The Official Publication of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the Corvair Society of America --- Chapter 947

Dedicated to the enjoyment, history and preservation of the *Chevrolet Corvair* produced from 1960 through 1969. This unique, rear-engined, air-cooled automobile grabs as much attention today as it did 60 years ago!



#### **VOLUME 341**

#### **FEBRUARY 2022**

Look for us on the Web! https://www.SFBACorsa.org



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Kevin Hightower's Electro-Charged Corvair

Next SFBA Zoom Meeting Thursday, Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> @7:00PM #243 888 8339

## Letter From the Editor

hope you were able to attend our last meeting. We had 10 people join in. Not bad considering it's a busy time of year for all.

Last month I put in a little blurb about how SFBA would be 50 years old in 2022 as it was founded in 1972. Thinking this was pretty old, members wondered what was the oldest Corvair Club in the country? Little did I realize how much interest this would spark. I heard from Ed Thompson (Milwaukee Corvair Club & SFBA), Dave Newell (SFBA), Mike Dawson (Heart of America Corvair Owners Association), Charley Biddle (Chicagoland Corvair Enthusiasts). Looking at the emails, I compiled the following list of when these clubs were first active.

SFBA Corsa - '72 Milwaukee Corvair Club - '70 Chicagoland Corvair Enthusiasts - '68 Heart Of America Corvair Owners Association - '64 Capital City Corvair Club in Madison, WI - '63 Rocky Mountain CORSA - '61 Opposers Club in Pasadena - '59 (according to Dave Newell)

I most likely don't have the club's names correct officially. I am sure I would hear back if I made a huge mistake. Also, not all of these clubs are still around or have been active continually since inception.

The responses I received were very interesting and I wish I had the room to run all their letters. But organizing the emails would be a challenge even if I could find 3 or 4 empty pages to use. But it is heartening to note that our newsletter actually gets read by so many people across the country. Even the "dry" Minutes pages!

I received this note from Skip Polacchi. Skip is a long time SFBA member that moved to Manton several years back. He has lots of Corvair parts and regularly participates in Swap Meets.

## Current SFBA Corsa Officers

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Vice-President Harry Kypreos, 7840 Creekside Dr,

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san-francisco-bay-area-corvair-club

"Hello Clark, Hoping you & Carol are well and wishing the best of a New Year for the family. Our family is well and looking forward to

(see **Letter...** on page 10)

On The Cover: Kevin Hightower is converting his '63 Spyder into an all electric car. Read about why he chose this car and how the project is progressing. The picture on the cover is of his "third brake light" which he converted from the stock Turbo emblem. Part 1 of this story starts on page 5.

The Spyder Web is published twelve times a year by SFBA Corsa, Chapter 947 of the Corvair Society Of America (CORSA). The group meets monthly on the first Thursday at 7:00 PM at Black Bear Diner on Sycamore Valley Rd in Danville except for special occasions. Membership costs \$25/yr (membership in CORSA, \$38/yr, is encouraged). An associate membership (newsletter only) is avialable for \$15/yr. Memberships begin on January 1 of each year (first year is prorated).

Advertising space in the Spyder Web is available for \$50/yr (1/4 page), \$75/yr (1/2 page), and \$100/yr (full page). Business card size ads are \$25/yr but do not include a subscription to the newsletter. All material should be sent to the editor (address above) or emailed to CaCalkins@astound.net. Material must be received at least two weeks prior to the next meeting date.

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# Minutes of the Last Meeting

#### January 6, 2021

The regular meeting started a bit after 7:00. At the prior Board Meeting it was Josh, Harry, and I. Harry will send in our CORSA dues for 2021 & 2022. Josh mentioned that new members were paying via PayPal and suggested that SFBA set up its own account, so he doesn't have to forward the money to Harry (the web site currently lists his own personal PayPal account). Josh will forward Harry the info to do this.

Josh has ordered some colorful SFBA Corsa decals (as shown in last month's newsletter) and the plan is to pass them out to current and new SFBA members. He is having Flat Six Graphics do T-shirts also and will let us know when these are available. Josh said he is currently using Zazzle for Club merchandise, but they are getting hard to deal with. They keep asking for proof that are material is not infringing on GM copyrights. Josh plans to switch to another platform.

When the regular meeting was opened (a bit after 7:00), we were quickly joined by Lane, Christy, Carl, Chris, Joe, Don, and David. Sorry if I missed anyone.

**Treasury Report:** Harry reported that the bank balance stands at \$4,576.75. Clark has a \$25 check from Skip ready to send in.

