to embody something different.



### 1962 Corvair 700 Series Station Wagon

This almost unintentional sportiness resulted in a more sorted Corvair suspension. A regular production option package with antiroll bar, stiffer springs and swing-axle travel limiters arrived in 1962. This became standard in 1964, along with a transverse rear-suspension camber compensator. Perhaps tellingly, a handling-improving camber compensator had been available via the aftermarket from 1960; aftermarket parts-giant EMPI likely foresaw the demand for this kit after manufacturing a similar setup for its sport-oriented customer base of Volkswagen drivers.

The sad end for the Corvair station wagon came in 1963, while the sport-packaged Corvairs continued to rise. But model-year improvements were more or less evolutionary until a major redesign for the 1965 model year—which came not long before the Nov. 30, 1965 release of a book, “Unsafe at Any Speed,” that notoriously called out the car by name. The first chapter of self-styled consumer advocate Ralph Nader’s text, titled “The Sporty Corvair—The One-Car Accident,” stated, in part, that the car was a public tragedy resulting from the supposedly secret world of automotive engineering.

But was the unsafe, widowmaker reputation of the Corvair wholly deserved? No—or at least, not entirely.

For one, any early ‘60s American compact car shared economy-class road dynamics with the early Corvair. Nothing from the Big Three in 1960 that was both compact and economical was built to travel nimbly at any great velocity; in 1972, a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study found that the Chevrolet was on par with its economy contemporaries in the handling department.