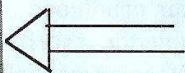




One of a kind  
Ultra Coach  
FOR SALE



Above photo is Ernest Newhouse's #603, at nite in Palm Springs.

WANTED. Need 22 Ultra Van owners who would be willing to spend \$10.00 for new "U" channel rubber to replace the rubber on the headlight bezels. (Round bezels only). The new material is black, 60 durometer neoprene, shape is 7/32 high, 1/16 wall each lip, 1/16 open space. Each buyer would get 11 feet, enough for four (4) bezels. Send \$10 check to John Shattuck, #304, at 546 Westminster Ave, Newport Beach, CA 92663. Phone (714) 646-6189.

WANTED: A fiberglass water tank used in the three tank system on Ultra #412 and up. Contact: Art Eller, 3873 Shannon Road, Los Angeles, Calif. 90027. (213) 665-3457.

FOR SALE, ULTRA VAN foam bumpers (original style) . \$44.95 (includes shipping) or \$35.00 each at shop. ULTRA VAN fabric see thru windshield and side window covers. Color - white, new hardware included. \$90.00. New Ultra Van windshields, full tinted and uncut. \$395 each. Shipping extra. Also, two each used Ultra Van Manuals (Ryersons's) very good condition, in three ring binders. \$40.00 ea. Contact: Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Road, Joshua Tree, Calif. 92252. (619) 366-9104.

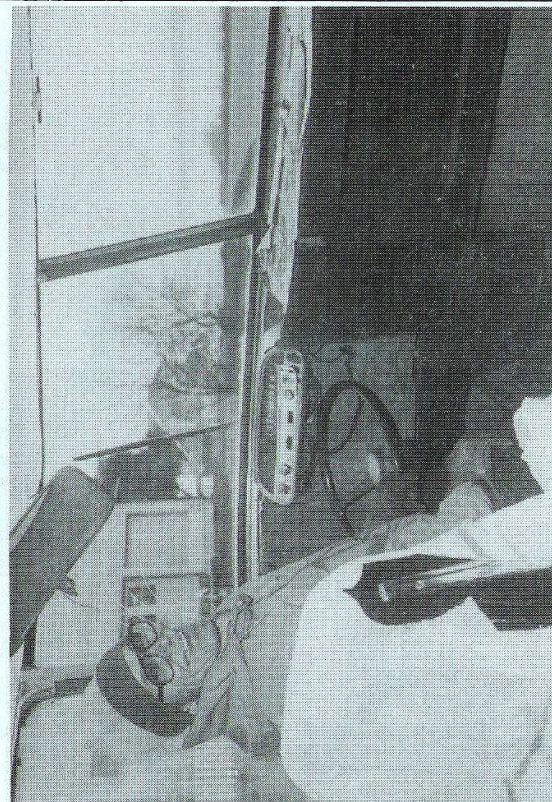
FOR SALE, ULTRA VAN fiberglass bumpers, one pair for \$90.00. Available only at the next National Rally. The bumpers are to be furnished by Dick Granger & Co. They are approximately 7 - 8 inches in height, and wrap around front and rear. They are gel coated on the exterior, and can be repainted to match your ULTRA. Must have 10 orders to start production, \$25.00 deposit required. Make checks payable to W. Granger, send to Dick Granger #430, 2795 South Tropical Trail, Merritt Island, Fl. 32952. Phone (619) 366-9104.



WHALES ON WHEELS

5537 Pioneer Road, Boulder, Colorado 80301

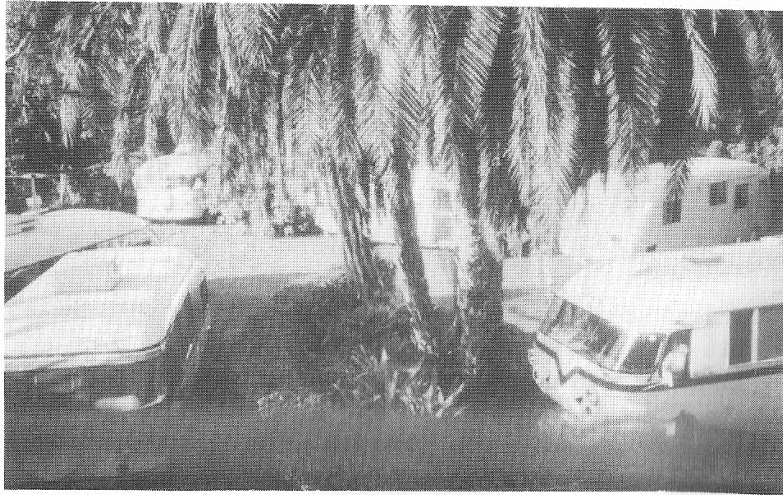
FIRST CLASS MAIL



A PUBLICATION OF:

