



Vair Views

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Prez Says

I've only been to a handful of CORSA national conventions, but the 2024 convention in Dayton tops my list. The Marriott Hotel was very nice, with plenty of space for events and vendors, and great hotel staff. The Concours was held at the beautiful Carillon Historical Park that includes multiple buildings showcasing the regions many industrial innovations and transportation achievements. And the autocross event was held at an actual race facility. Everything was well planned and organized. An overall fantastic event.

SMCC was well represented at the monthly Memories Car Club show at Faith Church on August 2nd. I understand we had 7 or 8 cars in attendance. Thank you to Bob Bauer for coordinating the event. I planned to attend but unfortunately came down with "convention Covid" soon after getting back to town. (Yes, that did take a bit of the luster off the convention experience!).

Looking ahead, Saturday 8/24 we're holding a meeting at the Jefferson Underground at 10 am. Then we have the All Chevy Car Show at the Museum of Transportation on Sunday September 8th and our annual trip to Chuck-A-Burger on Saturday September 28th.

I hope you'll make time to participate in one or more of these events!

See you soon,
Kent



What could be more red white and blue than the Chevy Corvair? Photo taken at the CORSA convention by Kent Goddard.

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Pontiac's Corvair

By Mark Morgan

SMCC member



Pontiac Polaris mock-up

In the world of automotive history and journalism, you never know what you're going to find. Case in point: the July issue of a Brit publication, *Octane*, included a highly entertaining article on the Pontiac Tempest (yes, the Brits regularly write on American heavy metal). Pontiac introduced the model in 1960, during the first round of the "import wars. GM's Y platform served as the foundation for the new Tempest and also for Buick's Special and Oldsmobile's F85.



Polaris mock-up rear

Here's the interesting thing: originally, Pontiac's new small car, meant to take on the VW Beetle and other small foreign cars, was supposed to be a badge-engineered Corvair. Tentative model name? "Pontiac Polaris," most likely in reference to the north star (or, possibly in salute to the Navy's new sub-launched ballistic missile, the UGM-27A *Polaris*).

Typically for GM and the other major auto manufacturers, it was common for all divisions to have variants of the same basic platforms/designs. That expanded the market; in the case of the Corvair and its possible spin-offs, it would also serve to defray the high development costs of the 'Vair by spreading those costs around two or three different versions of the basic design.

With full-scale production of the Corvair approaching, Pontiac, Oldsmobile and Buick management received a directive from GM corporate to initiate design and development of their versions. Work on the initial design mockups for the Poliard, Oldsmobile Sixty-Six and the Buick started in 1958, with the intent of debuting the cars to the public during the 1961 model year.

Per *Motor Trend's* Don Keefe, Pontiac's designers took the basic Corvair sedan and added Pontiac features, including a copy of the 1959 full-size Pontiac split-grill front end and rectangular rear taillights. The upper cheat line stopped short of and curled below and behind the headlights. Keefe added, "It was an attractive car overall, though it did not scream out the performance message that Pontiac was quickly becoming known for. There were other problems as well. Pontiac upper management, particularly General Manager Semon E. "Bunkie" Knudsen and Assistant Chief Engineer John Z DeLorean, were not impressed with it."

And how! According to *Octane*,

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Pontiac's Corvair continued

GM's top brass wanted to recoup costs by rolling out the platform to Pontiac, Oldsmobile and Buick, even building prototypes badged Pontiac Polaris and Oldsmobile Sixty-Six. Yet those divisions were proudly autonomous, and they balked at being handed a leftfield design with minimal development potential. Knudsen explained in 1994: 'The Corvair is a rear-engined, air-cooled car. How do I make it different? There's no grille to be restyled and the engine can't be exchanged for a Pontiac powerplant – so how do I justify the extra \$500 to \$1000 to sell it with a Pontiac nameplate?'"

In addition, Pontiac engineers and leadership very concerned about the Corvair's swing-axle rear suspension. Octane added, "Though its space age styling was not unattractive, it illustrated Knudsen's point that the car's fundamental Corvairness was impossible to hide."

