

# The Denvair News

**Volume 48 Issue 6**

**July 2023**

**Official Publication of the Rocky Mountain Corsa Club**



Another view of the RMC Corvairs at the Tune-Up

## In this issue

VP message  
Castle Rock Show  
Events  
Cooling tips  
Book Review  
Minutes

Ken Schiffner  
Mike Piper  
Paul Seyforth  
Mike Dawson  
John Dawson  
Rob Brereton



**Visit our website: [www.rockymountaincorsa.org](http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org)**

## *Vice Presidents Message*

### **Good morning**

I like to take, weather permitting, a daily AM “hike” using a nearby trail. Perhaps “hike” is too strong a term. Let’s just say “walk”. Hike, climb, descend all don’t fit.

During my walk, I see animate objects such as neighbors, some with pets and some without, doing the same. I usually smile, nod and say, “Good Morning!”. Sometimes the neighbors respond in kind. I can sense if things are going well for them, they’ll respond. If not, maybe I get just the nod. Maybe nothing. I enjoy it even if there is no response. Makes me feel better. Helps me start my day. Even for some special inanimate objects I’ll even use the full greeting. Crazy, perhaps. Gee, I hear that some people even talk to their plants!

Recently while walking the trail my leg began to cramp up. Painful. Needed to sit down. I had entered a part of the trail that I knew had a bench. Sanctuary. It is a nice wooden bench. I had often passed it when not in need, but conditions had painfully changed. I saw in the distance the bench and got closer. I sat down, smiled, nodded and said, “Good Morning!”. Made me feel better.



The Bench

So, if in the AM and your Corvair is in a garage, parked outside, at a shop waiting to be repaired, etc. a suggestion. “Hike” over to it, smile, nod, and say “Good Morning!”. Who cares even if no one is listening. Might make you feel better. Might even be a nice start to your day. The vehicle is over 50 years old and still is here and so are you!. Both deserve a “Good Morning” or at the very least a smile and a nod.

Ken Schiffner



# Castle Rock Car Show

Jeff Addams & Tanya Boudreau's Lakewood from PPCC, the Green's two cars, Larry Schubert's '65 coupe, my car, Christine's '64 convertible, Steve West's '65 turbocharged Corsa coupe. participated in the Castle Rock car show. The Greens were volunteers assisting the staff of the event and Larry Schubert was a judge for the various cars that signed up for judging.

Steve, Christine and I attempted to enter at the same time but didn't quite make it but the three of us ended up parked together. The Green's were parked near the check in tent, Larry was among the Corvettes and Jeff and Tonya were parked near the entrance. We figured out that Steve's Corsa and my Corsa were manufactured at the Van Nuys plant in 1965 and his date code is one month newer than mine.

Christine's '64 and the 65's together make an interesting contrast for the change in body style between '64 and '65. I can't speak for Steve and Christine or the others but the crowd was large, there were many interesting cars and the Corvairs were popular regardless of where they were parked in the crowd.

Mike Piper





# *A few more photos of Castle Rock's Show*

The Green's Lakewood wagon



The Green's other car



Mike Piper's 65 Corsa



Chris Kimberly's 64 convertible



Hats off to these eight club members for showing their cars and representing our clubs, RMC and PPCC at the Castle Rock show.

# *Upcoming Events*

**July 7<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM** at John Elway Chevrolet, 6200 S. Broadway. RMC's monthly meeting. Hope to see you there.

**Colorado Collector Car Council's** has 1 remaining event that our club supports this year. A worthwhile cause. We are hoping for a good turnout.

**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 has made reservations at Lakewood's Bear Creek Lake Park. Keep the date open. Details in the August newsletter.

**August 12<sup>th</sup> Saturday 9-2 Holy Rollers Car Show,** Broomfield. This is an old fashion car show, many makes and types in a beautiful setting. Located in old town Broomfield on Midway Blvd just east of Hwy 287.

**September 9-10 RMVR Fall Sprints,** Pueblo MotorSports Park. Real racing and we are invited to the park.

**Editor's Note:** It's time for me to announce I am retiring as the Rocky Mountain Corsa newsletter editor effective this September. I will produce the August and September newsletters and then will turn this job over to someone else. I have been at this position for 10 years and it is time to pass it on. I'm sure someone will step up. In the meantime the club does have RMC-list for club news and the website [www.rockymountaincorsa.org](http://www.rockymountaincorsa.org) for follow ups on the club's events.

# Some Tips on Engine Cooling

*By Mike Dawson. HACOA Preventive Maintenance. dated 10/15/2013.*

Some improvement items require major engine work and would be on a list of things to do when that occurs; others are easily completed. Previous owners may have done strange things so be thorough. The more you can accomplish the better the engine will perform and the longer it will last, however, you cannot properly cool a worn-out engine with high blowby, so be aware of that. The Corvair engine was expanded from 80 to 180 horsepower with almost the same cooling system.

First, simply make sure your engine cooling system is functioning properly in its stock condition:

- The single most common cause of significant overheating is a mouse nest on top of the head or cylinders under the top cover. Lower shrouds can also be mouse houses.
- Check for proper belt tension & length, correct pulley diameter, and fan bearing height.
- Lower shroud exhaust air doors must work properly-check that they do not hang up on sheet metal.
- All engine cooling sheet metal must be in place and seal any leaks around the top cover at the heads. \_\_\_\_
- All engine to body seals must be in place.
- Check for proper spark plug boots, dipstick grommet, vent tube seal, and fresh air hose installation.
- All vent tubes must be dean and you must use the correct size of fixed orifice or correct PCV valve.
- Use the correct weight of dean oil in the crankcase and you could choose synthetic lubes.
- Air baffles must be in place under the cylinders.
- Heat shields installed between all mufflers and valve covers - aluminized mufflers do reduce heat.
- Oil cooler cover in place over the (dean) cooler and sideplates installed on the 12-plates.
- Recirculation plate installed for summer if applicable (or block the recirculation holes).
- For automatics, the access cover on the converter housing needs to be installed.
- Check for bent exhaust pipes or loose baffles in mufflers.
- Check the air inlets from the outside on Greenbriers tor loose insulation.

**continued**



**Head work:** De-flashing and deaning the heads can be done by removing the top shroud and lower heater shrouds, putting a light on the floor and using a long 1/8 drill bit, key hole saw and other tools to remove dirt and aluminum flashing from the finned head areas. In particular check the holes next to the spark plugs and 140 heads are the worst because of fewer and smaller passages. If you have the heads off, you can remove the valves and dean up the runners in both intake and exhaust areas with rotary burrs. If you are rebuilding the engine and using oversize pistons, you may want to consider using cylinder spacers to bring the compression back to original.

**Carburetor work:** The carburetors must be balanced off idle to ensure that one carburetor does not lead the other when accelerating or cruising. Out of balance will cause pinging, overheating and poor mileage. Correcting this may indude replacing or repairing the cross shaft, down links, throttle shaft holes and look for loose throttle shaft ends where they are peened. Check that there are no vacuum leaks to include base gaskets, balance tube hoses, vacuum advance ports, vacuum modulator hoses, choke pull-offs and PCV hoses. Disassemble carburetors to match venturi clusters and re-jet carburetors to 0.052 0.055 depending on your preference. Be sure all parts match between both carburetors and that the specs match. If you have hot idle valves, be sure they are open at idle and dosed off idle.

**Distributor work:** Look for a worn distributor shaft inside the distributor cam (where you are supposed to place grease). Check the pivots, weights and springs for wear and lube everything that moves. Check the breaker plate pivot tor wear; a common cause of pinging and loss of power. Check the vacuum advance. All of the distributor curves are published in pamphlets and you can use a tachometer and timing light to check your distributor performance. Distributors can be a significant cause of overheating if they do not function properly tor your engine.

Oil coolers: Installing a 12-plate cooler on an engine without one would be a good upgrade. It does require sheet metal modification (cutting on late models and some welding on early models) and the 12-plate cooler uses a longer bolt, bigger cover, and end plates that keep the air directed out of the engine compartment. If you already have a 12-plate, be sure you have the end plates installed (you can install end plates on an 8-plate).

### Additional cooling items:

- I checked FC engine temperature on a two-way highway run with heater shrouds on and shrouds off. My temperature gauge showed a 40-degree difference. Others have reported a 25 - 70 drop. The initial warm up time is longer but in the heat of the summer I would think the gain in lower operating temperature would easily be worth the tradeoff. Be sure your choke coils are tight after you remove the shrouds in case a rivet is missing.
- I also like to avoid extended tip spark plugs because they start the flame front closer to the piston. The engineers would have used an extended tip if they thought it was a good idea- which they never did.



#### REAR-ENGINE SPECIALISTS

**Steve Goodman** 16010 W. 5th Ave., Unit 12  
Golden, CO 80401  
(303) 278-4889  
Fax (303) 936-7420  
e-mail: [rearengine.steve@att.net](mailto:rearengine.steve@att.net)  
internet: <http://rearenginespecialists.com>

### BLACK HAWK ENGINEERING

Precision Mechanism Design & Fabrication

Chuck Riblett, P.E.

737 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Loveland CO 80537  
Cell 970-635-4769

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





# Book Review - The Sack of Detroit: General Motors and the End of American Enterprise

by [Kenneth Whyte](#) (Author)

Publisher: Knopf; 1st Edition (June 1, 2021); Hardcover: 432 pages

During the time waiting at the local library while my granddaughters were having fun in the “tween” class “Books and Bricks”, I noticed the eye-catching cover of a book with a picture of the left front corner of a mist blue 1965 Corvair. After a brief thumb through, I checked the book out. The writing was so engaging that I had to read it from cover to cover in just a couple of days. The book was so interesting and well written that I had to get a copy for my personal library. What follows is a summary review of the book.

After the Second World War, the United States enjoyed a period of great industrial growth and affluence with automakers being some of the largest contributors. The statement made by Charles Wilson, then President of GM, during the January 1953 Senate confirmation hearings for his nomination to be Secretary of Defense that “...what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice versa.” (often misquoted/misconstrued as “what’s good for General Motors is good for America”) certainly seemed to be the norm.

By the 1960’s, The United States was experiencing a period of great social, economic, and political change. The Cold War (as exemplified by the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Berlin Wall), the Space/Moon Race, and the Vietnam War all amped up the military/industrial complex and the economy in general. The assassination of President Kennedy, followed by “the British Invasion”, the “pill”, and the Civil Rights movement, all contributed or indicated that great social change was afoot. The Democrats severely

trounced the Republicans in the 1964 Presidential elections which created a “progressive wave” in Congress with an opportunity to advance certain agendas, such as “crashworthiness” in motor vehicles. Around this same time, Nader’s Unsafe at any Speed was published, which pilloried the Corvair in Chapter One. These two forces combined to become a perfect example of politics and policy in action.

The 1965-1966 “Federal Role in Traffic Safety” hearings were chaired by Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D-Connecticut) with assistance from Sen. Robert F Kennedy (D-New York) along with a “key (expert) witness” - a young consumer advocate attorney from New York named Ralph Nader. The hearings primarily focused on the crashworthiness of vehicles with the intent on requiring manufacturers make a vehicle so safe that passengers could withstand any additional injuries after impact (the “second collision” theory). What was blatantly ignored, even discounted, was the “Triple E” theory (education/enforcement/engineering) which included “common sense” means and methods that would prevent accidents: driving within the speed limit, using seat belts (if provided), and driving sober (i.e.: taking some personal responsibility). Government procurement power and influence by the Post Office and other agencies had already forced safety upgrades in motor vehicles, such as side mirrors, dual master cylinders, seat belts, safety glass for windows and windshields, etc. but that was not good enough or thought by Congress to be as quickly effective as legislation would be. The combination of the Senate hearings, media

publicity given Nader's book, and GM hiring a private investigator to look into Nader's comings and goings all resulted in a "Perfect Storm" for GM with the Corvair as a "poster child" for corporate negligence, hubris, and greed.

Ultimately, the hearings resulted in the Motor Vehicle Highway Safety Act of 1966, which thereby created the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which sets safety standards governing the sale of new motor vehicles (and parts) as well as overseeing automobile recalls. Certainly, some good has come from the NHTSA, but at what cost?

The book does a very good job of portraying the rise (and subsequent fall) of the primarily Detroit-based auto manufacturers, and provides decent "mini biographies" of Ralph Nader, Ed Cole, and Abraham Ribicoff. The author tries to remain impartial in telling the story, but it is readily apparent that he has no love lost for Ribicoff and Nader, even portraying Nader as just a pawn in Ribicoff's political game. Whyte does lay some of the blame for the outcome on GM's cavalier attitude at the beginning of the hearings, including their bone-headed move to covertly investigate Nader. In many ways, the book depicts a "paradigm shift" in the approach to safety responsibility that occurred in the mid 60's. Subsequently with that shift, manufacturers have often tended to take an overly conservative approach to any new product - basically delaying or stifling innovation. Case in point - it took almost 50 years for GM to bring the C8 mid-engine Corvette to production, and we'll probably never again see a new automobile as innovative as the Corvair.

Towards the end of the book, the author likens the 1965-66 motor vehicle hearings with recent

legislative efforts targeting pharmaceutical firms and the opioid addiction crisis, while ignoring that the FDA approved the drugs with often inadequate warnings. Currently, Congress' target is the tech firms allowing pornography, sex trafficking, terrorist recruitment, scams, invasion of privacy, and fake news, yet the blame falls on the tech companies and not the regulators or the users. Truly, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

For those of us that want to know more about the backstory behind Unsafe at any Speed and the 1965-66 Senate hearings on motor vehicle safety (which also looked into the crashworthiness of the Corvair), this is a very interesting and informative read. It's up to the reader to determine whether this book is a champion of corporations, or just an apology for capitalism. The book is also a fair assessment of how politics creates policy and change. Regardless where one stands on the issue of causal factors of automobile crashes, this book presents a balanced approach to weighing evidence on both sides, concluding that the focus on crash avoidance would have served the nation better than the obsession with crashworthiness.

As a Corvair owner and a native of Detroit, I found that this book covered many of my interests: mid-20<sup>th</sup> century American history, the auto industry - Corvairs especially, safety, politics and policy creation, and the story of the people who were involved. The Sack of Detroit is a great read for any Corvair owner, automotive historian, automotive engineer, auto safety lawyer, journalist, policy wonk, and any car enthusiast.

Respectfully submitted by John Dawson

# Rocky Mountain Corsa Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** June 2, 2023      **Called to Order:** 7:12 pm  
**Location:** John Elway Chevrolet, Englewood CO      **# Present:** 13 on site, zoom 0

**Guests, long distance, new members:** None

## **Standard Business:**

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes from May meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasury report: The end of May balance was \$7,727.80. Treasurer's Report was approved.

**Mailbag:** Nothing.

## **Old Business:**

- Thanks to Paul for another great newsletter
- Tonight's snacks are provided by the Levins. Dylan Berichon will bring snacks in July, Rick will cover August and Ken Schiffner has Sept.
- Discussion of Tri-State travels. No breakdowns on the way up, but the return trips had some interruptions. Rick had intermittent power loss, got worse across South Park, and quit in Fairplay. With adequate fuel, ignition was suspected. Opening the distributor, the rotor was found loose and fell into the deep. After finding it, and securing it, the distributor was later found to be the wrong one and has since been replaced with the right one. Bill Degroot had his throttle stick wide open, and switched off to find a broken return spring, but he had a spare. Dylan dropped a valve seat 3 miles from home. He got it going yesterday and did show and tell with problem exhaust log studs. John Dinsdale's trip back was interrupted by power loss, causing him to route around Monument due to a suspected weak fuel pump.
- Club patches were discussed for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. We may do a shirt or patch.
- Looking into costs. Rick has mockup logo. Mike P asked about business cards for Cars and Coffee and some were available.
- We have approximately 70 members, ~50 are active. There were no new members from Salida. Ed & Wendy Batterson just renewed.

## **New Business:**

- Need to schedule a board meeting.
- Chris Jackson and his family have suffered a house electrical fire on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and Chris spent a week in ICU. Pets were lost and they will be out of house for 10+ months.
- Rob Brereton discussed his Bike MS ride to raise money to fight Multiple Sclerosis. Many members generously sponsored. Those present voted to make a \$100 donation to the cause. Thank you all, and look for a story coming up after the event on June 24-25.
- Activities discussion:
  - June 3 & 4      24 hours of Lemons at High Plains. There will be an admission charge.
  - 6/3 (Sat)      Andrew Child, 9-1, Lutheran High School in Parker, 1st ever LUH car show. Will give a row of parking.
  - 6/4 (Sun)      ACC Concours.



- 6/10 (Sat) Car Show, VFW Post 5061, 5515 W Warren Ave Denver. Rods and Rides
- 6/11 (Sun) Veterans Appreciation Car Show, 10-2 at Colorado Springs VA, 3141 Centennial Blvd.
- 6/18 (Sun) PPCC / Model A / Palmer Lake Ice Cream Shop.
- July 28-30 High Plains / Kids Race against Cancer
- August 5 CCCC Air / Car Show. Air Cooled Corner. Need count to reserve space.

**For Sale or Wanted, Recently Purchased, Projects**

- John suggested members call 720-329-3138, which is Ryan's number related to John's car. Call, don't leave a message, get him on phone in person.
- Rick mentioned his detail guy, Michael who is coming to do ceramic-coat work at reasonable prices. See Rick for contact info if interested.

**50/50 Raffle:** To Club: \$30 To Winner: \$30 Winner: Ken Schiffner (donated to Bike MS, Thanks!)

**Meeting adjourned (not recorded)**

**Respectfully submitted by Rob Brereton.**