**GROUP  
ULTRA VAN**

Winter 1991  
Volume X Number 1



#### ULTRA VANS in the Palms at Gutherie's estate.

Friday January 25th we visited the Weeks Air Museum. Planes from the beginning thru World War II. They fly everyone they restore. The Motor Home show seemed to be bypassed this year as we all felt we have the Best Motor Home ever built. So for you readers who don't own one, better hurry and get one. Attending the rally were: Walt and Marilyn Davison #336, Randy and Tennie Randle #328, Dick and Bonnie Granger #420, Richard Badstibner #487 (quest, Harry Light), Norm and Marian Helmikay #547, Pat and Marge Fitzgerald #448, Gordon and Ruth Harvey #469, Jean and Bette McMasters #330, Len and Olive Hunter #556, Lain and Jean Gutherie #482.

I received a call from Ken Wildman in Ada, Ohio. He was in Orlando Florida on business and wanted to ride in an Ultra Van. I invited him and his father Ben Wildman to come to West Plam Beach on Thursday for lunch. We really enjoyed showing them out #330 and letting him drive it. By this time he has bought a unit, I'm sure.

I have about five inquiries a month from someone who wants to buy an Ultra Van. So if you know of one, make sure it gets listed in our newsletter "Whales on Wheels".

Happy camping, everyone. Remember the CORSA National convention in Washington, July, 1991. Be there!

#### UP DATE ON #101

In January the "Gang of four," Jim Craig, Bob Franz, Mory Snyder, and builder-developer of the Ultra Van, David Peterson meet in northern California (see photo below). They had a chance to look over #101 (the prototype). Some of the things they came up with that will be needed in the restoration are the following: Good used stove and oven combination, kitchen sink, fiberglass shower/bathroom pan, instant hot water heater, L/H (driver's) windshield (a used original cut style), small cracks and pits o.k.; lug nut extentions (8 each) for the rear dual wheels, cabinets for overhead & kitchen. Phone Jim Craig #549. (619) 366-9104.



Bob Franz, Moey Snyder, David Peterson (Jim Craig photo)

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Mr. Palmer:

In answer to your letter to my friend Christy Barden, which he published in "Whales on Wheels". I will give you my thoughts on your problems.....

My wife and I are original owners of #334, which is corvair-powered. At 89,000 miles I replaced the Powerglide Auto transmission with the 1961-62 four-speed manual transmission. This is a major change, and in my opinion, improved fuel consumption and power. We have no difficulty maintaining speed on most highways. One way to re-gear the Ultra is to change tire size. This is much easier than changing gears in a differential. Changing to a different engine and drive system is a bigger job. Your Chrysler Caravan requires a radiator. Placing a drive unit and engine in the front of the Ultra Van interferes with foot room—it has been done, but has its disadvantages.

I would suggest that before you make any major changes, you come to a Rally or two, and look around. In our group are some fine mechanics who are willing to share their experiences with the Ultra Van.

The Porsche six is a fine engine. You might find it rather expensive to acquire.

I made a new instrument panel, fully instrumented; my tires are the same size as a Volkswagen Microbus, and I use a Microbus speedometer; this is round and easy to install.

LOUIS GIRGGS #334

Dear Christy:

After long and thoughtful consideration, I've decided that there's just too much mechanical maintenance and other modifications necessary to my Ultra Van. I'm also constrained by the high wind problems. As you probably know, in North Dakota about half the time we live in a 15-30 mile per hour wind. It makes it pretty frustrating to try to move the Ultra Van around.

