

WHALES ON WHEELS

Volume 1 ULTRA VANS Number 1

"New" Members Give "Old" Van New Life

Young Boulder couple use hard work instead of money
to make their new home.

by W. Christy Barden

Joe and Dori De Camillis were looking for a van to drive from Boulder to California for living in while they did their art work. While Joe was driving down the road he saw this funny looking van parked in a field, he knew **that was it**. He showed it to his wife Dori and she wasn't sure until she saw the back of the Van. She remembered it as a shape out of the 30's. It was "love at first sight". The Van belonged to Vaught I. Fosmo #538, a V-8 model, **they bought it!**

Joe and Dori are both 28 years old. They met at the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1983. She is from Steamboat Springs Colorado and he from Louisville Kentucky. Joe majored in creative writing and Dori in fine arts and English. They are both active and eat healthy foods. When they met it was "love at first sight." Dori liked his eyes and sense of humor, Joe liked her legs. They found they had everything in common because they do everything together.

Joe left to attend U.C.L.A. in Los Angeles in 1984, Dori went



Joe and Dori DeCamillis

out to visit him four times while he was there. When she graduated in 1987, he came back to Boulder to be with her. He started house painting with his brother, then managing a Boulder restaurant, then started doing art with Dori. They make art of the 1950's, oil painting of house interiors, from pop to the famous. They were married June 10, 1989.

The Ultra Van was in poor shape. They started with the interior. Using an art deco theme, they redid the interior. Black and white square linoleum was used for the floor, red and white gingham curtains, light green on the kitchen appliances. They painted with damaged Formica white. The finishing touches are art deco painting hung on the walls. My favorite, "See the West! in something



Before.....

absolutely new, Ultra Van," it's reproduced on page five.

Vaught Fasmio was very helpful in getting the Van running and worked on many of his "special" systems. Next they used my backyard to paint #538. They did the entire job in one week-end. Joes house painting experience really helped here. They did the prep by sanding by hand the entire Van, wiped it down, masked the win-



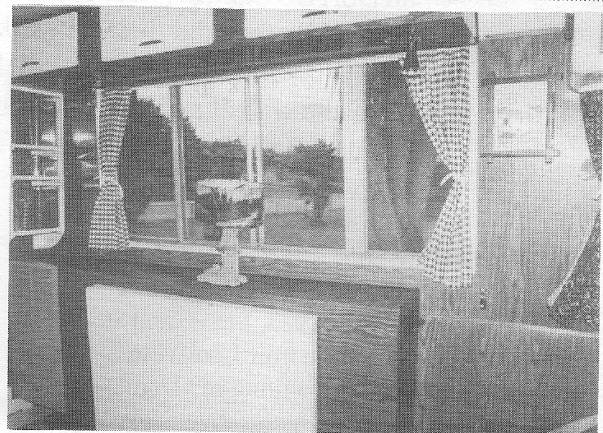
After.....

dows, etc. Then using an airless sprayer he painted a primer coat, 2 gallons of X-I-M Premium Brand 400 White, which is fast drying. He recommends using 3 gallons. The finish coat was Kelly-Moore Q.D. Industrial Enamel 185-100 White, 2 gallons. Again he suggests using 3 gallons. The cost of the paint was about \$50.00 and airless sprayers rent for about \$40 - \$60. The paint job really looks good. A bright white offset with red wheels and red wheel cover over the



Redone kitchen area, note their paintings on the walls.

"It was love at first sight"



Repainted table and overhead cabinets, and wall paintings.

spare tire.

Some people would be satisfied with the same old vehicle. The DeCamillis' spent much time making the Ultra Van into a piece of their art work. This shows the commitment they have to their future.

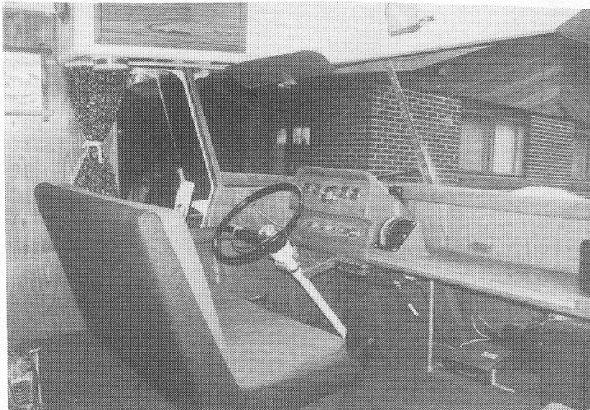
Dori has one brother and two sisters and Joe has three brothers and 2 sisters. They plan to have six children and would like to start on their first one next year.