Ultimately, GM's leadership dropped the idea and authorized Pontiac, Buick and Oldsmobile to move forward with their own small cars on the Y platform compact design. Despite being saddled with a limited development budget, DeLorean and Pontiac's engineers came up with a truly unique power train for the car, featuring a 195 ci/3.2L "Tempest Trophy" slant four up front and a two-speed transaxle at the back end, connected by a "rope drive" flexible driveshaft that allowed for flatter floors in the passenger compartment.



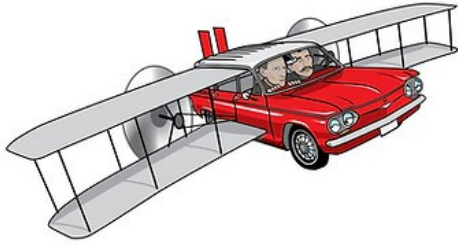
Oh, and the rear suspension was a swing-axle design. Ah well, when facing a limited development budget, sometimes you have to make the hard choices.

Deliveries of Tempest coupes, convertibles, sedans and wagons to dealerships started in the fall of 1960 and in the end the unique Pontiac sold pretty well. *Motor Trend* selected the Tempest as the magazine's 1961 Car of the Year (following 1960's award winner, the Chevrolet Corvair). However, in 1963 Pontiac revised the design and pushed the Tempest into midsize territory, complete with an optional 326 ci V8; in 1964, this design provided the foundation for the legendary GTO.

As for Pontiac's brief flirtation with a Corvair-based, rear-engine compact, the mockup was

eventually destroyed, as were the Buick and Oldsmobile proposals. All that remains are a few photographs and the occasional article. There are still a number of the first generation Tempests out running around; interestingly enough, the car *Octane* tested in its article belonged to Corsa's Larry Claypool.

Sources: *Classic & Sports Car*, July 2024; Don Keefe, "1965 Pontiac Polaris – What If?", *Motor Trend*, 30 May 2014; "How the Corvair Almost Became A Pontiac," *Motor City Garage*, 24 January 2023; "Pontiac Polaris – The Stillborn Rear Engine Pontiac," New Jersey Association. of Corvair Enthusiasts, 23 October 2023.; Larry Printz, "The Rearview Mirror: Forgotten, Yet Popular, Pontiac," *The Detroit Bureau*, 8 October 2022; John Liberman, "Behold the Polaris, a Rear-Engined Pontiac!", *Jalopnik*, 24 April 2007.



CORSA Convention— Dayton, Ohio.

SMCC flying high!

The Dayton, Cincinnati, and Columbus chapters hosted a spectacular and well-organized 4-day Annual Convention in late July in Dayton, Ohio. The SMCC was well-represented and successfully won a number of awards.

Monday's events included a Welcome Party, valve cover races and cruise-in with people's choice awards. The Concours d'Elegance on Tuesday was held at the beautiful Carillon Historical Park. The Park's walkways were lined with period-correct buildings housing local transportation history (stagecoaches, early bicycles, early 20th century cars, street cars and a large Wright Brothers building) and displays from local companies such as Delco (Dayton Engineering Laboratories Co. which became a subsidiary of GM) and National Cash Register (NCR). Tuesday evening included a dinner at the very large US Air Force Museum which houses an impressive collection of historical aircraft, large and small, old and new. Wednesday included the Economy Run in the morning and the Rally in the afternoon. The autocross on Thursday was held at Kil-Kare Raceway, followed by a happy hour, banquet and awards ceremony on Thursday evening to conclude the festivities.