I'd like to have an ad run in the next Whales. My van is number 433. I believe it's a 1968; has a 110 Corvair that was overhauled at 62,000 miles. It currently has 79,000 miles on it. It's in inside storage. The price is \$4,000. They can call me at (701) 775-1600 or write me at Box 1357, Grand Forks, ND 58206.

I appreciate your help on this and in the past, Christy.

Sincerely, Robert C. Palmer #443

Hi Christy:

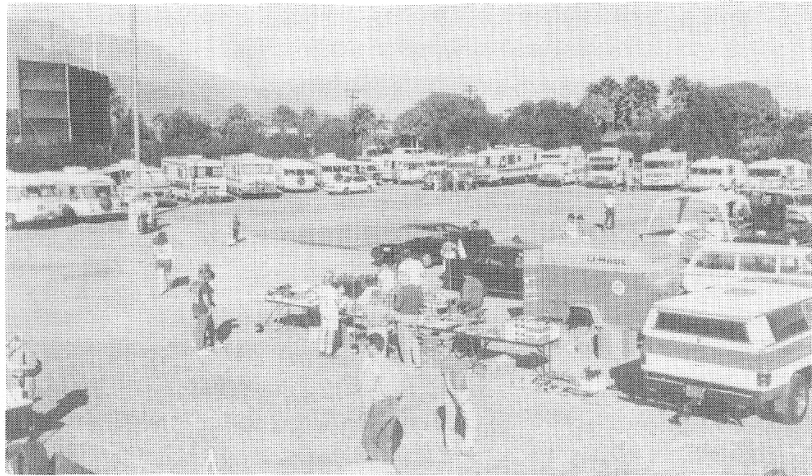
I was just reading the news letter. I am putting a 1989 SUBARU XTG 2700cc engine in my Ultra Van #422. It should work just great. It puts out 145 H.P. and has a 4 speed auto transmission with a lock out converter. The engine has Bosh fuel injection and is just like a water cooled Corvair, but more like a 911 Porsche. It has overhead belt driven cam's, redlines at 7,000 R.P.M. and gets over 25 M.P.G.. I expect it to go in with very few mod's. I paid \$1,700 for everything I needed from a salvage yard car that only had 3,000 miles on it.

I get mine the 1st of March and will get it going ASAP for the Alaska trip. I'm also looking for a 180 Cessna or Stenson or some other nice bush airplane to play with. Dean W. Hansen, 15 Mission Circle. Sedona, Az 86336. (602) 282-5110.



**Dean Standing in front of his 1988 XT6, 5 speed Subaru  
It weighs 500 pounds less than an Ultra**

*Editors note: You may remember Dean as the former owner of Batway Autos in Chatsworth, California. He specialized in Corvair repairs. He was severely injured in a crash of his home built airplane a few years ago, and wasn't given much of a chance to live. It's truly a miracle that he is still with us, and we're glad to have him. I have seen the type of engine of which he speaks, and agree that it should fit fine. It's the nearest thing to a Corvair engine that I've ever seen, with the sametrans axle arrangement.*



**Ultra Vans parked at Palm springs swap meet.**

**PALM SPRINGS  
G.W.F.B.T.&S.M., WELL ATTENDED**

The Great Western Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet held in Palm Springs was the usual success. The San Diego Corvair Club was the sponsor this year. November 3rd was sweater weather, all though it did warm up a bit on Sunday. The swap meet spaces were up, at a record number this year. The larger vendors were happy with the turn out and the amount of business they did. We had about 13 Ultra Vans at the event. Down from previous years, probably because of the cost for overnite parking this year, where previous years had been free. The rally held by Jim Craig at his high desert home (about 20 miles from Palm Springs) was the usual success. Before and after the G.W.F.B.T.&S.M. many Ultra Vans gathered and had a good time. Next year the CORSA West Corvair club will be the sponsor. They plan to hold the event at the fairgrounds in Indio, which is about 15 miles down the road on Highway 10. They felt that Palm Springs was just getting to expensive for us. They seemed to charge for everything this year, and had some funny fire rules for vendors. So we will all be looking forward to something just a little different next year at about the same time.



**Bonnie Granger, Jamie Lee Curtis and Dick Granger standing in front of #484 at Universal studios in Florida.**

**ULTRA VAN FEATURED IN A CINEMA**

**BY BONNIE GRANGER**

John Wizer, representing Universal Studios, contacted Gordon Harvey #518 in reference to using an Ultra Van in an up coming movie. They were considering several motor homes of the late 60's or early 70's (the Ultra Van, Travco, and Winnebago). Gordon referred them to Al Driggers #512 who was in the talking stages of purchasing #484. Al arranged for Universal representatives to look over Doug Taulbee's #267, and they really liked it. Al Taulbee and Dick Granger #430 picked up #484 at Harvey's (it had been parked for 5 years) and drove it to Cocoa for a few repairs. Then they went on to Orlando, where Universal bought it, and had it completely refurbished to look as much like #267 as possible.

Universal started filming January 21, 1991 in Bartow, Florida. The first scene has Jamie Lee Curtis driving #484 to a stop sign, and then turning right and down in front of a house where most of the movie was filmed. Jamie Lee is a hairdresser who lives in her Ultra, and travels all over the country. She answers an ad for a hair dresser, not knowing it is to work on dead people in a funeral home run by Dan Ackroyd. After each take Dick Granger drove the Ultra back into position for the next take, then sit in the bathroom out of sight while Jamie drove it in again. Since that time, the Ultra and Jamie have been shot from all angles, as well as interior shots. Doug, John and Dick removed the back center panels, trunk lid window all the way to the top, removed both sides of the toilet and the door frame. A camera was set up in the bedroom to film all interior shots. The movie should be released for viewing sometime this summer. The name is "MY GIRL", starring DAN ACKROYD and JAMIE LEE CURTIS.

## THE POWERGLIDE MODULATOR

**STORY** by Art Eller

The modulator is the 2" x 2" cylindrical object that screws into the aluminum transmission case just in front of the right hand bolt on the case to the differential.

The modulator's function is to act as a hydraulic shock absorber. When it stops working, the upshift and downshift are harsh and rough. If permitted to malfunction, my theory is that this can cause the famous "E" clip in the valve body to fracture which then causes the upshift and downshift problems.

I also believe that continued operation of a vehicle with a bad modulator can cause the springs in the band piston to fail. In my rebuilding of these transmissions, I often find one of the two springs on the shaft of the 3" piston to be broken.

A failure of this unit is usually caused by a ruptured rubber diaphragm within the unit. This then causes hydraulic fluid to be sucked into the engine. Besides the hard shifting, modulator failure usually results in rapid loss of fluid in the transmission and white smoke out the tail pipe. This smoke is often most heavy when the engine is first started in the morning.

Absence of smoke or oil consumption with the hard upshift may mean that the trouble isn't with the modulator but with absence of engine vacuum being delivered to the modulator. Put a vacuum gauge under the car at the modulator connection point and see if you have vacuum when the engine is running.

Loss of vacuum at the modulator could be any one of the following:

1. Failed rubber hose at top and bottom of 1/8" metal pipe connected to middle of crossover pipe between carbs.
2. Failure of one or both hoses that connect crossover pipe to carb bases.
3. Small slot worn in the 1/8" pipe where it passes through the front shroud of the engine.
4. Small pipe connection to center of crossover pipe may be cracked or plugged up with carbon.

The Corvair Powerglide Transmission is a remarkably simple but effective and smoothly operating mechanism. If yours has hard upshifts, go solve the problem and get it working as it would.

## RALLY TO ALASKA

May - June 1992

Canada and Alaska will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the "Alcan" highway. Many communities along the highway will hold celebrations on different dates to encourage the tourists to join them and at the same time see some of the beautiful country of the Northwest.

Now it's time to get out the map of Canada and Alaska and really look at our suggested routes. We plan to gather in the Northwestern part of the United States. From there we will enter Canada. Our suggested route will take us up thru Calgary, then over to Banff and up thru Banff National Park to Jasper. Then thru Hinton, Grande Prairie to Dawson Creek. Here is where our choices begin:

1. Travel up the Alaska Highway to: a. Fairbanks; b. Anchorage; c. Skagway (the Alaska Ferries port).
2. Travel west to Prince George and on the Prince Rupert, maybe visit the islands. Then back via the BC Ferries to Vancouver Island at Port Hardy; or backtrack to Prince George and south thru British Columbia back home to the United States.
3. From Hinton travel east to Edmonton, thru Alberta Province, thru the Saskatchewan Province and home to the United States.

