

The Denvair News

January 2012 Vol. 38, Issue 3
A Member of the Corvair Society of America



RMC Christmas Party Livens Up The Place!

Mickey's Top Sirloin was the repeat choice of restaurant for the RMC Christmas Party, and merry-makers showed up in good order at the five o'clock hour on Saturday, December 17.

Earl Nelson didn't make the event, but would have been proud of the turnout: 37 folks occupied the reserved tables in the main dining area, and a few Corvairs were reported in the parking lot.

The food was good and the tables were arranged about as well as could be expected in the public area. Lack of a private room didn't stop the partiers from the Yankee gift exchange.

Gifts were initially stashed on and under the dining tables. When the meal was



Long table arrangement seats local Corvair dignitaries and family members. Without separate storage table for gifts, they added a very seasonal and festive touch on the tables.

Below, gift exchange in full swing after the dishes were cleared away.



done and dishes cleared, they appeared as if by magic to occupy the round center table.

To the amusement (with perhaps a little irritation here and there) of other restaurant guests, the gift exchange was conducted with all normal fanfare.

No fist fights were recorded during the gift exchange, the Corvairs made it under their own power, and everyone ate well. For the friendly group from Rocky Mountain Corvair, it really doesn't get much better than that!

Event Alert: New Year's Brunch - The Other Side Restaurant, Estes Park. If you guessed this will take place on New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1 2012 at 11:00am, you're absolutely right. The cost is \$21.00 per person, payable in advance to John Dinsdale. It's a great way to start a fresh Corvair season.



Rocky Mountain Corsa (RMC) has been a chartered chapter 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. The Denvair News is now available as a PDF by request to the Editor.

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 Merchandise

Past event t-shirts, RMC name badges and other merchandise are available. Please contact Earl Nelson for a current list of goodies.

RMC Mailing Address

Correspondence, ads, & articles may be snail-mailed to:
RMC
PO Box 27058
Lakewood, CO 80227-0058

Web Site: www.rockymountaincorsa.com

Membership & Dues

Rocky Mountain Corsa annual dues are \$24.00, Corvair Society of America (CORSA) annual dues are \$45.00, which includes a subscription to the *Corsa Communique*, an award-winning monthly magazine. Combined dues are \$69.00 annually. Checks should be payable to RMC, mailed to: **RMC, c/o John Dinsdale, 3240 Billings St., Aurora, CO 80011-2231**

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.

RMC Officers

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In Memory of Ruth Goodman, 1935-2011

Goodman, Ruth, passed away on December 15 at Porter Hospice. Ruth was born in June 13, 1935 in Indiana and has lived in Denver since 1953. She drove Corvairs for many years and was active in the Corvair clubs. She also enjoyed crochet and other crafts. She is survived by her husband, Steve. A memorial service will be planned after the holidays. In lieu of flowers, send donations to CAT CARE SOCIETY, 5787 W. 6th Ave., Lakewood, CO, 80214.

Published in Denver Post on December 18, 2011

My Pen Pal, My Friend

Heula Pittman

Several years ago at a Tri-State hosted by CNM, I was helping to prepare for the banquet which was to be held that night. I was sorting and arranging our collection of door prizes when I came across a beautiful embroidered table runner. At the time I had no clue who had made it, but I thought to myself that, if I were lucky enough to be able to choose a prize and if that pretty cloth was still there, it would be mine!

When my lucky number was called that night I was delighted to see that "My Prize" was still available! I immediately chose it. I inquired among the Colorado ladies and soon learned that "Ruth Goodman from Denver made the table runner, of course!" It turned out that Ruth Goodman always contributed handmade craft items to all Tri-State events. I still have that lovely table runner.

I don't remember where this Tri-State was held nor which year it was. Maybe it was Las Vegas, New Mexico in 1992. In any case, it was the beginning of a long friendship between Ruth and me. I wrote to thank her for the lovely handwork, and she immediately wrote back. Many letters, cards, recipes, gifts, not to mention phone calls, were exchanged between us after that. More than once, Steve commented that Ruth and I were doing our part to ensure the viability of the United States

Postal Service for years to come. The 440 miles between Albuquerque and Denver kept us from casual visits, but we always looked forward to our time together at Tri-State events.