**Membership:** Josh did not report any new members this month.

**Old Business:** Nothing discussed.

**New Business:** As mentioned above, Josh will look into changing Club merchandise vendors and also into getting SFBA Corsa's own PayPal account.

The Corvair Preservation Foundation is having a fund-raiser. They are hoping to acquire a new building for a more permanent display.

Events: The SFBA Holiday Luncheon was a huge success. Of the 28 people that indicated they would join us, 25 people came. Good turnout. Considerably more than previous years. We had three tables with lively discussions. It's always hard to get around and talk with everyone, but we tried our be4st. Everybody had a great time. There was only one Corvair in the parking lot, that was Elizabeth's very nice late model 140 convertible (at lease someone drove one!). Buck sent us a Thank You note saying how much he and Eugenia enjoyed the luncheon. Thanks to everyone for participating!

Josh said that Central Coast Corsa is having a swap meet January 15th in Kettleman City. Quite a drive but if you need something, it would be worthwhile.

The next Corsa Meet-Up (2nd Thursday) will feature Rick Morris, first Corsa President. Should be interesting. In February it will be Cal Clark. And may be Gabe Lopez (from Sterling Restorations) later in the year.

There is a Mecum Auction coming up that will feature 40 Corvairs.

Our next Meet-Up will be at Donut-Time in El Cerrito this coming Sunday (01/09/2022). We are still working on the Aviation Museum in Oakland

**Tech:** Josh said his heads with the dropped valve seat are still at the shop. He probably shouldn't have said "no

rush" on these. Also he picked up a 180 Turbo engine from Lovejoy and some 140 heads from someone else. Where does he keep all this stuff?

Carl indicated he has been having a hard time in getting all of the brake lines to seal properly. There is one iunction that keeps leaking. Maybe it's a bad flare. All of the parts are new from Clark's. Don suggested he order new lines from Rock Auto (they are cheap and they deliver to Australia) at least until he gets the car registered. Following the Meet-Up in Lafayette, Chris finally car his Corvair home (Elizabeth followed him to make sure he made it okay). He had David come over and check into engine and they found lots of problems. Whoever rebuilt this engine before Chris got it just didn't know what they were doing. It has only 250 miles on the rebuild, now Chris is looking for a new motor as this one is not usable!

Joe showed picture of the chipped throw-out bearing shaft. This is a hollow piece and apparently very brittle. He chipped it when trying to pry out the seal using a seal puller. Ouch!



(See *Minutes..* on page 10)

# Coming Events in 2022...

Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> Regular SFBA meeting at 7:00PM via Zoom, ID = "243 888 8339"

March 3<sup>rd</sup> Regular SFBA meeting at 7:00PM via Zoom, ID = "243 888 8339"

April 30th-May 1st 15th Annual Autorama Drive-In, Cal Expo, Sacramento, CA

June 25-26<sup>th</sup> Vairfest, Arroyo Grande, CA

July 12-16<sup>th</sup> CORSA International Convention, Peachtree City, GA

# SFBA CORSA Meeting Schedule 2022

Thursday Jan 6, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

#### Thursday Feb 3, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Mar 3, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Apr 7, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday May 5, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Jun 2, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Jul 7, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Aug 4, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Sep 1, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Oct 6, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Nov 3, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

Thursday Dec 1, 7:00 PM SFBA Regular Zoom meeting, ID = "243 888 8339"

# Lucy's Journey from Gas to Electric

## 1963 Chevy Corvair Electric Vehicle Conversion by Kevin Hightower - Part 1

Five years ago, when I was finishing up a two year assignment in England, I had extra room in a shipping container heading back to the states. "What could I fill it with that I couldn't get back home?", I asked myself. Cases of whisky were high on the list, but then I had this crazy idea of bringing home a right-hand-drive, classic Mini and converting it to a high powered electric beast. It didn't work out, as it seems to rain a lot in the UK, and Mini + rain = lots of rust, but that was the start of the electrification journey

of a classic.

Fast forward to the Covid filled 2020 and my first two car garage house, and the search started for a car to "restomod" - restore and upgrade to modern, while keeping as much originality as possible. It had to be light, relatively simple electronics, great on the eyes, affordable and a real restoration car.

After about three months of searching, a 1963 Corvair Monza Spyder

showed up on my list and in my price range. My aunt learned to drive stick on a Corvair, and my father and uncle both owned one way before I was born. This one was driveable, made in the Oakland facility, original paint, lots of work to do, but drivable and it had lived in the bay area its entire life. On the way home, I was being pushed around by the wind on the bridge over the bay and the steering dead zone was so large that she got her new name, **Lucy.** 





While she was still driving, the first step was braking, steering and suspension. I did some testing to make sure everything was aligned and in good shape, and verified the brakes were just redone. New shocks and springs (with heavier ones up front to support the batteries) were definitely needed, but nothing critical.

