

The Denvair News

October 2025

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Corvair Season Eases Into Fall

The Wilshire Picnic is behind us, leaving many pleasant memories for those who attended, and the ‘formal’ Corvair season is slipping quickly into autumn. It’s perhaps a sign of the times that there are no RMC fall foilage drives on the calendar, but Rear Engine Steve is still collecting names for those who would like to join him at the Westwood Inn (SW corner of 6th and Wadsworth in Lakewood) on Sunday morning, 10/6/25. Corvairs are encouraged, of course, but not required!

Red Racer Update

Jon Whiteley upheld the honor of Corvairdom over the September 28-29 weekend at Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing’s 2025 season finale, the Race Against Kids Cancer. The annual event is held in support of the Morgan Adams Foundation, which benefits children’s cancer research, drawing more than 100 vintage race cars from across the country to High Plains Raceway.

If you’ve not been to an RMVR vintage race, make a note now and check www.rmvr.com over the winter for next years’ schedule. Vintage racing is literally and figuratively a loud, rolling car show. And Corvair folks, note that spectator entry is FREE!



Can you pick the Corvair out of this field? Jon’s revitalized 1965 Corsa red racer (hint: clues on page 2) performed well throughout the weekend, and he set a personal-best lap time. The car finished every track session, and will live to race again in 2026. Photo by Rupert Berrington, professional photographer, as you may have guessed from the name ghosted onto the image.

2025 Corvair season has transitioned nicely into Autumn, leaf-peeping weekend traffic is epic in the mountains, and the October 3 RMC meeting is on for Elway Chevy, 7:00pm!



Red Racer Update - Direct From the Red Racer!

- Jon Whiteley

RMVR's 2025 Race Against Kids' Cancer (RAKC) is a wrap. High Plains Raceway was the venue for the 15th anniversary of this charity event which brought together vintage racers from Colorado and the surrounding region. You've undoubtedly seen my earlier plea for donations to the Morgan Adams Foundation. My sincere thanks go out to several of our club members whose generous contributions allowed me to surpass my personal fundraising goal of \$1500 this year.

The weekend's weather was perfect for the 130 competitors that presented for this year's RAKC - 30 of which were in my run group. And of that 30, five were piloting an early Miata. "Not vintage" you say? Consider that the first-gen Miata is now 30+ years old and could be considered the MG of the 90's.

Friday was Test & Tune day, and I used the opportunity to scrub in new tires and try out a set of larger-bore carbs.

Saturday's schedule presented us with a practice session, qualifying, and two races. I was pleased with my laps times, achieving a couple of personal bests during the day. My primary competitors during the races were two of those Miatae plus a Porsche 914, all of which I managed to stay ahead of until the checkered flag. Those bigger carbs offered nice

power at WOT though the engine wasn't especially happy at mid-throttle, which cost me some time. I'll need to work on that.

BBQ, beverages (adult and other), and a band were on tap for Saturday after the track went cold, with plenty of time to socialize and swap "war stories". Absence of rain and wind made for a very pleasant evening.

Sunday's weather was more of the same, but with a steady, slight breeze all day, the effect of which could be felt on the long straights. There was a warmup session scheduled in the morning, followed by a pair of races for each of the five run groups. As the day progressed attrition took a toll on cars and drivers, and grid sizes shrank. I found some different sparring partners in my group and finished the weekend pleasantly tired.

These LM Corvairs are nice handling cars and get plenty of attention from curious passers-by. And naturally, plenty of stories and "I had one of those back in the day" comments. I'm sure you know those.

My 2025 race season is now finished, but I've got work to do on the engine before next Spring. That, and motivating [ed.] to get his race car finished and on the track.



Jon's red racer at speed.

Other than the fact that it's RED, this is a great image.

Corvairs can readily be made into remarkably capable track cars. And it must be confessed, the editor is still smitten by the smooth styling of the second generation coupes more than a half-century after production ceased.

Déjà Vu All Over Again

- Eric Schakel

At some point in every life, there are moments when an individual realizes they've entered a scenario strikingly similar to one experienced in the distant past. I believe Yogi Berra's famous expression, "It's like déjà vu all over again" summarizes it nicely. And to be clear, the Yogi I quote is not Boo-Boo's equally famous mentor, Yogi Bear, but the reknowned baseball player from the post-WWII years.