Ruth was the most giving, the most loving and the most generous friend I have ever known. I suppose there is no way any of us could know how many afghans, scarves, dish towel holders and more she crocheted for raffles and door prizes for Corvair Club events. The same is true for all the beautiful pillow cases, dish towels, table runners, table cloth and napkin sets and quilt squares she embroidered for such occasions. Her talents were extraordinary! And I believe that all of us who received her handcrafts are proud to own them.

Steve and Ruth attended every Tri-State event from the first one (1976, Montrose, Colorado) through this year: 2011, Red River, New Mexico. No one else can say that except Steve Gongora of CNM. (And, Rita Gongora went to all but one!) Wow, what a record for both couples! That's dedication, folks!

We all have great memories of Ruth Goodman and her many contributions in helping to preserve our little Corvairs. And yes, we will miss her happy smiling face. But I, for one, will always have many terrific memories of my Dear Friend and Pen Pal.

Heula, Ruth, Jim Pittman, and Steve Goodman share a meal at a Tri-State Meet.



RMC Meeting Minutes – December 2, 2011

The RMC meeting was called to order by President John Dawson at 7:08pm with 30 members in attendance. The meeting was held in the newly remodeled meeting room at Elway Chevrolet.

Meeting Intro Stuff

- ✓ We welcomed back members Dave and Vicky Russell and their 1965 110 convertible.
- ✓ Minutes were approved as written, with the exception of noting Michael Timmons as a visitor/new member.
- ✓ Treasurer John Dinsdale reported \$3618.61 in the RMC account, and noted that we have not received proceeds from Corsa for the National Convention.
- ✓ Next meeting will be Friday, January 5, 2012, at John Elway Chevrolet.

Upcoming Events

- ✓ RMC Christmas Party will be Saturday, December 17 at 5:00pm. Restaurant will be Mickey's Top Sirloin (same as last year). Order off the menu, bring a \$20 max. gift for the Yankee gift exchange.
- ✓ New Year's Brunch will once again be held at The Other Side Restaurant in Estes Park, 11:00pm on Sunday, January 1, 2012. Cost is \$21.00 per person. Please send payment in advance to John Dinsdale.
- ✓ The Tri-State will be held May 18-20 in Salida, Colorado. Host hotel is the Gateway Inn and Suites. RMC needs to participate in the Francis Boydston Award selection; contact Steve Goodman with your nomination suggestion.
- ✓ Tri-State Tune-Up will precede the Tri-State - it's scheduled for Sunday, April 29 at the Schakel Corvair Compound in suburban Sedalia.
- ✓ We're looking for suggestions for stuff to do in the wintermonths. If you have thoughts of cool Corvair-ish things to do in February and March, please pass them on. Trains, planes, and cars are always big favorites.
- ✓ Jonni Berkman and John Drage will be picking a spring date to run the Convention Rally. Charge up your GPS, just in case...

New Business & Discussions

- ✓ Election of officers was discussed. No offices were challenged, and these current officers have agreed to stay on:
 - President John Dawson
 - Vice President Larry Yoder
 - Treasurer John Dinsdale
 - Historian Steve Goodman
 - Membership Chair Paul Seyforth
 - Auditors Rob Brereton and John Drage
- Note that the Editor and Secretary positions will become vacant as of April, 2012 - please consider taking one of these positions!

✓ Project Updates were discussed:

- Dave Russel gave an update on his fuel system and paint progress, with photos. He's no longer using the "auxiliary" 2-gallon gas tank in the engine bay.
- Rob Brereton reported that his 62/64/65 turbo automatic is now running. It suffered vapor lock over Thanksgiving with the mechanical fuel pump. Rob adjusted the float level and also identified a wiring problem. He also asked for advice on the repair and adjustment of gas heaters.
- John Dawson reported on the "cascade effect" of car projects, noting that his 110 received a Steve Goodman rebuilt transmission and turned up many more issues, like a dangling e-brake cable, missing pan parts, etc. He vows it will be back on the streets soon.