Next was the removal of all the ICE components. The engine was a turbo and looked like it was a 64, but it was hard to tell. I sold it for \$1100, with the caveat that the buyer had to do all the

work. I am sure I could have got more for it, but the labor savings was worth it. The gas tank also came out and sold for another \$100. So at this point, I had the car ready for conversion for only \$2300.

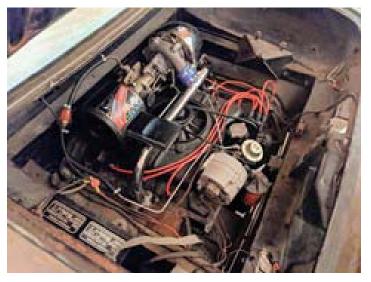
After the motor was out, I cleaned up the transaxle, checked all the gears and replaced all the seals. New U-joints and it was ready for the electric motor, which has a custom mount to align to the existing Corvair bell housing and a custom spline to align to the transaxle shaft. On the other end, I

made a custom mount for it and got an LS4 motor mount welded to it to use the existing mounts at the rear of the car.

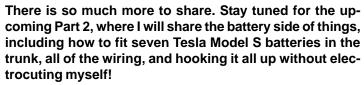
The motor I chose is a Netgain Hyper 9 High Voltage. It runs up to 180 volts and is rated at 120 HP and 172 ft/lbs of torque. That may sound low for the cost, but electric vehicles get all that torque immediately and up to 8000 RPM, which is a drastically different butt-in-seat feeling than the stock motor.

(see Lucy... page 6)

# Lucy...











## Raffle Car And Donations Needed To Help CPF

## - Josh Deitcher

Hello fellow SFBA CORSA members. Are you aware of the Corvair Preservation Foundation (CPF) and the Corvair Museum? If you are, here is a little refresher on their mission. If you aren't, keep reading. There's good info here.

The Corvair Preservation Foundation (CPF) - an affiliate of the Corvair Society of America - is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation which is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of the Corvair. The mission of the Corvair Preservation Foundation is to document all aspects of Corvair history and to preserve significant Corvair artifacts for the enjoyment and education of the public. CPF also gives out a scholarship every year.

The CPF and the Corvair Museum need our help! Currently, CORSA is working in conjunction with CPF and the museum to raise funds to find a permanent home for the Corvair Museum where the museum property is owned by CPF and can continue to tell the story of the Corvair for generations to come without the fear of rent hikes, property owner change or worse... eviction!

There are a few ways to help. All are pretty easy.

You can become a member of the museum. Sustaining membership is even better as it guarantees funds that CPF can bookmark toward operating costs.

You can make a cash donation to CPF. CPF is a 501(c)(3) so all donations are tax deductible.

Amazon gives to charities and CPF is on the list. When you buy from Amazon and CPF is your charity of choice, Amazon will give a portion of all purchases from your account to CPF. It's small, but every penny helps and once you choose CPF as your charity, you're done!

You can buy a raffle ticket or two (or 10!). The museum currently has a beautiful black with red interior 1961 Monza that they are raffling off at the Atlanta convention this summer. This car entered the concourse at the mini convention in Springfield last year and scored 94+ points! If you win, you have to figure out a way to get it home. Oh, what a problem to have!

You can volunteer to donate your time to the fundraising committee. Currently, CORSA president Mike Hall is looking for a few volunteers to establish and maintain a fundraiser com-





mittee for the museum. A few people are already on the committee, but if you are interested, I can put you in touch.

All information can be found on the CORSA website www.corvair.org. If you want a paper raffle ticket or if you have any specific questions about CPF, the museum or the volunteer committee, please send me an email vondeitch@gmail.com.

## SFBA CORSA Members & Friends of the Club

### - Josh Deitcher

We hope everyone is doing well and staying safe out there. Below are a few items of note to precede the upcoming Spyder Web newsletter.

SFBA CORSA is 50 years old this year! This is a remarkable accomplishment that couldn't have happened without you and without the many Corvair lovers that established, fostered, grew and sustained the club over the last half century. Thank you to all current, past and even future SFBA CORSA members!

With that said, it is January, and that means that dues are due for the 2022 year. \$25 for full membership and \$15 for associate membership. Your continued support is greatly appreciated. This year, being our 50th anniversary, we are giving out a 50th anniversary decal designed by Scott Howey at FlatSix Graphics. These decals will only be given out to SFBA members, so get yours! (image of decal attached). Payment info is at the bottom of this email.