Driving down the road. Notice the legs that first attracted Joe.



The bedroom and bathroom door with mirror.



The driving compartment.

They are now parked in the back yard of Elga and Hilda Green #294 in the Los Angeles area, working to get material together for an art showing. I received a note from them last week. They made it to California with no trouble and except for a few leaks the Van is working out fine. We wish them the best of luck. □



Ultra Van #538 parked in the Editors driveway with its fresh paint job.

From the President

Jean McMasters #330



Betty and I attended the Florida Corvair Affair held at the Days Inn near Disney World in Florida. About 150 people gathered. There were about 100 cars in the concourse. We entered #330, the only Ultra Van there, in the show and came away with a trophy. There were about 11 clubs represented from all over the south east. The weather was rainy, but it cleared up for Sunday. Saturday night a banquet was held the Arabian Nights, a dinner theater at Disney Land. They put on a great horse show.

We had a Group Ultra Van meeting there, members (without their vans) attended as well as interested Corvair owners. We passed out about 100 applications for Group Ultra Van at The Affair. We discussed the Alaska Rally among other things. Dick Granger reported he had seen the preview of the movie "My Girl" starring Jamie Lee Curtis and Dan Ackroyd, and Ultra Van #484 (see *Whales on Wheels*, winter 1991 issue). The release is scheduled for November 21st. If you own an Ultra Van or are a fan, this movie is a must! The release date coincides with the coming Holiday season.

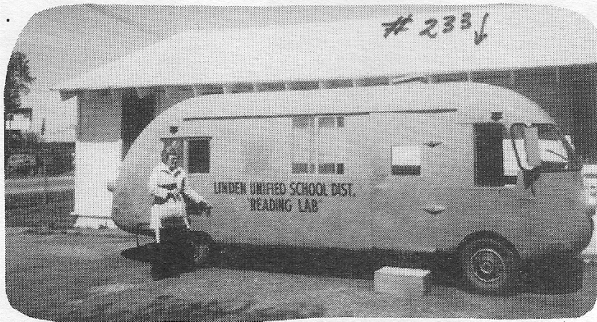
On the way home we stopped by Winter Heaven to see an aircraft fly-in. We saw many home built aircraft, including a Piper J-3 cub replica powered by 2 cylinder (1/2 a Volkswagen) engine. A 1919 Jenny was also there, along with many other aircraft.

Betty and I are driving to Pasadena this year to see the Rose Parade.

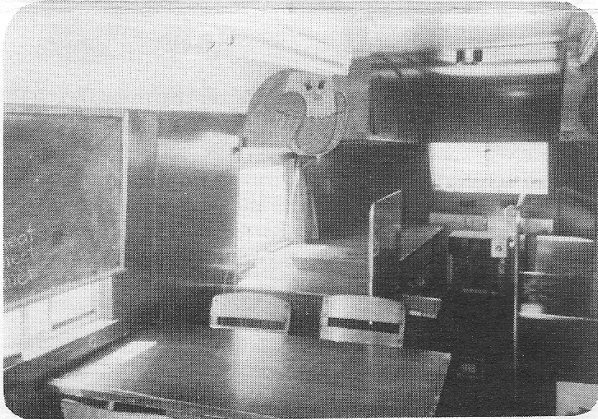
We will leave home about December 15th. We will stop at our daughters in Tempe Arizona (Phoenix area) from the 20th to the 30th. Then drive on out to Los Angeles. If anyone would like to join us her name is Susan Walker (602) 624-1979, give us a call. We will leave the Los Angeles area about January 12th to get home by the 15th, so we can attend the January 23rd rally in Miami. □

A real school bus.

This is Rita standing in front of Ultra Van # 233. We don't know her last name. The date is 1981 and the owners were David and Joyce Fawns, of Sacramento. The last owner of record is Robert Dougherty of Marble, North Carolina. □



The "Reading Lab" on the school grounds in California



The interior looking back toward the engine.