SMCC members in attendance were Mike Hall, Mike and Phillip Kost, Rob and Jeanne Landers, Bryan, Joan and Trevor Monninger, Doti Williamson, David Wison, and Kent and Kris Goddard. We did quite well in the various competitions, taking home the following awards:

Mike Kost: 2nd place in the Rally (primary class)

Phillip Kost: 5th place in autocross IS-3 class with a time of 57.742 seconds

Rob Landers: Silver in Concours with a score of 94.33; 1st place in autocross IS-5 class with a time of 52.692 seconds

Trevor Monninger: Gold in the Concours with a score of 97.67; 1st place in autocross IS-1 class with a time of 60.7 seconds; 2nd place in the Economy Run 2-Carb Manual Transmission class at 31 mpg

Kent Goddard: Gold in the Concours with a score of 96.62; 3rd Place in the Economy Run 4-Carb class at 30.8 mpg

It was great to see several hundred Corvairs all in one place, representing every model and configuration you can imagine. But best of all was sharing the experience with fellow SMCC friends and enjoying "Corvair Comradery" with the 550 people who attended.

Preparations are underway for the 2025 Convention in California. Is anyone up for a LONG road trip? By Kent Goddard

Corsa Convention Photos



Left-to-right: Kris and Kent Goddard, Mike Kost, Phillip Kost, Doti Williamson, David Wilson, Jeanne Landers, Rob Landers, Bryan, Trevor and Joan Monninger.





That looks a lot like Kent's car doesn't it?



And this one looks a lot like Trevor's automatic Spyder.

What a beautiful venue for a car show, huh? And great weather too.



Dean Meyer

Owning his dream Vair

SMCC Member Profile

Dean owns a 1964 Goldwood Yellow Spyder convertible, and as he says somewhat disappointedly, "It's not running." He says he always like the Corvair but his now ex-wife was not fond of them. For Dean, he was most attracted to the rear engine aspect and independent suspension that made the Corvair one of the better handling cars of the 1960s.

We asked Dean if he had any interesting story about his Corvair but he said he hasn't owned it long enough to have any great stories. Stick around Dean, something sure to come up. His yellow 1964 is Dean's dream Corvair and we can understand why. That mellow yellow color was a hot-selling color for all of Chevrolet in the '60s. Dean hasn't owned his Spyder long enough and hasn't been in the re-build stage for long so he still hasn't come across a job he really hates but we all know he'll come across something eventually that busts knuckles and generates choice words better left unsaid. And NO, he hasn't thrown a fanbelt and we imagine he never will.

Dean's father worked for 35 years at the Fischer Body plant at Natural Bridge and Union before and after it became a GM plant. Most of his time was on the passenger car line and Dean would love to own a 1965 Impala SS convertible like the many his Dad must have helped assemble. Still, Dean is not choosey. He'd also be happy with another C10 pickup. Of course, it won't surprise you to learn that the car Dean would most like to have back is his 1965 Impala SS. It was black with a white interior and a 327 Powerglide. A simple and stunning combination to say the least.

Dean's fondest car related memory is sitting at Creve Coeur park in his 1973 Nova SS along with his buddy in his 1963 1/2 Ford Galaxie 500 XL, hangin' out. Two cars ten years apart but still cool. How is it that those half years are as important for cars as they are for young kids? You know, like "I'm five and a half years old. Maybe it's because the cars make us feel young again?"

Besides the Nova SS and Impala SS Dean has owned a 1965 C10 pickup and another Impala. This one was a 1966 Impala Sport Coupe. After all, when your dad works at Chevy you buy Chevy's.

In his free time Dean likes pickleball and trout fishing. We hope he saves time to finish the Spyder so we can see it soon. We wish you well with it Dean. Reach out if we can help.

Stay tuned or photos of Dean and his Corvair. We'll publish them in future issues.

SMCC 2024 Meeting and Event Schedule

BE SURE TO NOTICE THE NEW MEETING SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 24TH

August 24 Meeting at Jefferson Underground, 10 am

September 28 Chuck-A-Burger get together and meeting. Kurt Arthur facilitating plans.

Museum of Transportation All Chevy Show. Date to come.

October 26 Tech Session at Kent Goddard's "Garage Mahal" (the larger garage at his house). Kent is planning this event.