For Sale or Trade

- ✓ Dave Russell is looking for a good dual exhaust system for his 110 locally before trying Clarks. He also needs some trim. Ray Klomp noted that when Clarks says it's loud, it's LOUD. Larry Yoder was checking inventory.
- ✓ Rob Brereton has goodies from his "Atwood Collection" for sale, with lots of old books, magazines, and catalogs.
- ✓ Steve Goodman and John Drage both have stocks of old Communiques. Call for particulars if you need an issue.
- ✓ After listening to all of the "for sale or trade" talk, sage Larry Schubert suggested that members bring lists of their stuff to circulate or hand out at meetings. Good idea!

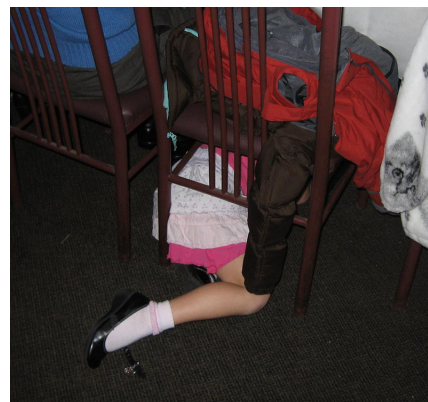
Refreshments: Linda and Bud Duncan provided meeting snacks. A reminder: The Yoders are on deck for January.

Door Prizes: The Duncans brought fine, fresh door prizes. The first was won by Carolyn Taylor, followed by Lynn Yoder, Larry Yoder, and Eric Schakel.

50/50: A total of \$79.00 was taken in. Dave Russell scored \$39.00, with \$40 to RMC.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32pm, with members urged to hang about to look at the short-notice swap items on hand. There were several transactions...

Respectfully submitted by Linae Schakel, RMC Secretary



Kids grow up too fast these days, which make it even more engaging when they revert to "kid behavior" in public places.

Left, Nayla Olwine takes a dive below the table in search of a hidden treasure. Her parents assure us she was not nipping at Christmas cheer...

Very Serious Brakes

Eric Schakel

In two previous Denvair News articles (December 2010, January 2011) Corvair drum brake system hardware and dynamics were discussed in some detail. They concluded that for most drivers, properly-maintained Corvair brakes are capable of handling even the most severe normal usage.

This third brake discussion targets the lunatic fringe of Corvair owners who anticipate using their cars in actual competition. On the track in traffic, the ability to aggressively brake with consistent repeatability and control is crucial for both competitiveness and safety.

Racing stresses systems in ways that street driving simply doesn't duplicate. When I began vintage road racing with YS-066, the stock 140 Corvair engine and street tires didn't provide the speed to murder the brakes. Well-maintained drums with performance upgrades gave acceptable braking.



New racing drum setup after one track weekend. Note SS brake line, vented backing plates, 1" bore cylinder and unequal wear on front and rear shoes. Carbon metallic race shoes generate much heat and dust - drums were throw-away items due to extreme "bellling".

But when the Stinger received a stout Stage III engine (roughly 70 more horsepower than OEM at the rear wheels) and race-level tires the brakes immediately became a bottleneck. Literally, racing the Stinger at that level with drums made Ralph Nader's infamous title very real: It was unsafe at any speed after a few hot laps.

Vintage purists and stubborn traditionalists still covet and hoard sintered metallic linings, but the facts are clear: Heat rejection capabilities inherent in disk

brake design allow very aggressive friction materials to be used with reduced fade and fewer destroyed components.

Use of 4-wheel-drums on a race track today forces the driver to choose either competitive stopping distances (using modern formula friction material) or extended fade resistance (using very hard friction material, such as the sintered metallics). The second issue is control: Self-energizing drum brakes reduce pedal effort with hard sintered metal shoes, but introduce modulation and directional stability issues ("darting") under hard braking.

For racing purposes, there is simply no substitute for properly-engineered 4-wheel disk brakes.