From the Editor

Next year (1992) will find me on sabbatical. I'm renting out the house, climbing in #603 and going trucking for the year. I will be keeping the same address here in Boulder, keep those cards and letters coming in. If you need to phone me, call Leona Campbell in the Los Angeles area. Her phone number is (818) 786-7815, I'll be checking with her from time to time for phone messages. I enjoyed having all the Ultra Vans in my back yard in October. I was gone most of the time, and thank the Hoffman's for hosting the rally.

Look right on page 5 is a reproduction of the 1950's style ad of the Ultra Van by the Joe and Dori DeCamillis.



Ultra Vans in Christy's back yard in Boulder.



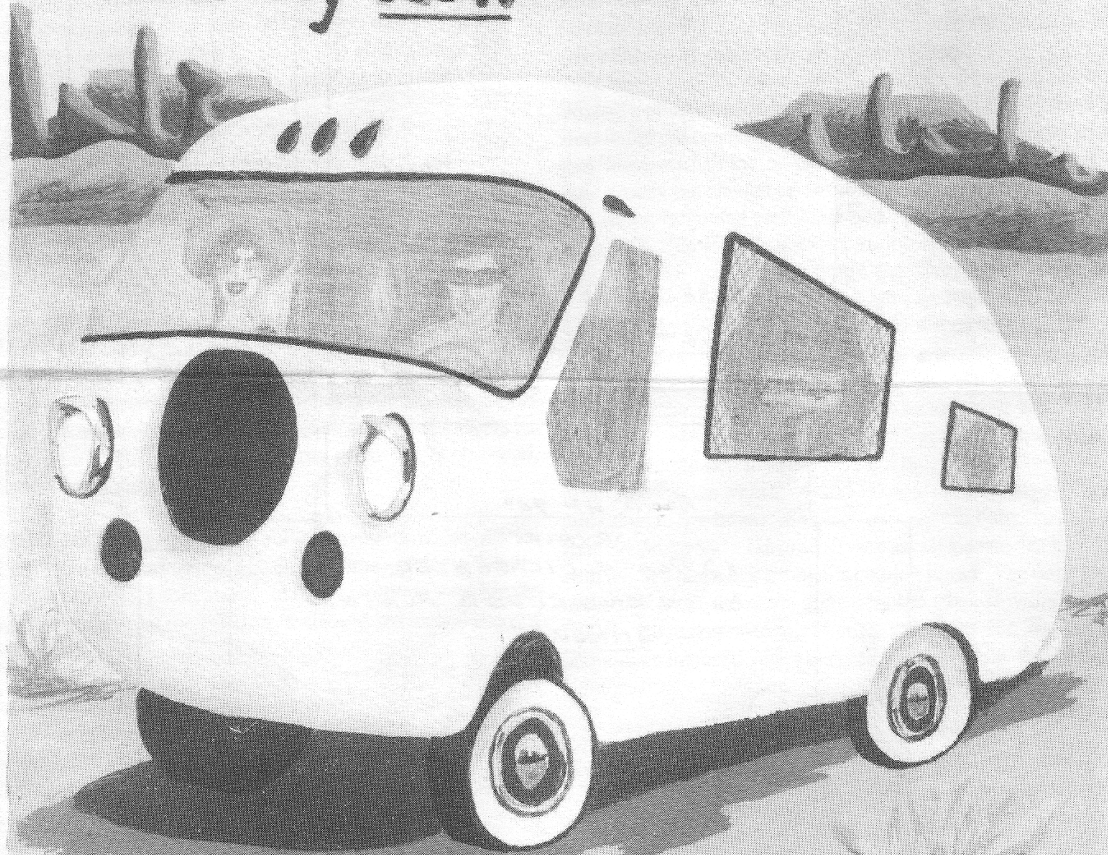
From left to right: The Franz's, Snyder's, Harvey's, Christy, the Newhouse's, and Hoffman's in Boulder.

They did a good job of keeping things moving. Dinner out, tours and lunches, and in the evenings, cards around the kitchen table. Thank-you. Those attending were: Bob Merritt #517, Mary and Howard Boso #453, Bob and Roberta Franz #427, Mory and Ester Snyder #489, Gordon and Ruth Harvey #484, Ernest and Edna Newhouse (former #228 & 603), John and Claire Hoffman #468, Walt Davison #366 and me.