November 28 Ameren Thanksgiving Day Parade. Tom James is coordinating.

December SMCC Christmas Luncheon at Rich & Charlie's from Noon-4pm

In most cases a meeting will be held in conjunction with the above event.

Remember
to check out
our facebook
site. Show Me Corvair
Club



Memories Car Club Show Photos



There's Bob Bauer and Don Hemwall holding court near Bob's car and two good-looking Fords



Think we'll ever get Trevor behind the wheel of a late model?



Ron Karl ran into an old friend from grade school. And just look at that nice row of Corvairs.

More Memories Car Club Show Photos



The row of Corvairs from a different angle with Rose and Bob Bauer's Monza in the foreground.



Mark Moyer brought his grandson, who asked, "Hey Pops, when are you going to get one of your cars running again so we can bring it to a show like this together?" He liked this one because it was just like the one Grammy's family had when she was his age. Better get one of your cars back on the street Gramps.

Hot off the press!

Here's a special mention event a member wants us to be aware of.

Cars and Coffee: April through October
Immanuel Lutheran Church
214 W. 5th St
Washington, MO 63090
Saturdays, 8-10 am, opens at 7:30am



2024 Car Cruises

- Every Fri.** Apr -Oct ~ 1980& older~ 3889 Veterans Memorial Parkway O'Fallon, MO
Every Fri Apr - Sept ~ Sonic Restaurant, 1002 S. Kirkwood Rd. Kirkwood, MO
1st Fri Memories Car Club Cruise~ 4 to 9 pm~ 1979 & Older ~ 417-700103 Fenton, MO
@ Faith Church, Corner of Hwy 30 & Rahning Rd. ~
- 2nd Fri Hardy's Restaurant**~ 2850 Lemay Ferry Rd. St. Louis, MO
- 2nd Fri April-Sept-Hotshots Bar**-1239 S. Laclede Station Rd. 314-755-1550 Webster Groves,MO
- 2nd Sat. Rolla Cruise-In** ~Big Lots Parking Lot, 1001 S Bishop~ 573-634-0865 Rolla, MO
2nd Sat Apr-Oct JJ's ~1215 S. Duchesne~ 636-946-3500~ St. Charles, MO
- 2nd Sat Apr-Oct~MO Moonshiners Cruise-in**~Thriftway Parking Lot 5-8PM Linn, MO
- 2nd Sat Apr-Oct~Owensville Cruisers,meet @ Snowensville @4PM,573-999-7998** Owensville, MO
- 3rd Friday Apr-Sept-** 5-9PM-Hot Shots at 141 and Jeffco Blvd.,Huge lot behind McDonalds Arnold, MO
- 3rd Sat-May-Oct ~ (new)Cloverleaf Sports Bar-** 6070 Telegraph Rd., 314-293-1815 Oakville, MO
- 3rd Sat-May-Sept Gearheads Cruise-in**~ 5-9PM, downtown Ste Genevieve Ste. Genevieve, MO
- 4th Sun-Rides & Coffee**~ Detail Garage, 70 Meramec Valley Plaza, 1-3, dogs & coffee Valley Park, MO
- Last Sat- Apr-Oct ~ Bobby's Place-** 5PM-9PM, 108 Meramec Valley Plaza, 141 & Marshall Valley Park, MO
- Last Sat- Raisin' Canes,** 5PM-9PM, DJ Don,1163 Jeffco Blvd ½ mi S of 141 Arnold, MO
- Last Sat. JJ's ~ Apr-Aug.**~ 200 Fort Zumwalt Sq. ~636-978-1737~ 10:30 am-3 pm O'Fallon, MO
- Last Sat ~ Caffeine & Chrome ~Feb-Nov**~Gateway Classics 1237 Central Park Dr O'Fallon, IL
- Last Sat ~Capital Mall Cruise-in,** 4-8PM at Capital Mall Jefferson City, MO

2024 “Come Join Us”