My Yogi moment has come, it seems. I'm feeling a strong urge to repeat a pattern last seen in the mid-1970s, when I sold a bashed 1965 Corvair Corsa 180 turbo and swore I'd never, ever mess with the stupid things again. It was the final Corvair of seven I went through between high school and the age of 25. And although Corvair drum brakes are very effective WHEN DRY, they ignored my call to keep the Corsa from rear-ending a 1965 Impala that had abruptly stalled transiting a long, flooded road dip during a nasty rain storm. I was appalled as my transportation options suddenly shrank.

A 1973 AMC Hornet Hatchback X with disk brakes, brand new off the dealer's lot, took over daily driver chores. I really, really coveted a 1973 Pontiac Trans Am 455 4-speed I'd identified as a reliable Corvair replacement, but Dad refused to co-sign for it; something about no son dying in a fast car... I still had a

turbo Corsa in 1976 when I acquired a 1971 Trans Am 455 HO; the Corvair was soon sold off and forgotten. Life went on with disk brakes and water cooling.

In the mid 1990's, our little family began attending Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing's annual Steamboat Springs race events. As a young man in Indianapolis I spent long hours at the Speedway every May, and later raced a bit with the SCCA at Indianapolis Raceway Park. My early racing bug went dormant, though, after the Stinger went away, and a couple of decades slipped past before Steamboat re-lit the fire, which clawed at my head and screamed for attention. And what else would I race but a Yenko Stinger, reliving those glory days when I had thick dark hair?

My wife found YS-066 in Hemmings in 1999. A deal was done, and a month or two after I drove it home from Chicago we drove it to Burt Chevrolet on a sunny weekend to attend a Corvair gathering hosted by Rocky Mountain Corsa. Racing prep took longer; vintage racing back then had a vigorous "authenticity" rigamarole, but we waded through it and the Stinger's first race weekend was the RMVR Driver's School in 2002, held at the now-defunct Second Creek track.

Additional Corvairs, of course, followed almost by default. Today, the recently-retired-from-racing Stinger's

logbooks document 72 events over the past 23 years, and we've traveled many miles in the legendary Pig (now known as the Maroon Car because a certain local Corvair curmudgeon who repairs them was so vocal with his complaints about the 3-letter nickname). A yard art Corsa sits in my shop, halfway converted to a replacement race car.

So what's the problem? We've been living the Corvair dream, right?

After a few days of repeated scenes like this, nightmares about ignition systems form, and thoughts of Firebirds begin to take on hallucinogenic reality.



Continued from page 3...

In a nutshell, I've really hit the wall. Mark the date: Friday, September 19, 2025. We drove the Maroon Car around the 'hood for a bit, conscious of the stripped interior every time a door handle hit the bare floor. The engine is a sweet, sweet runner, but leaks oil like a fresh well along the Southern California coast in the early 1900s and the interior is completely stripped out. I have many big dusty boxes of parts waiting to make this baby rumble after I apply the necessary paint to the metal.

The Ringer, destined to replace the Stinger as our ever-more-rule-infested racer, isn't half-finished or painted, but has the race engine and CR trans in place, along with functional 4-wheel-disk brakes (have I mentioned that I LOVE disk brakes?). It's waiting to be finished, sneering at me.

And then there's the Stinger, complete, street-ready and licensed, with a fresh engine replacing the 12.4:1 compression race engine. Broken in running on a test stand, the engine is all hooked up and ready for fine-tuning.

Reading these words, one would think I'd be buoyed up, with three mechanically-intact Corvairs staged in a spacious, well-equipped workshop. Again, you may ask, what's the problem?

The Stinger has declared war, that's the problem.

The pre-run engine had used the Stinger's ignition system on the stand, so a fresh distributor and tuning was in order. I dragged out an antique instrument known as a timing light and summoned my faithful shop apprentice, Linae, to twist the key. The electric fuel pump chattered into action, the starter spun the engine, but the light remained dark. Scratching of head ensued, wiring was reviewed, and connections tightened, but the second attempt yielded the same result. No jolt in the wires.

The timing light was quickly transferred to the Maroon Car. That flat six fired immediately and the light blinked in synch with the timing marks. More head scratching with a few grumbles followed, and we called it a day.

A new day dawned, and new hope. The distributor now in the Stinger was equipped with a Pertronix II trigger – perhaps after years of service it had finally given up? I carefully set up a clean Delco point distributor with Standard contact points and fresh cap and rotor and swapped it in place. The timing light was

hooked up, the key twisted, and darkness prevailed once again. And again, on the Maroon Car engine the timing light blinked like a startled wino.

Could it be the coil? I located my box of GM ignition parts and pulled out a clean OE Delco-Remy unit, likely the one on the Stinger when I acquired it. I wired it in, repeated the test, same result. Moderate foul language could be heard near the shop for a few moments.