I have some friends, who are full timers, spend some time in my back yard recently. They are active in the Escapees Club. There are about 15,000 members and its primary purpose is to provide information about RVing. A bi-monthly newsletter, Mini-rallies and an annual "Escapade" are included with a \$40.00 yearly membership. They have a network for full timers, that included mail forwarding services, co-op RV parks across the sun belt states, etc. For a sample

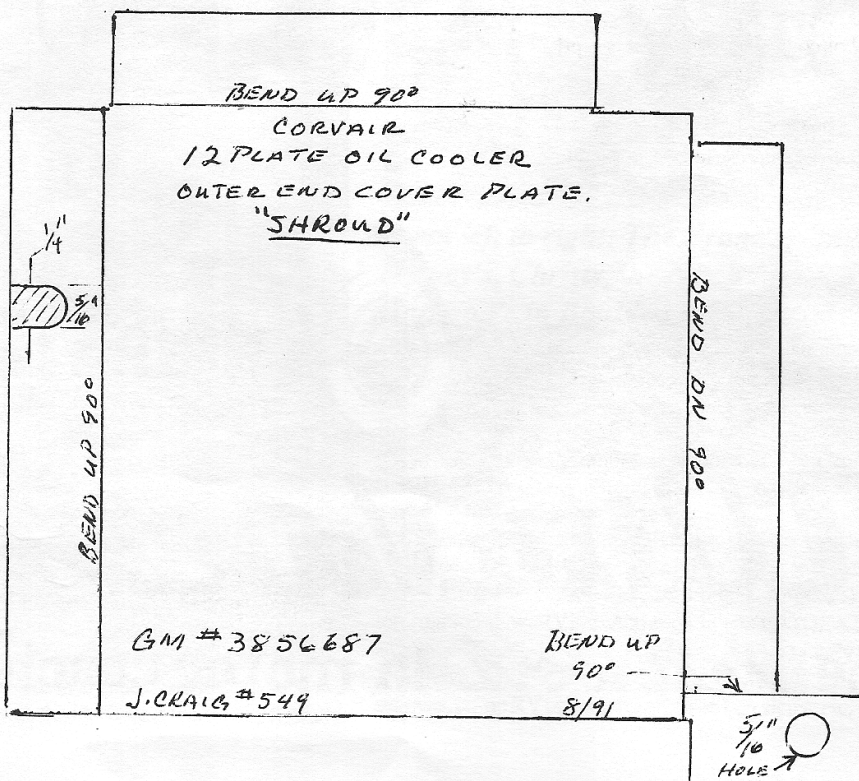
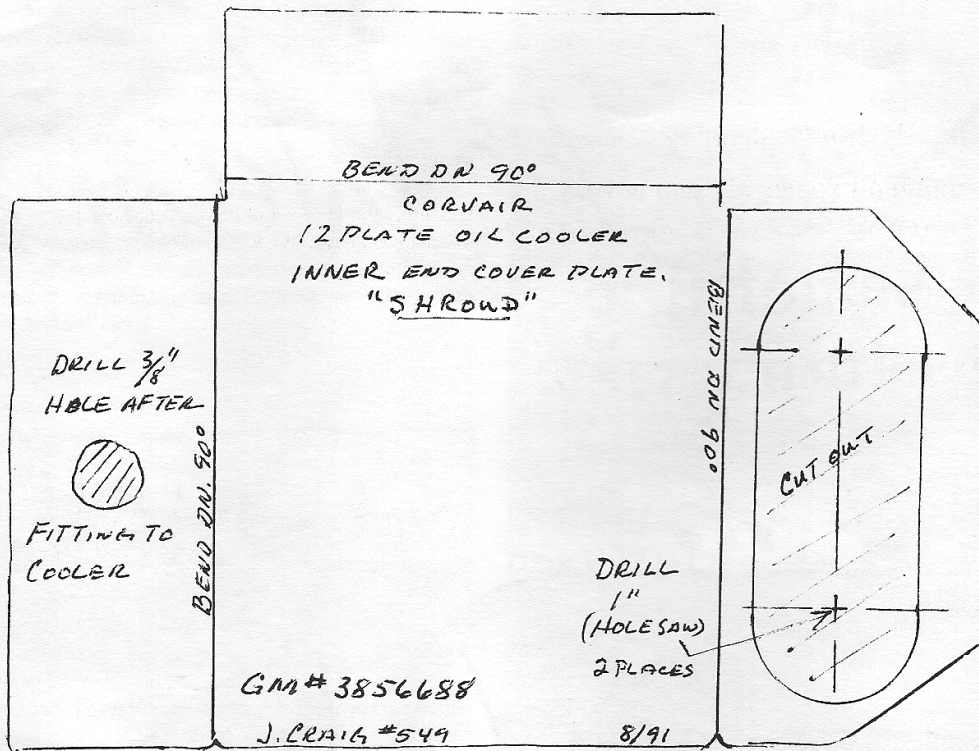
See the West!

in something
absolutely new



UltraVan

the last word in motor coach design



newsletter write to: Escapees Inc., Rt. 5 Box 310, Livingston, Texas 77351, Phone (409) 327-8873.