- 1st Wed every month-** 7 PM, First Capitol Classics Auto Club meeting, Sports Café,
3579 Pennridge Dr., Bridgeton, MO 63044 firstcapitolclassics@yahoo.com Bridgeton, MO
- 1st Thurs every month-** 7 PM, Rt. 66 Car Club meeting, St. Clair Elks Lodge St. Clair, MO
35 E. North St. (Frontage on N. Commercial St.)
- 1st Thurs every month-** 7 PM, Gateway GTO Assoc. meeting, Gingham's Restaurant St. Charles, MO
1566 Country Club Plaza Dr. St. Charles, MO 63303 chriswinslow@charter.net
- 1st Thurs every month-** 7:30PM STL S/R Assoc. meeting, Location TBD Wildwood, MO
Barry Gan, 314-315-1712 or 636-244-0316 after 5. St.louisstreetrods@gmail.com
- 1st Thurs every month-** 7PM, Rt 66 Corvette Club meeting, Old Hickory Golf Club St. Peters, MO
- 1st Sat every month-** Cars-n-Coffee, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 214 W. 5th, 8am-10am Washington, MO
- 2nd Tuesday every month-** 7PM, Archway Olds meeting, Sports Café, Bridgeton, MO
3579 Pennridge Dr. Bridgeton archwayoldsclub.org
- 2nd Tuesday every month-** 7PM, Original Corvette Club meeting, Dogwood Social House,
15682 Manchester Rd. 63011 Ballwin, MO
- 2nd Sunday every month-** 5:30 PM, Gateway AMC, Bandanas, 11750 Gravois Sunset Hills, MO
- 3rd Sat every month-** 8 AM, Midwest Chevy/GMC Truck Club Alumni breakfast, Bob
Evans Restaurant, 6528 S. Lindbergh South St. Louis, MO
- 3rd Fri every month-** 7:30 PM, HCCM, STL Auto Dealers Assoc Bldg
13616 Manchester by White Castle, 314-313-0305 martinhassel@att.net Manchester, MO
- 4th Thur every month-** 6 PM, Mid-Mo Old Car Club, location varies ckmidmooldcar.club Jefferson City, MO



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The Annual Jim Butler ALL CHEVY CAR SHOW

LOCATION:
Jim Butler Chevrolet
759 Gravois Bluffs Boulevard
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TIME:
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2024
(RAIN or SHINE)
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Registration 9:00-12:00 Noon

AWARD PRESENTATION @ 2:30:
Corvettes
Camaros
All Other Chevys
All Trucks
All Modified
Best of Show
Butler Pick (Sponsor Award)
Peoples Choice
Best Club Participation

Independent Judging by:




ENTRY FEE:
Judged \$25.00
Display Only \$15.00
 Dash Plaques to first 100 Entries
50 / 50 RAFFLE
 Other Prize Raffles

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT




BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

OF GREATER ST. LOUIS

We need More Member Profiles!

Submit your SMCC member profile by answering the questions below. Submissions may be emailed to markmoyer1@gmail.com or send via snail-mail to Mark Moyer, 2220 Edge Wood Manor Lane, Wildwood, MO 63011. Please send a photo of you with your Corvair along with your profile and feel free to add anything else of interest to the information below (photos of cars you have owned).

SMCC Member Profile Member Name:

Corvairs you currently own:

Year, color, body style, drivetrain, running or non-running, how often do you drive it?:

When and why did you buy it (them)?

What is it that you like most about Corvairs?

Any interesting story about your Corvair, or others you have owned:

Describe your dream Corvair:

Corvair job you hate most (e.g. brakes, upholstery, oil change, etc.):

Have you ever thrown a fanbelt?

Other than a Corvair, and assuming money is no object, what classic domestic or foreign car or truck would you most like to own and why? What car or truck would be a close second?

Name one car you'd most like to have back, including cars from your childhood to today.

Fondest car-centered memory ("G" rated version). (first date, parade, best compliment you received, etc.)

Do you/have you owned any other classic cars, and what are they?

Other hobbies or activities you participate in: