

# **The Denvair News**

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**Some of the RMC Corvairs parked at the Schakel spread 2019**

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# There's a new car in town

Andy Neilsen

In mid October of 2022, I was at the local watering hole enjoying a rather large beer and a burger with the usual suspects. On this particular evening, another Rocky Mountain CORSA member and his lovely wife joined us. Our guest casually mentioned he had a line on a 1965 Corvair 500 that ran but had been sitting for several years. There was some talk about buying the car and parting it out as a club function. This plan didn't sit right with me.

I got in touch with the member holding the details, who then put me in touch with the owner of the car in question. I spent an hour on the phone getting to know the owner of the car. It was indeed a '65, a 500 and 110/automatic with AM radio. She was the original owner, her mother bought it for her brand new when she was in nursing school. I assured her we would not part the car out or turn around and sell it for a profit. My plan was to daily it, as my job was about to become 100% work from home. All future miles would be pleasure drives and errands, with the occasional 5 mile commute for the lovely and talented Cherie.

The 500 looked pretty good in the photos so we decided that even if it needed a massive mechanical overhaul, it was going to come live with us.

My dad and I made the trip to the farthest corner of Castle Rock, CO to look at the car. It was even nicer than the pictures. Red on black interior, split bench seat, black 13" steel wheels, and raised white letter Goodyear Eagle ST tires that were every bit of 20 years old. We loaded it on a dolly and headed for some lunch at B-Man's BBQ in Sedalia, CO. From there we headed back to our home turf to unload the 500 and return the dolly. While my dad ran the dolly back, I dropped a battery into the tray while asking myself, "What could possibly go wrong?" and I hit the key. The engine cranked for a few seconds, then sprang into a reasonably stable but slightly fast and more than slightly stinky idle.

It lives!

A quick spin around the block revealed good brakes, a transmission that shifted 1-2 like it wanted to break my neck, and no surprises in the steering.

The carbs had been abused by someone with hams for hands so I got them tuned as well as I was able. Meanwhile, my dad sourced a good set from another club member and delivered them to Steve at Rear Engine Specialists in Golden, CO. While we waited for Steve to finish the carbs, I tweaked the original carbs, adjusted the timing, and fixed some vacuum leaks. One of the vacuum leaks had been causing the hard 1-2 shift.

Continued



Speaking of the 1-2 shift, I had never experienced a Powerglide and was assured that not only was it slow, but that I would likely get a ticket for for being an obstacle. To say that I was pleasantly surprised would be a gross understatement. It could use another gear between low and direct, but most of the time it has adequate acceleration and is even pleasantly punchy off of the line. My Mrs and I are both completely enamored with the tiny T handle shifter on the dashboard.

With the rebuilt carbs installed, cold starts are significantly better and idle is as smooth as it has ever been. It is not all roses though; there is excessive blow by, it leaks oil like that is its only job, and the exhaust has leaks so using the heat is literally putting everything on the line.

The 13" wheels have been replaced with a nice set of 14" turbine alloys, also sourced by my dad from another club member.

LED bulbs have replaced the archaic light emitting heaters in the turn signal housings and an electronic flasher has replaced the simple bi-metallic strip. The car has been my daily driver and has proven reliable to this point. We hope to address the engine's issues this spring. Stay tuned!

Andy Nielsen

# RMVR Fall Sprints

Eric Schakel

Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing is contracted with Pueblo Motorsports Park to conduct a vintage race weekend on September 9-10. The track is ten minutes west of I-25 off of Highway 50 on the north end of Pueblo. And as the Race Chair, "My Way" is to declare Corvair vehicles to be the featured marque. Ideally, we'd have a handful of vintage-legal Corvair race cars join the races, but I can only be sure that I'll have the Stinger (or the Ringer!) in the actual races. Jon Whiteley is on deck, too, but I can't speak for him.