W.C.B.

Tech Tip By Jim Craig #549

Corvaire engine oil cooler air seal covers.

If you have the 12 plate oil cooler on your Corvaire engine it is probable that the air seal covers are not installed on each end of the cooler. With out these covers a lot of cooling air is allowed to escape out under the tip covers. Actually it should be going down through the cooler to keep the oil temperature within a safe operating range. The sketch on page 6 is provided in full size so you can use them as a template to make your own covers (*remove page 6 and make a copy on a copying machine, that way you don't destroy your newsletter. Ed*). Use soft aluminum or thin steel sheet. The cooler will have to be removed to install the inner cover. □

Letters to the Editor

September 11, 1991

Dear Christy,

Thank you for using material from our RVer's GUIDE BOOK TO SOLAR and then listing us as a credit. Barbara and I are committed to solar as a preferred method of battery charging for RVs, especially while folks are dry camping. A generator has to run too many hours to be practical. We make our living by selling solar and inverters for RV use. And of course we try to keep our prices the best around, much lower than Camping World, Etc.

Enclosed find some material on RV solar from our previous articles and material that you may use for a basis for future articles in Whales on Wheels or other RV publications. In future reference to us use the street address rather than the PO Box. Enclosed is a signed copy of RVer's Guide.

Enclosed is my \$4.00 for subscription to your publication. You do a very nice job in getting this all together. Would you want to swap some short blurb on your club in our SOLAR ELECTRIC UPDATE? Thanks for mentioning us as a source of solar and other RV materials on electricity.

Next issue of Whales: I would appreciate if you could correct the mailing address that was in error.

Many best wishes,

NOEL KIRKBY, President
RV SOLAR ELECTRIC
14415 N. 73rd Street
Scottsdale, Az. 85260
(602) 443-8520

We had an article in our Spring issue on Solar Battery Charging. Mr. Kirkbys' address was given incorrectly by mistake. Please note their correct address.

October 17, 1991

Dear Christy,

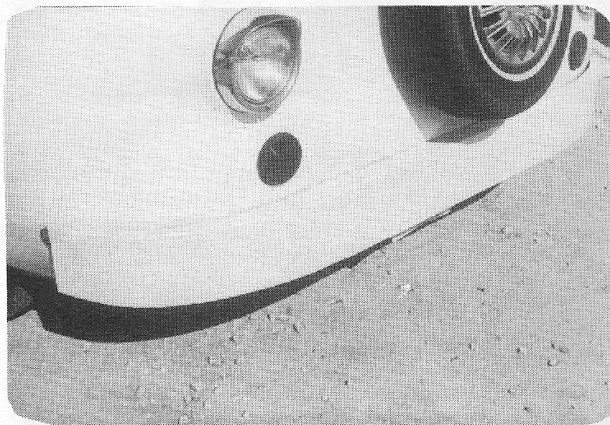
We surely did enjoy your home, your hospitality, and Boulder. It was a great 3 days. We would like to see more of your city and the surrounding countryside.

This "t-shirt" is one the printer was using to experiment with his colors! We immediately thought of you! We had 3 others to give as "gag" gifts at the banquet. ("T-shirt" consisted of the Ultra Club 25 years logo; Neosho Soccer Logo, on the front. On the back 2 Jesus Christ, One Calvary logos; Jesus is the right one baby, UhHuh! logo from the Northside Baptist Neosho; and The Neosho Jaycees logo. A real collectors "T-shirt." Ed).

We had a pleasant trip on to Neosho from your place (except for the slots in the pavement across Kansas - Gordon Harvey did better; he took lesser roads running parallel to U.S. 70). The weather was a little drizzly but cleared up and was pleasant all week. The facility was super, large and well equipped. Except NO Showers. They were broken down. We also had trouble finding the dump. No one knew where it was. After 2 hours, the Chamber of Commerce ran it down for us. It was back to the highway, Right 1/2 mile; Right 3/4 mile; Right 50 feet and right 100 feet on a pavement leading to an agricultural buildings! It was a manhole on this road!