Disk Brake Engineering

Four wheel disk brakes on a Corvair require a custom-engineered system. Almost every brake component must be replaced or modified. Proper engineering is the key - remember, a Corvair is balanced almost perfectly when braking at one full gee of deceleration. That means the front and rear axle bias is 50/50 under hard braking. Your average Camaro will have a front 80/20 bias under the same conditions.

Corvair development had stopped by the time GM made disks a priority - there are no OEM parts from which to draw, and the potential market is so small that vendors won't cough up the cash to design and inventory expensive engineered kits for a few extremists.

That means you're entering a territory where you will be assuming all liability and responsibility for safe, reliable workmanship. It's your life on the line, so it's not a place to cut corners or use junkyard parts with impunity.

The astute reader will note that this article ignores Corvair vendor kits and junkyard options for front disk brakes. While front disks alone may improve stability and modulation under light to medium braking, the calipers (sourced from front-engine cars) inevitably have too much piston area and will lock well in advance of the rear brakes in panic or threshold braking situations. It is certainly possible to engineer a front disk brake application to work with rear drums, but a kit using recycled parts

and offering no recommendations for master cylinder or proportioning hardware is unlikely to have received that kind of attention. Caveat emptor.

Corvair 4-Wheel Disk Brakes

Still interested? The very first step for a would-be Corvair racer is to check with the sanctioning body to confirm whether the rules allow disk brakes on all four corners. If rotor size and caliper type are spelled out, make note. If you're really serious about doing this, ask for the organization's approval in writing. It can save a lot of hassle and frustration!

In the case of the Stinger, the sanctioning body is Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing. Until late 2010 the car was required to comply with the 1967 SCCA General Competition Rules (GCR). At that time, however, the Board of Directors voted to allow cars to move up to the 1981 SCCA General Competition Rules to expand car eligibility.

According to the 1981 GCR, the Stinger may use 4 wheel disk brakes with 10.5" x 1" vented rotors, one caliper per wheel (otherwise unrestricted) and no master cylinder restriction. 14x7 wheels are allowed in place of 13x7 wheels for caliper clearance. I immediately petitioned to modify YS-066 to the 1981 GCR, and received a written approval that is retained on file.

Hardware Selection

Start with the rotors, as they will define dimensions for the other brake hardware. With the rules in mind, a review of Corvair forums identified a slip-on rotor from AWD Chevrolet S-10 trucks in the required size, with the 5" x 4.75" late model bolt pattern. Because the Stinger needs the same braking ability at each axle, four identical rotors were purchased new. Note that this is one area where used parts would be suitable, as long as they could be resurfaced and remain within the OEM specifications.

The next step is to select calipers. I chose Wilwood Dynalite 4-piston forged aluminum calipers for several reasons: 1) They are a compact fixed design and can fit wheels as small as 14" diameter; 2) Wilwood produces this model with three alternate piston sizes, giving the ability to tune the application mechani-

cally, if necessary; 3) The calipers are light and feature stainless steel pistons for rapid heat transfer and durability, and finally; 4) Wilwood produces a wide variety of pad compounds for the caliper, increasing the flexibility and adaptability of the installation.

Had the rules stated that "vintage-correct" calipers must be used, the Wilwoods may have been disallowed. In that case, fixed 4-piston 1965 through 1982 Corvette cast iron Delco-Moraine calipers are a reasonable (but very heavy!) alternate. Several companies sleeve the Vette parts for SS pistons, which should be considered a mandatory upgrade for reliability. GM single-piston cast iron, or later Girlock aluminum two-piston sliding calipers could also be substituted for reasons of cost and/or installation flexibility.

Corvairs destined for road racing will benefit from calipers with same piston area front and rear. The exception might be where dramatically larger tires are permitted on the rear axle – in that case the piston area in the rear could be slightly increased to take advantage of the added traction.

Sliding vs. Fixed Calipers

It's not a coincidence that every race car uses fixed opposed multi-piston calipers, except where specifically disallowed by production rules!