Anyone who shows up Saturday, September 9 with a Corvair on Saturday will be invited to take it around the track on pace laps at lunchtime. We may also have lunch rides for Corvair drivers/passengers who are wary of driving on the track, which would give the speed without the worry of tossing a belt. And when the track goes cold on Saturday afternoon (racing done for the day), the Corvair folk may join the RMVR group for the after-race Happy Hour, with beer, soft drinks, water, and some casual light snacks – no charge.

The two documents attached are the RMVR entry page pieces. You're welcome to use them as you see fit. There may be a \$5.00/car charge at the gate, that's something the track has been doing, not an RMVR thing, but I haven't confirmed that yet. I'm planning to have a Corvair Corral for reserved parking, and I think it could be a good time



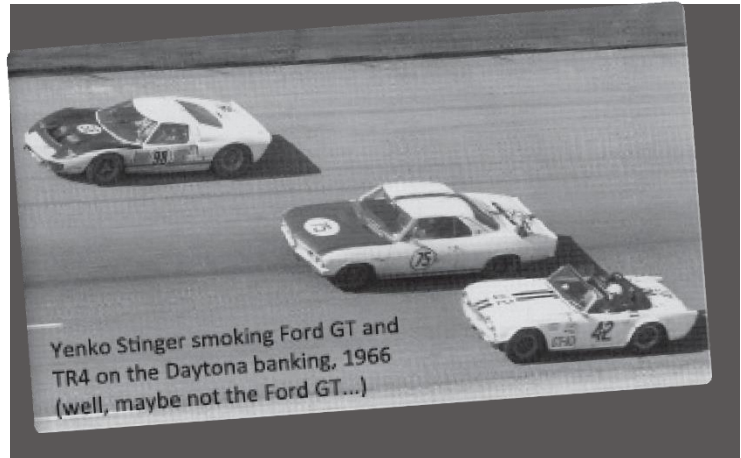
**A semi-official event flyer follows**

# RMVR Fall Sprints

*Pueblo Motorsports Park, September 9-10, 2023*

Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing will celebrate the arrival of fall in our 40th Anniversary Season with a weekend of classic vintage sprint races at Pueblo's historic road course. And to add a touch of whimsy, Chevrolet's controversial Corvair is the featured marque.

We don't envision a Corvair run group or flood of Corvair racers in Small Bore – the plan is to invite local and regional Corvair clubs to drive their cars to the track to enjoy some lunchtime parade laps. A parking area will be reserved for the Corvairs, and we'll have the opportunity to swap lies with the owners at Saturday evening's Happy Hour.



**WHAT:** *RMVR Fall Sprints*

**WHERE:** *Pueblo Motorsports Park*

**WHEN:** *Weekend of September 9-10, 2023*

**Bonus!** PMP will host *RMVR-ONLY* open lapping on Friday, September 8. It's perfect for getting your Pueblo groove re-established. To register for Friday lapping, visit PMP's web site [HERE](#).

**ENTRY FEES:** Your credit card won't be charged until after race weekend, so SIGN UP [HERE](#) NOW for the Full Two-Day regular competition weekend.

- \$385 - "Early Birds" registering before August 14th
- \$410 – registering between August 14th and August 31st
- \$485 - "Fence-Sitter's" registering after August 31st
- Online Registration closes September 6 at midnight. After this, call or e-mail RMVR Admin Linae Schakel (admin@rmvr.com; 303 319-3062) for late entry. Last minute phoned-in or at-event registrations are \$560

## **SATURDAY 9/9/23 HAPPY HOUR**

Happy Hour is open to all volunteers and competitors, we'll have beer, soft drinks and water, plus some sort of handy snack food. There is no charge, but there will be a donation plate for contributions to the Worker Fund.