Speaking of FlatSix, SFBA CORSA now has a store on the FlatSix Graphics etsy page. We worked out a deal with Scott to give club members a really great rate on merchandise. Way cheaper than what we were able to do with zazzle and Scott is a Corvair guy, so it's a win/win. \*click here\*

No suggestions for a Feb in person meetup, so with this covid variant still running wild and potentially inclimate weather, lets table until March. In March, Lane Davidson is working out an event to meet at the Aviation museum at the Oakland airport. Details to follow... There are also recurring cars & coffee events. Some that SFBA

and Valley members attend are listed on the club calendar. \*click here\*

The zoom meeting is still the first Thurs, of the month, The room number will always be 243 888 8339. There was some confusion last month, so we will make sure to email everyone here a link prior to the meeting. These get a great turnout and have been helpful and educational to many members and attendees. The plan going into 2022 is to continue to do the 1st Thurs. zoom followed by an "in person" event on one of the weekend days during the month. Hendrick's coffee shop in Lafayette may be the default meetup unless there is a special event (Vairfest, for example). Have an idea or want to host an in person event. let us know!!!

Lastly, some CORSA/CPF news. Are you a member of CORSA? If not and funds allow, join CORSA! If you are a first time member, your membership will net you a copy of Corvair Basics. Everyone should have a copy of this book in their Corvair library, regardless of mechanical skill. Good for the novice, good for the pro. Also, the Corvair Preservation Foundation (CPF) is looking to buy or build a permanent home for the Corvair mu-

seum. Funds are needed, so join CPF or give what you can. They are also raffling off a beautiful concourse 1961 Monza. Message Josh for more details or \*click here\*

To pay SFBA dues, you can:

Send a check made out to SFBA CORSA to:

SFBA CORSA c/o Josh Deitcher 375 Harris Ave Rodeo, Ca 94572 (if you already mailed a check to Clark, Ray or Harry, that's ok too!)

Paypal: vondeitch@gmail.com (person to person transaction)
Venmo: Josh-DIY-Deitcher
Zelle (email Josh for details)

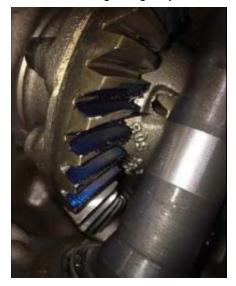
Thank you again for your continued support of SFBA CORSA. We appreciate you all!

Ray Welter - President Harry Kypreos - VP/Treasurer Clark Calkins - Secretary/Newsletter Josh Deitcher - Membership/Web/ CORSA Western Division Director SFBA CORSA sfbacorsa.org



## Minutes... (from pg 3)

By checking the wear pattern, he thinks the part is still usable and plans to put it back together after removing any sharp edges. He also showed pictures of the play in the throw-out bearing that most felt was excessive. While he has it apart, he will replace it. The part is replaceable but would require disassembling the whole unit. Joe showed many pictures of what he has already done on the differential and trans. It's coming along very well.



Here Joe is checking the gear wear pattern. Looks very even!
Joe asked about Clark's U-joints. Are they okay? Don said he had lots of



When Joe assembled the trans cover he paid special attention to getting the shifting forks aligned. He was using Permatex and didn't think he would get a second chance without having to replace the gasket..

trouble getting his installed. Had to grind away material. Christy said to use Spicer U-joints (available from Summit Auto). Not cheap but very good. Joe also asked about raising the fan bearing to reduce clearances. Christy said yes this will work but "don't do it". He has seen cases where the fan lifts under load and hits the sheet metal shroud. David said to be careful when installing the belt guide that the bolts are not too long. They can contact the fan and damage it

Joe showed a very interesting video of the fan belt under load. A friend of

his put a camera (a GoPro or iPhone) in the engine compartment and then drove the car fairly hard. Up-shifting and down-shifting and you can see the belt finally come off! His car was using Aluminum pulleys from American Pi. David said he has used all kind of belts over the years. All seem good with very few belt problems.

Christy said he has a Nash Fan but hasn't installed it yet. He plans to use it in his Ultra-Van but won't have room for the revised plenum shroud.

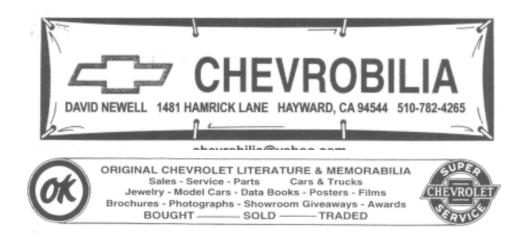


**Swap & Sell:** Josh said there is a junk yard in Richmond that has an early Corvair (year?). It won't start. He is asking \$400 and has title. Contact Josh if you are interested.