Fixed caliper advantages:

- Quicker initial brake response
- Balanced clamping force
- Equalized pad wear
- Better brake modulation control
- More reliable; fewer moving parts

Fixed caliper downsides:

- Closer mount tolerance requirements
- Caliper may weigh more than comparable slider
- More expensive; rarely found in the recycle yards

Emergency Brake

One of the reasons Corvair 4-wheel disk brake conversions use front-engine parts is due to the desire to retain rear emergency brakes. Many OE rear caliper designs integrate mechanically-actuated parking brake components. Unfortunately, these calipers all have too little piston area to properly balance a rear-biased Corvair.

The aftermarket has recently introduced disk brake rotors with small integrated emergency brake drums, copying OE applications. Spot calipers are also available for emergency braking applications. Both options must be custom-engineered to fit a Corvair rear hub, and neither is currently installed on the Stinger, limiting street legality.

Spot calipers are in the works, and will be added in the future to help the Stinger retain streetable status.

Master Cylinder Selection

A new dual master cylinder, or optionally, two separate single MCs will be necessary to separate the braking of the front and rear hydraulic circuits. The place to shop for an OE dual MC is the Corvette parts bin, as the big 4-piston Delco-Moraine calipers have a huge fluid volume requirement. You'll never have to worry about "too little" brake fluid with a Corvette MC.

Interestingly, while the original Corvair

"fruit jar" single piston master cylinder is marginal for any kind of stand-alone use these days, two could be adapted side-by-side, one for each axle. In racing it's not uncommon to use two single-piston units side-by-side, connected by a balance bar to the primary pedal pushrod. The balance bar allows the two MCs to be adjusted mechanically for proportioning the front-to-rear brake balance.

Another brake proportioning option is the use of an adjustable valve to reduce pressure to the rear wheels. Brake engineers cringe at the thought of limiting pressure to the front wheels, but it was common OEM practice to mechanically reduce pressure to the rear brakes under high pedal effort before the omnipotent anti-lock braking systems became standard equipment.

Wheels and Tires

With this application, 13" wheels and tires are history. It is possible to source 10" diameter rotors and calipers that can be packaged with 13" wheels, but the resulting brake torque won't provide the significant stopping upgrade that makes the effort worthwhile.

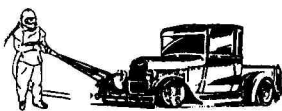
Go with the biggest and best disk brake package your rules allow!

To Be Concluded

Next month we'll detail the actual installation of the brake system onto the Stinger and conclude this lengthy series. Stay tuned!

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Editorial Ramblings

Eric Schakel

Another Season

With the final days of 2011 inexorably slipping away, a rather lame tradition is being replayed: The Media is treating their viewers/readers/listeners to endless reviews of 2011.

There is something self-serving about this annual habit. Perhaps all reporters and videographers take their vacation at the same time as the year closes out, so there's no one to dredge up fresh news for a week or two? Or maybe everyone who makes news, like the crooks and lunatics (and politicians, if you differentiate from the others) declares a holiday break, leaving little news to report.

From a network business perspective, reporting on old news must be a cost benefit, as the news-gatherers have already been paid. Maybe it's a clever scheme to boost year-end cash flow?

Regardless of the rationale, I'm oddly insulted by this - it's as if Media thinks I don't remember the big events of 2011.

Of course, the Media glossed right over one of the biggest events: Corvairs With Altitude. For those of us involved, it's great to have an event of that magnitude behind us, particularly since it seems to have been a resounding success. Give yourself a round of applause, RMC!

On a personal note, Media also missed the Stinger's return to the race track on the downhill side of 2011. How could they not appreciate the thrill of a rare vintage race car upgraded with stunningly effective disk brakes?

Some members made huge strides. Justin

Henry managed a buggy project and a Corsa coupe rebuild. How do you top that? The Breretons acquired a complete "veteran package" and now have two self-propelled Corvairs.

On the other side of the ledger, we lost some members in 2011. Some are club dropouts: Waning interest, Corvairs sold off, shifts of personal or professional focus, and other influences. Several members won't be back, most recently Ruth Goodman. I hope you'll join me as I bow my head to those who will live on in photos and memory only. Time marches on.