Thursday night came, and I studied several of my automotive electrical references closely. The one thing I hadn't checked since installing the fresh engine was condition of ground connections. On Friday morning I marched to the shop with new hope, stripping, cleaning, and tightening each electrical ground and running an extra HD braided strap between the powertrain and the chassis. I dropped into the drivers seat, smiling with fresh confidence, and twisted the key.

The starter clicked, but didn't engage. I tried three times. My heart sank.

I gently slammed the Stinger's door and walked away, past the Ringer and out into the yard. I reached the side door of the car hauler trailer and pried it open. Sitting inside, one tire flat, was my 1971 Trans Am, the car I bought in 1976. Linae and I used to ride around Atlanta in it before we were married. It's been in various rolling states of disassembly for three decades.

Standing there quietly, I swear I heard the Trans Am say, ***"I suppose you need me to save you from those Corvairs again?"***



Rocky Mountain Corsa Official BS & Contacts

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 20th of the month prior to the desired publication month. Electronic files are preferred, pictures are awesome, but please include descriptions!

Classified Ads

I don't recall RMC doing paid ads in this fine newsletter since the Reagan Administration. Should this section be updated or eliminated now that RMC has a well-maintained web site?

Business Advertising

Ditto Editor rant above - much the same applies.

RMC Mailing Address

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

RMC
PO Box 27058
Lakewood, CO 80227-0058

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 may also be paid online via PayPal at this link: www.rockymountaincorsa.org/dues

Monthly Meeting

RMC 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 (above Parts Department).

RMC Officers & Appointees

President: Mike Piper

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RMC Corvair Happenings!

- Friday, October 3, 2025 — RMC Meeting, 7:00? pm @ John Elway Chevrolet
- Sunday, October 5, 2025 — RES Corvair Breakfast, 8:00 am @ Westwood Inn
(call Steve ASAP to confirm @ 303 278-4889)
- Whenever, 24/7 — Check www.rockymountaincorsa.org for the latest and greatest!



President's Letter, October 2025

Howdy all! (to switch things up a little)

Yet again, Eric had to remind me to get moving on my thoughts. He even said I could text it to him, but I didn't want to injure him trying to figure out my typos. Once again, I've been running around a lot, accomplishing very little, and on the Corvair front, things have been pretty slow for me.

I'm still working about 4 hours per week at my old employer assisting with questions and providing historical context as some system repairs and upgrades are undertaken but starting on the 29th I'll be in the office daily for the week since the real facility manager will be out of the office. I promise I won't forget the club meeting on October 3rd.

Eric asked me to quit procrastinating so he could get the newsletter out ahead of the RMC breakfast Steve Goodman has been promoting. The day is October 5th, 08:00 hrs at the Westwood Inn at 5th Avenue and Wadsworth. I believe this will be mentioned elsewhere too. This is a trial to see if Sunday mornings have potential as an alternate meeting day & venue. I lost track of the alternate meeting discussion when we went on vacation, so I still need to catch back up. I think Eric put together a questionnaire asking the club to consider alternate days, times, locations and if we want to do alternate months particularly during the winter. There is also not a Corsa national requirement to do a monthly newsletter so we could do it every other month or even quarterly. If you have thoughts, please share them. (Ballot on last pages - Ed)

A quick note about Kawai: I've been to and driven on the four main Hawaiian islands. Kawai has the least square footage of dry land. It is pretty much green everywhere and there is actually a lot to do. It seemed like there are fewer "poor" drivers per tourist. Their road map looks like a hair net, and you will turn onto a different highway about every three miles. The speed limits vary from 15 MPH to 45 MPH. They have Costco, Safeway, Target and the standard fast food places. Gas is \$5 per gallon. It is a really nice place.

On the Corvair front, the weather has generally been good so I expect the usual monthly Cars & Coffee events will happen. I'll plan to hit the Lafayette event on October 4th and the WeatherTech one on the 12th. Breakfast with Steve is on the 5th. The Golden Supercruise is also on October 4th. My car goes into the body shop in October, and I discovered I don't have it in my calendar, so I need to call to find out when. I will do some of the disassembly for them in trade for some touch-up work. I have not committed 100 % to a Trunk-or-Treat at my Grandson's daycare. They have an old Greenbrier they used for their school bus and I'd like to see if I can somehow tie the white car into that as a display. I did one at Buckley a few years back, that was scary enough that some of the kids wouldn't get near me.