Meeting adjourned about 9:15.

Respectively submitted.

Clark Calkins, secretary



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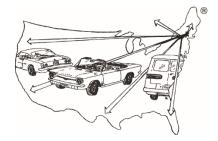
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## Letter...

a return to normal activities. Our big trip last year was to the Fan Belt Toss in Palm Springs, as always was a great weekend seeing old & new acquaintances.

I would like to change my ad in the newsletter. Enclosed shows what was sold and continue the few left. Also my dues for 2022. Thanks, Skip & Thelma"

Kevin Hightower has kindly written up details of his Corvair project. He converted a '63 Spyder to all electric using modern day motors, batteries, and electronics. Part 1 appears in this issue and more will follow. He sent in many more pictures than I had room to include.

I received an email from Larry Tustison (760) 518-0323 in San Diego. He has these Corvair assemblies for sale.

"'65 Corsa convertible project car-60% done welding all seams on car, rust free body, on rotisserie, tele wheel, complete 4 speed diff/trans gone thru with new seals/gaskets, fully rebuilt trailing arms, most all parts are with car, but will need to be reinstalled by buyer

'65 Turbo engine with carb, needs dist, fuel pump and exhaust, was gone thru several years ago with new seals and checked all components for clean and wear. all found to be in very good condition"

He also has MANY NOS parts (way too many for me to list here). If you need something, give him a call. He is moving so don't wait too long.

Keep the newsletter interesting by sending in pictures and stories of you latest projects. Even if you only adjust the carburetors or rebuild the transmission, take photos and send them in! When we see others working on their Corvairs it gives us more incentive to do the same.

As detailed on page 8, it's time for SFBA Club dues for most of us. We try to keep everyone aligned at the first of each year. If you receive a printed newsletter, the dues date in on the lable. For others Josh keeps a spreadsheet account of everyone and Josh or I will let you know when you are due. Thanks!

Our next Zoom meeting will be Thursday, Febuary 3rd starting at 7:00 PM. Remember our meeting ID# is 243 888 8339.

# Corvairlassifieds

#### **CORVAIRS FOR SALE**

'64 Spyder Cvrt 2nd owner. Owned since 1977. Excellent Condition. Engine original, body and interior fully restored. Yellow / black. Fully documented. Located in Fremont. email sfbacorsa@gmail.com for contact info. Asking \$25K OBO (07/21)



'64 Monza Coupe 110/AT, engine rebuilt by Mell, good interior. Been kept in running condition Lassen county area (can deliver). Asking \$3000. Contact Dan McCormick (510)919-9527 (03/21)

#### CORVAIR PARTS FOR SALE

**Skip Polacchi** has the following parts for sale. Best to call evenings (530)474-4227.

**1 Pair Late 110** rebuilt heads - \$250

1 Pair Big Valve Heads, Bill Thomas. all new parts, angle port exhaust, rotated manifold, w/mod carbs, linkage - \$1700 firm

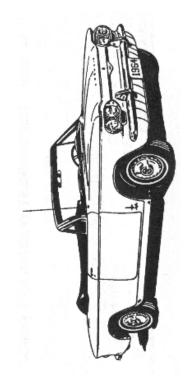
1 New complete Clark's Ultimate 140 carb kit, linkage & air filter - \$700

1 All New Parts for an early 102 hp NOS crank, cam, 0.030 pistons & barrels+heads etc. You assemble - \$700

We still have other misc items

#### **CORVAIR MECHANICS**

David Gray: Fairfield - Retired GM/ Corvair Mechanic. Can do minor repairs, engine rebuilds, tune-ups. Located in Fairfield but can travel. Also has parts for sale. (916)531-0905 (corvairguru@gmail.com)



## Treasurers Report - Harry Kypreos

#### January 2022

Date	Activity	Check #	Credit	Debit	Balance	Status
01/01/2022	Begining Balance			\$4,462.48		
12/29/2021	Newsletter Decem		(\$43.18)	4,494.30	(*)	
01/04/2022	Membership Renewals		\$25.00		4,519.30	Skip (*)
01/06/2021	Membership Renewals		\$75.00		4,537.48	
12/31/2021	Ending Balance				4,519.30	
January Totals		\$100.00	(\$43.18)	\$4,519.30	estimate	

(\*) Not sent to Harry yet.

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