## RMC Event Calendar

Ah yes, the event calendar. Looking a bit better this month than last as some more events have trickled in. John Dawson sent in an event he is involved with for scouts, Eric Schakel submitted an idea for a club get together at the Pueblo Motor Sport Park this fall, Richard Fritz sent in flyers for The Colorado Collector Car Council events, Kathy Green has reminded me several times to present the 2023 Tri-State information, and last but not least we have the Holy Roller Show in Broomfield. If you are Involved with some event you want posted let me know. We will put it up.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** Our Scouting District is having a Pinewood Derby/Car Show for our Cub Scouts It will be held at St. Andrew United Methodist Church in Highlands Ranch. 9203 South University Blvd. Along with the Pinewood Derby, there will be a car show from about 8 am to 1 pm. This would be a great opportunity to get our Corvairs

**April 30<sup>th</sup>** Somewhere I saw something that said the Tri- State tuneup get together was still in place. A fun event at the Schakels spread. More details next month after I check with Linae Schakel.

**May 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>** **The 38<sup>th</sup> annual Rocky Mountain Tri-State.** The event is getting closer and you don't want to miss this one. The PPCC club has pulled out all the stops on this event and we all know they can really host a party. Registration information follows this page.

Colorado Collector Car Council has 4 events they are promoting.

**March 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>** Tri-State Auto Exhibition, National Western complex

**June 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday 9-3.** Colorado Concours, Arapahoe Community College.

**June 10<sup>th</sup>** 8-2 Cannon Car Club Show. Cannon City

**August 5<sup>th</sup> 10-2** Rocky Mountain Car Show, Metro Airport, Broomfield

**August 13<sup>th</sup> 11-3** Dale and Joan Wilshire Memorial picnic. Dale Neilson just made reservations at Lakewood's Bear Creek Lake Park. Keep the date open.

**August 12<sup>th</sup>** Saturday 9-2 Holy Rollers Car Show, Broomfield

**September 9-10** RMVR Fall Sprints, Pueblo MotorSports Park. Racing and we are invited.



### **2023 Corvair Tri-State May 19-21, 2020 Salida, Colorado**

The Pikes Peak Corvair Club (PPCC) is proud to announce that registration is now open for the 38<sup>th</sup> Tri-State meet to be held in Salida, Colorado the weekend of May 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. The host hotel is the completely renovated Hampton Inn & Suites, located at 785 E. Highway 50. PPCC has secured a Tri-State special rate of \$119/room plus tax for either a King room or a double Queen room. Breakfast is included. To register for the event, order tee-shirts, reserve a room, and sign up for the banquet to be held Saturday night, please log onto the PPCC website <https://pikespeakcorvairclub.wixsite.com/ppcc> and click on "2023 TRI-STATE" on the top menu banner. This will open the information page with all the information you need to do on-line registration, or to print the registration form. There is also a direct link to the hotel registration site to register at the hotel and a schedule of events and times.

If you have any questions, please email [ppcctristate@gmail.com](mailto:ppcctristate@gmail.com). We look forward to seeing you there at the Tri-State next year in Salida, the Heart of the Rockies.

### What Was Chevy Thinking?

The champion of the Corvair was an engineer named Edward N. Cole. Ed Cole cut his engineering teeth in war production at GM, working on the massive air-cooled flat-six tank engines. He became a believer in the smooth balance of a flat six, and the economical reliability of air cooling. So, who'd guess that when Ed Cole became Chief Engineer of Chevrolet Division, R&D kicked off a project to apply those attributes to a compact car? And it's probably not coincidental that when Edward N. Cole became General Manager of Chevrolet Division in 1956, the Corvair was soon green-lighted for production.

### Chevy Had a Lot To Learn!

Chevy was a body-on-frame, big car, iron water-pumper company. They didn't know how to cast aluminum engine cases or cylinder heads. The high operating temperatures associated with aluminum and air cooling ate gasket materials and seals. And how to fit a horizontal cooling fan requiring a drive system capable of transferring up to 25 HP? And of course, the unitary body structure had to fit well with good weld penetration. It wasn't a slam-dunk.