In November we'll need to decide who our officers for 2026 will be so we can conduct the vote at the Christmas Holiday meal. Don't be shy, if someone wants my job or a different one, we can throw hats into the virtual ring.

This turned out longer than what Eric is expecting but I still managed to jabber on a bit. We're drifting into the off season but still drive your cars when you can and think about what you need to do to prepare them for winter storage.

Meanwhile, as always be safe, have as much fun as you can with your Corvairs, and please enjoy the fall season.

- Mike

terminal - rotor gap

Your Corvair's distributor probably doesn't have a hole this big in the cap, but if it did you could check to see if the rotor and cap terminals are 3/32" apart when aligned. It also shows the rotor tip in near-alignment with the machined bevel, as one would hope. OEM rotor shown, not an E rotor.

It is NOT recommended to operate your Corvair on the highway with a holy cap, however, as the electrons are extremely social and often invite friends in who may affect the continuity. It has also been reported that a 'whizzer' sound may emanate.

- Izzy Guiffe (writing from the fourth dimension in the Hawaiian chain)



Rocky Mountain Corsa Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: September 5, 2025

Called to Order: 7:04 pm

Location: John Elway Chevrolet, Englewood CO

Present: 8 in person + 1 on Zoom

Guests, long distance, new members:

- None.

Standard Business:

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes from the August meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: The end of August balance was \$8,407.50. Not much activity. Treasurer's Report was approved.

- None.

Mailbag: Only a business credit card offer . . .

Old Business:

- Membership: No updates. Dues for those joining from now to end of year are ½ dues now through end of year.
- Thanks, Eric, for a great newsletter. Please contribute your articles, with pictures.
- The bylaw review is inching along. Not much progress was made at meeting last month.
- CCCC Update: This Tuesday 9/9 at 11am, there will be a drive-by followed by lunch for the Sunrise Elder Care Center in Broomfield, meet in parking lot at 10:30. Sunrise Elder Care provided the vans and drivers for Air and Car show. Dust and Shine, 3rd Sat in month is the time. Rick will put our name in for June 20 or Sept 19.
- A question was raised last month about alternate account access in the Treasurer's absence. Mike will meet with John to get on the account and remove any past officers who should not be included.

New Business:

- The Air and Car Show was on Sat Aug 2. The event broke even or made a little money. The airport was happy with attendance and results. There were ~400 cars, down from past.
- The Wilshire Picnic was held Sunday Aug 17. Pretty good turnout, a good time was had, see newsletter article.
- Steve is working to arrange a breakfast gathering at Westwood Inn, 5 Oct (Sun), 8:00am. Watch for message on RMC list.
- No events planned at this point for November,
- December: Holiday party at Black Bear Cafe, in schedule, 13 Dec 1:30. Drinks and appetizers on club, order from menu, gift exchange and Toys for Tots.
- January New Years Day Brunch in Estes Park. Same location.
- Elections coming up. Need a Treasurer. Secretary is willing to share the work with others!
- The survey of members about meeting location / time has not happened yet.
- Jon Whiteley, RMVR Race against Kid's Cancer, end of Sept. Raising \$\$, help him meet his goal. Rick moved that the club donate \$200, Diane seconded, motion passed.

Activities:

- Oct 3 (Fri) Regular meeting, Elway Chevrolet, 7pm
- Oct 5 (Sun) Westwood Inn breakfast, 8:00
- Sept 6 Golden Supercruise
- 14 Sept Weathertek
- 28 September Fall tour arranged by PPCC.

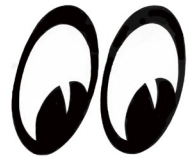
For Sale or Wanted, Recently Purchased, Projects

Show and Tell time: John Dawson discussed Russell Davies and some of his special tools. John brought one of his shorty harmonic balancer puller to pull without dropping engine. Also has a bezel remover for Headlight / Wiper/radio bezels. John showed a pushrod tube puller. He discussed an EM bearing press tool that used a clamshell housing to hold ring, pulling bearing with impact driver on 1 1/16" nuts alternating sides. Larry Claypool did a tech tips article on rebuilding these bearings. Has a way to press on with this tool using a long tube.

50/50 Raffle: 15 to winner, 15 to club. Winner: Rick Beets

Meeting adjourned 8:03

Respectfully Submitted by Rob Brereton



Firebird Revival Pending?