For those that go to Alaska you will have several choices as to how you will return home. Backtracking on the Alaska Highway is one way back. The other is coming back on the Alaska and BC Ferries.

Approximate Ferry fares: (Canadian Dallars)	Skagway to Prince Rupert (36 hours)	Prince Rupert to Port Hardy (15 hours)
Per person (deck class)	\$118	\$ 80
6-11 years (5 & under free)	\$ 60	\$ 34
23 foot Motorhome	\$495	\$285

On the Alaska Ferry from Skagway it stops at Juneau, Petersburg, Wrangell and Ketchikan along the way. You can stop over at any of these ports at no extra charge and catch the next ferry to continue your trip. The BC Ferry from Prince Rupert goes directly to Port Hardy on Vancouver Island. It takes about 8 hours to drive the length of the Island, but I'm sure that you will want to take some time to see and enjoy this place. When you get to the south of Vancouver Island you can cross back over to the mainland at Nanaimo or Swartz Bay to Tsawwassen British Columbia. The cost is \$5.00 per person and \$29.00 for a 23 foot motorhome.

For more Ferry information:

Alaska Marine Highway  
P.O. Box R  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2505

1-800 642-0066

As you can see, this is a flexible itinerary. We are trying to include as many Ultra families as we can. I'm sure we have a program that will fit your desires. For more information contact:

Whales on Wheels

11

BC Ferries  
1112 Fort Street  
Victoria, BC Canada  
V8V 4V2  
(604) 669-1211

Winter 1991

Christy Barden  
5537 Pioneer Rd.  
Boulder, Colo. 80301  
(303) 530 1288

Jim Craig  
7011 Sunny Vista Raod  
Joshua Tree, Calif. 92252  
(619) 366-9104

Or Contact you local AAA club, they should have information about our suggested routes. Also contact headquarters for "RENDEZVOUS 92" at: Project '92, #14-9223 100 Street, Fort St. John, British Columbia, V1J3X3. (604) 787 1992.

## UP-COMING RALLIES

**March 10 -17th, 1991.** The Florida Lions Camp, 2819 Tiger Lake Road, Lake Wales, Florida 33853. 13 miles East of Lake Wales on Highway 60. Hosts: Walter & Marilyn Davison, (305) 444-1937.

**May 2 - 5th, 1991.** BRITE LAKE RALLY. Brite Lake, Tehachapi, Calif. Phone. (805) 822-3228. Hosts, Leonard and Brenda TeKaat #220; Mel and Mellie Dinesen, #220 (805) 834-5185.

**May 8 - 18th, 17 - 20th, 1991.** TULIP TIME ' 91 FESTIVAL. Holland, Michigan. Reservations and information, Marian Grootenhaar, 1505 Quincy Street, Grandville, Mi. 49418. (616) 896-8630.

**June 1991.** Eastern rally, Host and place to be determined.

**July 23 - 27 1991.** CORSA Internatioanl Convention. Sheraton Hotel in Prince George's County, Maryland. CORSA room rate is \$66.00, Phone hotel at (301) 4596700. Offical Campgournd is Cherry Hill Park, 9800B Cherry Hill Road, College Park Maryland, 20740. Spaces are \$28.00 a day. For reservations 1-(800) 323-8899 ask for Best Holiday reservations. Member Richard Decker #256 lives in the area and checked this place out. Its on the metro bus line for Washington, just one mile off I-95. **GROUP ULTRA VAN** is scheduled for a meeting on July 24th, 7 - 8 pm on Wednesday evening.

**July 18 - 30th, 1991.** Crescent City, California More later.

Whales on Wheels

12

Winter 1991

**September 15 - 18th, 1991.** BRAKE FOR BOULDER. Mini rally, Boulder, Colorado. Gathering place on way to National Ultra Rally in Missouri. Christy Barden's place, 5537 Pioneer Road, Boulder, Co. (303) 530-1288. Hosts, John and Claire Hoffman (303) 781-8617; Jim and Marlene Craig (619) 366-9104.