### It Came Together In 1960

The Corvair debuted in late 1959 as a 1960 model. Even from the outside, It was different: With a compact 108" wheelbase, it was almost a foot less than the Impala's 119", and much lower to the ground. Inside, the rear engine configuration allowed a flat floor pan, and seating for up to six (very well-acquainted!) passengers. The unit body structure gave unusual-for-the-time rigidity, and independent suspension provided a smooth ride.

It proved too costly to be a loss-leader econo-car, as Chevy discovered when going toe-to-toe with Ford's Falcon. A rush project to introduce the Chevy II compact in 1962 ensued, and the Corvair moved up-market with the sporty Monza option. In 1962 a turbocharger (another first!) boosted power to 150 HP, and with buckets seats, four-on-the-floor, and a sexy aluminum dash in the top-line Monza Spyder. The enthusiast magazines were enthused!

### Was the Cornering Really Squirrelly?

It isn't rocket science to deduce that a car with 60% of the weight on the rear tires might exhibit "oversteer" under some conditions. So, sure, it was possible to exceed the limits of the rear swing axles, which could result in jacking at the rear of the car. Chevy conquered the jacking with a transverse support leaf in 1964, but the lawyers were already targeting the "different" Corvair, including one named Ralph Nader.

But that loss of control didn't happen in normal driving. Back at Chevrolet Division, an engineer with a funny name had been measuring cornering power. He learned that a 1960 Corvair could corner at a **steady-state** 0.60 g lateral acceleration, while a 1960



Corvette managed 0.61 g on the same skidpad. By comparison, a 1960 Biscayne pulled slightly less than 0.5 g.

The 1964 Monza Spyder, last year of the swing axle rear suspension (now with a lateral stabilizer leaf spring), generated 0.68 g, with the C3 Stingray a tick ahead at .69 g. The Earth shook in 1965, when the fully revamped and restyled top line Corsa model, with 180 HP on tap from the turbo option and a new fully-independent rear suspension in place pulled a cool 0.70 g, besting the Stingray. Corvairs were pretty good in the corners, the engineer concluded. His name was Zora Arkus-Duntov.

### **The Yenko Stinger**

In 1966, with no Camaro yet to chase the V8 Mustangs in the sedan series, Don Yenko approached the SCCA to ask what it would take for the Corvair Corsa to play in the production sports car classes. The SCCA responded that Yenko would need to “manufacture” 100 copies of a 2-seat Corvair to qualify.

The result, of course, was the Yenko Stinger, classed in D-Production by the SCCA, and also written into the FIA rules. The Stinger proved its mettle in 1967, when Jerry Thompson won the SCCA’s D-Production National Championship, beating the factory Triumphs of Group 44.

### **Don’t Make Me Ralph...**

Ralph Nader is often cited as the reason for the Corvair’s demise, but that’s not the case. *Unsafe at Any Speed* had only one chapter devoted to the Corvair, the 1960-1963 models. No, the sporty Corvair was likely a victim of its’ own enthusiast success: It spawned the ponycar wars that began in earnest in 1965 with the introduction of Ford’s Mustang. Straight line performance outweighed nimble road manners at a similar price point. Chevy’s 1967 Camaro introduction was the final nail in the Corvair coffin.

Oddly, Nader may actually have been responsible for extending the Corvair’s life through 1968 and into 1969 model year: GM had been accused of having detectives shadow Mr. Nader in an attempt to find compromising material. To maintain a hint of dignity, it’s suspected GM continued production in defiance, even resorting to an off-line manual assembly process in 1969.

In 1972, an extensive Federal NHTSA study concluded that the Corvairs were no more or less unsafe than any other American cars of the same era. So there, Ralph! And don’t feel too bad for Ed Cole, he retired as President and CEO of GM in 1974.

### **The Case For Corvair Enthusiasts**

Today, Corvairs are experiencing something of a renaissance as collector cars. There were multiple models of Corvair-powered vehicles in the early years, including vans and the Rampside trucks. The later model (65-69) cars are regularly driven to summertime shows across the country; kept in good condition, they remain reliable, comfortable driving machines, at home at modern highway speeds.

# OUR 50TH ANNIV - 2023

Thanks to the support of 1,000's of Corvair owners over the last 50 years we continue to grow and reproduce more parts every year. Have a great year and enjoy our monthly sales and specials all year-Joan & Cal Clark

**SPECIAL SALES EVERY MONTH-** each month we'll send an email (if you have signed up) and list in a sale section on our Home page  
[www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com)

**FREE 50th MEMENTO gifts with your first order in 2023**

**LIST YOUR CORVAIR FOR SALE- NO CHARGE-** sell your Corvair or a spare you just don't have time for! For all of 2023 we will list it on our website at **NO CHARGE-** check website (Corvairs For Sale)

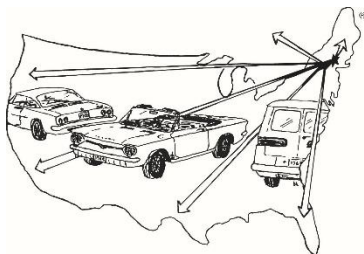
**CLARK CAR SHOW & PARTS SALES-** See our 2023 supplement or website for more details. We expect around 130 cars, and will offer tours of our buildings including the Upholstery Dept. Slide show by Cal. Parts on sale! **SEPT 16, 2023 - rain or shine**

**2023 SUPPLEMENT-** On our website or as a hard copy -many new repros & updates.

**INTERNATIONAL CORSA CONVENTION -Wisconsin-** We will be there Tues, Wed & Thurs with lots of recent repros on display. Stop by and say hello. Convention dates June 19 - June 24

**CATALOG-** over 450 pages, free with an order, \$8 postpaid in USA

[www.corvair.com](http://www.corvair.com)



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# MEETING MINUTES

The February meeting of Rocky Mountain Corsa Corvair Club was called to order by President Rick Beets at 1900hrs on Feb. 3, 2023 at Elway Chevrolet.

GUESTS: were introduced including Andy and Cherie Nielson (owners of 1965 500 cpe) and Mario Wibbens (owner of a 1966 and 1969). Also Kevin Shipman and Ron Jensen were present for the first time in quite a while.

MINUTES OF LAST MONTH: Minutes from last month were approved as printed in the DENVAIRNEWS

TREASURY REPORT: Treasurer John Dinsdale reported \$7197.51 and stated dues were still coming in.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS: It was announced that Christine Kimberly was recovering from surgery and doing well. Dale Nielson reported on the Friday of Meeting Day Lunch at B-Mans in Sedalia. There were 7 members and family present and 4 Corvairs in the parking lot.

Also events in the near future were discussed including the upcoming Tri-State in Salida (May 19-20) and the Tri-state Tune-up held at the Schakel Estate. April 30.

After some suggestions about a Saturday late afternoon dinner it was decided to incorporate that into an event 'up north' and Hooters in Loveland was picked. Date is Feb 18 Details will follow on email list.

A very short discussion of CORSA national conventions and problems of finding locations.

Membership chairman Tony Lawlor reported no new members.

After a break for snacks by Kory and Gail Levin Eric Schakel invited everyone to Pueblo Motorsports Park on Sept 9/10 for some track time and having the CORVAIR be the honored marque combined with CORVETTE for the weekend. More details to follow but our cars will be allowed on the track for fun runs etc as well as showing off to the rest or the participants.

It was noted that Ft. Morgan is hosting Fall Harvest Car Show. Date to be announced.

Chris Jackson showed pictures of an early coupe with LOTS of power built to go 1/4 mile very quickly. He will have it at Bandimere Raceway this summer.

It was asked last month for a display of club jackets with patches. Only John Dinsdale remembered and brought his club jacket to show off.

It was suggested reviving the "parts in a bag" game for the March Meeting.

John Dinsdale also reported that his poor running engine problem from last month was poorly vented gas cap. Mike Piper is offering some sealed beam headlamps for FREE and Rick Beets still has some very nice key blanks for sale.

Snack volunteers for upcoming months are: Dale Nielson March/Chris Jackson April and Caron Wetter and Jimmy Riley May.

50/50 drawing was \$63.00 and winner was Steve Goodman

Meeting adjourned at 2035hrs.

Respectfully submitted by

Steve Goodman for an absent recording Secretary Rob Brereton



**REAR-ENGINE SPECIALISTS**

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[chuck@blackhawkengr.com](mailto:chuck@blackhawkengr.com)



# RMC Home Page

**Rocky Mountain Corsa (RMC)** has been a chartered chapter (#802) of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA) since October 1974 and is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of Corvair automobiles.

**The Denvair News** is a monthly publication for members and affiliates of Rocky Mountain Corsa.

**Editorial Contributions** We encourage your participation! Please forward stories, ideas, jokes, recipes, and/or photos to the Editor. Content must be received by the 15th of the month prior to the desired publication month. Electronic files are *mucho* preferred.

**Classified Ads** Individual RMC member ads are free. Classified ads are limited to 25 words and may include a photo. All ads will run for three issues. Non-members may advertise for \$10.00. Please submit ads to the Editor, with payment due in advance to the Treasurer. Please make checks out to RMC.

**Business Advertising** Commercial advertisers are welcome. The following per-issue rates apply:

Business card size – \$2.50 ¼ page – \$5.00 ½ page – \$10.00 Full page – \$20.00

## **RMC Mailing Address**

Correspondence, ads, & articles may be snail-mailed to:

RMC PO Box 27058 Lakewood, CO 80227-0058

**Web Site:** [www.rockymountaincorsa.org](http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org)

## **Membership & Dues**

Rocky Mountain Corsa annual dues are \$25.00, due each year by February 28. Checks should be payable to RMC, mailed to: *RMC, c/o John Dinsdale, 3240 Billings St., Aurora, CO 80011-2231* Dues can also be paid on line via PayPal at this link [www.rockymountaincorsa.org/dues](http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org/dues)

## **Monthly Meeting**

RMC typically holds meetings the 1st Friday of each month at our host dealership, Elway Chevrolet, 5200 South Broadway in Englewood. Join us at 7:00 PM in the upstairs meeting room.

## **RMC Officers**

President:	Rick Beets	<a href="mailto:prez@rockymountaincorsa.org">prez@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Vice President:	Ken Schiffner	<a href="mailto:veep@rockymountaincorsa.org">veep@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Secretary:	Rob Brereton	<a href="mailto:sec@rockymountaincorsa.org">sec@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Treasurer:	John Dinsdale	<a href="mailto:tres@rockymountaincorsa.org">tres@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Member at large	Tony Lawler	<a href="mailto:m.a.l.#rockymountaincorsa.org">m.a.l.#rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Past president	Ed Halpin	

## **Appointed Chairpersons**

Activities Chair:	Open	<a href="mailto:activity@rockymountaincorsa.org">activity@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Auditor:	John Dawson	<a href="mailto:auditor@rockymountaincorsa.org">auditor@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
CCCC Rep:	Rick Beets	<a href="mailto:cccc-rep@rockymountaincorsa.org">cccc-rep@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Historian:	Steve Goodman	<a href="mailto:history@rockymountaincorsa.org">history@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Membership Chair:	Tony Lawler	<a href="mailto:membership@rockymountaincorsa.org">membership@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Newsletter Editor:	Paul Seyforth	<a href="mailto:news@rockymountaincorsa.org">news@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>
Webmaster:	Dale Nielsen	<a href="mailto:webmaster@rockymountaincorsa.org">webmaster@rockymountaincorsa.org</a>