While it's reassuring to have the winter solstice behind me, with the days once again gaining daylight and the prospect of spring around the corner, I can see that there is still much to be done. Our Colorado front range winters are rarely brutal, but the short days and colder temperatures make it difficult to get useful automotive work done. And though I hate to admit it, my joints don't flex quite as well as they used to, and the cold seems, well, colder than it did even a decade ago.

More than mere excuses, these complaints serve to remind that I'm using up my allotment of new seasons, and I have so many things to do! Maybe that's why we repeat the frustrating ritual of New Years Resolutions each

year - it's a rare opportunity to wipe the slate clean and start the project list over from scratch.

For the upcoming 2012 season, I have a renewed commitment to racing the Stinger. And, although this is a shocking stretch, I hereby vow to apply paint to the Corvair Formerly Known As Pig. Those two accomplishments might even cause me to lose weight, but I certainly don't want to be pushing my luck by making that into a resolution...

A fresh season is just around the corner. It's up to each of us to make sure the Media is our only source of review as 2013 approaches. Get your season ready to go, and have a Happy New Year.



Vented disks transformed Stinger - do you have a project in the works or plan stage to improve your Corvair experience?

RMC Corvair Happenings!

- Sunday, January 1, 2012 — New Year's Day Brunch in Estes Park, (probably, nobody tells me nuthin') at The Other Side Restaurant. Stay tuned!
- January 6, 2012 — RMC Meeting at Elway Chevrolet on Broadway, 7:00pm
- Sunday, April 29, 2012 — Tri-State Tune-Up at Schakel Corvair Compound, 11:00am. Watch for details!
- May 18-20, 2012 — Tri-State Meet, Salida, Colorado. Watch for details!

For fast turnaround, make your check payable to RMC and mail it to: *RMC, c/o John Dinsdale, 3240 Billings St., Aurora, CO 80011-2231*

Due Dues Reminder

January

Kevin & Robin Shipman

December

Justin Henry
Don Kellogg
James & Norma Leach
Jim Reich

November

John Dawson
Harlan Colburn
Robert & Jayne Reiter

Gone Next Month

Jim & Jackie Arnold



Another GM oddball bites the dust. Saab enthusiasts (all 17 of them) are railing against General Motors for blocking the last-minute life support efforts of Swedish Automobile NV to bring in Chinese auto company backing.

The Saab 92 (see image at left) began production in 1949, the first car from the former WWII fighter plane manufacturer. With a low drag coefficient to allow the 2-cylinder engine to push it to dramatic speeds, Saab built a reputation as an innovator.

The company prospered and grew through the post-war years, bringing front wheel drive and turbocharging into the mainstream with the very successful 900 series cars in the late 1970s and early 80s. Sadly, as the rest of the world adopted similar technology, Saab failed to keep their innovation fresh, and was on a downhill slope when GM purchased a share in the company in 1989.

In a rough parallel to the Corvair, it is likely that rational future Saab historians will recognize that the two

decades of GM ownership likely prolonged the company's life, as GM poured cash into the Swedish firm. No word on whether or not there will soon be a Clark's Saab Parts subsidiary.

- Izzy Guiffe

You have a Corvair!

If you aren't already a member, we invite you to join Rocky Mountain Corsa (RMC), a local chapter of the national Corvair Society of America (CORSA). RMC is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of Corvair automobiles.

We meet the first Friday evening of every month at John Elway Chevrolet, 5200 S. Broadway, in Englewood. Meetings are held in the upstairs training room, starting at 7:00pm.

There are a number of benefits from joining the group, including an annual show, monthly group events, a monthly local newsletter, **Denvair News**, and **Corvair Communique**, an award-winning monthly magazine published by CORSA. Whether you race, show, or just drive your Corvair, you'll find others who share your interests.

Combined single/family membership to both RMC and CORSA costs just \$68.00 per year. Dues can be mailed to RMC, PO Box 27058, Lakewood, CO 80227-0058, or simply pay at the monthly meeting - we hope to hear from you soon!

Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Telephone Info: _____

Corvairs in your life: _____

Referring Member (if applicable): _____