**September 23 -30th, 1991.** National rally at Neosho, Missouri. Hosts Nobia and Warren Suckow # 331. (602) 841-0911.

**November 1-3rd, 1991.** GREAT WESTERN FAN BELT TOSS AND SWAP MEET (G.W.F.B.T.& S.M.) The Desert ExpoCentre in Indio, California (25 miles east of Palm Springs) is this years new sight of the annual affair. The "Host Hotel" is one block from the ExpoCentre home of the National Date Festival and Riverside County Fair. Room rates range from \$33.00 to \$47.00, call early for reservations (619) 347 0911. Rick Trincherro is the manager. RV/Ultra parking will be at the ExpoCentre.

**May and June 1992.** Rally to Alaska. Rendezvous '92. We'll meet in northwestern area of the U.S.. From there we'll tour up to Fairbanks Alaska. Passing thru Alberta, British Columbia, The Yukon and up to Fairbanks. We may come back on the ferry along the coast. This is the 50th anniversary of the Alcan highway, 1941 - 1992. Big celebrations are planned by all participants along the way. Mark your calender.

## CLASSIFIED

WANTED, ULTRA VANS, contact:

Roy Mitqulon	Richard Samuels
P.O. Box 22597	1338 Buena Vista Dr.
Pahrump, NV 89401	Palm Springs, Ca 92262
(702) 727-4336	(619) 323-0657

1964 TRAVELON (Ultra Van coach built by Presto-Lite Corp.) New paint, blue and white. New windshields, new brakes; interior poor, needs TLC. V-6 Buick power, low time, runs great. \$3,500. James Farrar, 625 1st St. N. Shelby, Montana 59474. Phone (406) 434-2597.

Whales on Wheels

13

Winter 1991

#202 ULTRA VAN , 110 H.P. Corvair, automatic transmission. Ready to drive. \$5250. Don Gilbert, Midland, Texas. Phone (915) 694-1006.

#338 ULTRA VAN, 110 H.P. Corvair, Modified Corsa Dashboard, air conditioner, 3 system refrigerator, 2000 watt generator, blue interior, excellent outside paint, plus extra engine for parts and Ryerson manual. Wayne Howard, Fulton, New York. Phone (315) 592-7405

#391 ULTRA VAN, 1968 model, 110 H.P. Corvair engine, 15,000 on recent overhaul, rebuilt trans, 4:11 differential, New tires, original paint, has the steel steering bellcranks. Original owner. Hank Yankel, 7878 Normal, La Mesa, Calif. 91941. Phone (619) 463-1480.

#398 ULTRA VAN, 110 H.P. Corvair, Automatic transmission, Outside awning. Owner suffered a stroke and is unable to drive. Stored for 3 years, but kept in running conditions. Original owner. Mrs. R. T. Grout, 1852 Pamela Lane, Escondido, Calif. 92026. Phone (619) 747-1743.

#433 ULTRA VAN, 1968 model. 110 H.P. corvair overhauled at 62,000 miles. Current mileage is 79,000. Stored inside. \$4,000. Robert C. Palmer, P.O. Box 1357, Grand Forks, N.D., 58206. Phone (701) 775-1600.

#545 ULTRA VAN., rear pusher stock Oldsmobile Toronado with stock Toronado suspension, including frame, control arms, torsion bars, constant velocity joints, brake rotors, etc. Dual fuel LPG and gasoline powered. Dash and roof air. Air shocks front and rear. Alloy wheels. Over \$30,000 invested, \$15,000 firm. This one really flies. Richard Fess, San Francisco, Calif. Phone (415) 654-1210.

#603 ULTRA COACH, only five built, side mid mount Olds V-8 engine, 26 feet length, Onan 120-V power plant, power steering, independent brakes front and rear, Firestone Air Suspension (front and rear), large Dometic 5 1/2 cubic foot refrigerator, 14 foot Carefree roll-awning. Featured in Whales on Wheels, Summer and Fall 1988 issues. Won best of class at Palm Springs.

So many features it would take a whole page to list them. \$50,000 invested, all offers considered. Original owner, Ernest Newhouse, 15239 El Soneto Drive, Whittier, Calif. 90605. (213) 698-1740

Whales on Wheels

14

Winter 1991