As of this month's issue of DenVair News, I'm still shaking my head at my inability to make the Stinger's ignition generate spark at the plugs, hence the long, droning article you probably skipped that began on page 3. As the episode has evolved, I've spoken at some length with experts such as Seth Emerson (Performance Corvairs) and our own Steve Goodman. Jon Whiteley, fellow Corvair racer, has also scratched his head over the issue.

If there's a plus side, I suppose it's the forced recall of tribal knowledge related to distributor-based ignition systems. Of the nine vehicles in our fleet, the three Corvairs are the only ones with distributors. The next in age line, the '71 Trans Am, has a transplanted 2000 Chevrolet LS1 V8 engine, which, like all newer engines, features coil-on-plug direct fire ignition. These systems have earned the "bullet-proof" label with their maintenance-free reliability.

Contact breaker point ignition with cap and rotor served well for more than half a century, with regular maintenance intervals an accepted reality. Optical and magnetic triggering began replacing contact points in the early 1970s, with amplified systems such as GM's HEI becoming mandatory for emissions compliance by the late '70s, all still with spinning rotors and caps sprouting wires routed to the spark plugs until the 1990's. Today, I'm not aware of any volume-produced auto or truck applications with cap and rotor spark plug firing.



Two rotors sold as Corvair replacements. The one stamped with the emissions 'E' tip is shorter (they vary from 1/32" to 1/16" less), creating a wider gap to the cap contact terminal. E rotors are used with amplified ignition systems, and are NOT a good choice for Corvairs with standard point distributors.



Four 'Corvair' distributor caps, identical from the outside, but each with different terminal materials and/or machining configurations. Avoid aluminum (lower left cap); copper (as in upper right cap) is the preferred material. Notch machining varies by supplier machine set up. Again, amplified ignition helps overcome manufacturing variance.

Given the ever-declining demand for distributor-base ignition components, production is now in factories of lower-tier manufacturers with less-stringent (less costly) quality control. With no OEM QC department demands, things "ain't what they used to be", but we're fortunate to have vendors such as Clarks, who keep the faith and hobby going.

Now, back to trying to get the Stinger going...

Stay Functional, My Friends!

Whither Goest RMC?

Member Survey

As noted in the 7/25 Denvair News, RMC remains a very viable club. Meeting and event attendance, though, has declined notably in recent years. This survey asks a simple question: What changes can RMC make now to remain viable for Corvair Kids and Collectors into the next decade?

Please make your selections, and bring the form to the next RMC meeting. Alternately, select, scan, and email to a Board member. Legible jpeg images are also acceptable. ONE copy per member, please!

!! Please check only ONE box under each heading !!

I. Club Meetings

A. Member Meeting Purpose

- ☐ General, both Board & Members (current RMC practice).
- ☐ Board meetings only, no Member meetings needed.
- ☐ Board and General meetings should be held separately.
- ☐ Forget meetings, not needed.

B. Member Meeting frequency

- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Bi-Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ No Regular Meetings

C. Meeting time slot

- ☐ Saturday morning
- ☐ Saturday afternoon
- ☐ Sunday morning
- ☐ Sunday afternoon
- ☐ Weekday evening _____ (specify day)

D. Meeting location (in relation to Denver)

- ☐ North (think Northglenn)
- ☐ South (think Lone Tree)
- ☐ East (think Aurora)
- ☐ Denver Central
- ☐ Variable

E. Meeting Venue

- ☐ Dedicated meeting room
- ☐ Eatery
- ☐ Variable
- ☐ Online only

(Continued on back)

II. Annual Club Activities

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| A. New Years Brunch | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it | <input type="checkbox"/> Lose it | <input type="checkbox"/> Change it |
| B. Tri-State Tune-Up | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it | <input type="checkbox"/> Lose it | <input type="checkbox"/> Change it |
| C. Tri-State | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it | <input type="checkbox"/> Lose it | <input type="checkbox"/> Change it |
| D. Wilshire Memorial Picnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it | <input type="checkbox"/> Lose it | <input type="checkbox"/> Change it |
| E. Christmas Party | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it | <input type="checkbox"/> Lose it | <input type="checkbox"/> Change it |
| F. New Activity? | _____ (describe) | | |

III. “Heck With It!” Strategy

If this survey proves inconclusive, shall RMC throw a big party, blow our remaining treasury money, and simply shut down RMC as a formal chapter of CORSA over the next year?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ More detail needed

IV. “Status Quo” Strategy

Or, if this survey proves inconclusive, shall RMC simply continue down the current path, letting time and inertia run their course, and reacting and/or making changes as needed?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ More detail needed

(Please add your comments below. Contact info is optional)

RMC Member Name _____