Our two side trips were very successful; each followed by great smoggy in beautiful settings. The club banquet was M.C.'ed by Dan Rainhardt. A very surprised Pat Fitzgerald received the Ernie Award. He seemed to appreciate it a great deal.

From Neosho, we went to central Missouri to meet my brother at his granddaughter's house. She has a 7 day old baby, so Robert and Evie Shepherd had a fun time. Evie rode all the way back to Antiock with us. We had a few problems coming home. The bolts loosened in the flex plate and made quite a racket when slowing and idling. Francis Boydston recognized it as we drove into his yard. The harmonic balancer deteriorated and made a hole in the oil filter as it



Bob Franz's new front bumper

drifted back. Mory (Snyder) did a temporary fix by putting a radiator hose clamp on it and that survived the rubbing of the wheel the last 35 miles in to Albuquerque. He found a metal one, without a rubber insert, which many prefer. We went on to Apache Jct. where Howard Boso did some steering repairs. Then on to Antioch with no more problems.

You may have heard that Roy Muranaka now has Phil Phillip's coach #604. (This is the stable mate of Ernest Newhouse's #603. Only two were made of these 26 foot side mounted V-8's Ultras. Ed.) He had it painted silver and white and found beautiful wheels. Also, refurbished the interior. He had troubles coming to the rally, but I didn't know what they were. He had about 20 hours of work along the way.

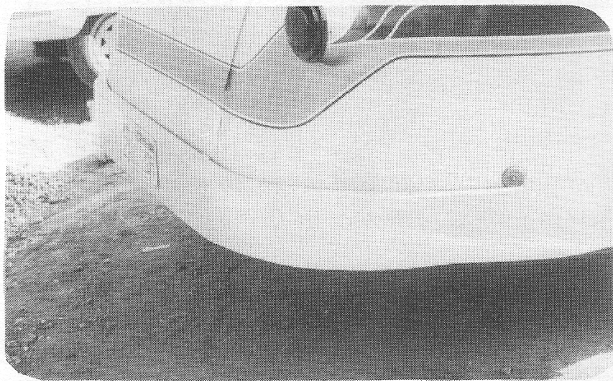
We had a good Rally all went really well. Two good trips and dinners. Then for the election and such we had a pot luck. The club bought 2 good hams and 3 gallons (6 kinds) of Ice cream. Such a great dinner we never could have afforded. Hank Yakel had ice cream before church and everyone had cake and ice cream before we left.

Dick Granger brought bumpers for our van and they just riveted them on, but they were pink. Everyone really liked pink on our Coach. Yik!! Bob sprayed them the same as the coach and they do improve the look (See photos, Ed.). Some one said they would stand a bump maybe at 2 miles an hour.

It was so good to see your part of the country, Boulder where you live and to get to park in your yard. We had such a good time there. Surely loved your home and garages, they're just what your need. Thanks so much for just being you and every little thing.

Love

Bob & Roberta Franz.



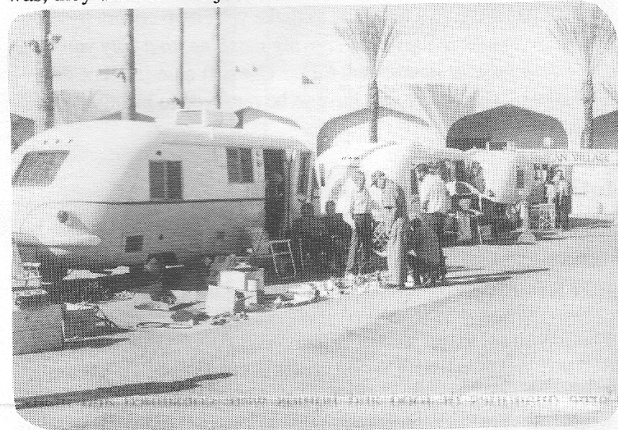
New rear bumpers designed by Dick Granger on Franz's Ultra Van.

Roberta did a marvelous job of getting my kitchen clean; she is welcome to come back any time. Walt Davison also did a great job cleaning my bath tub. All of the guests at the Boulder get together were most welcome. Ed.

G.W.F.B.T.&S.M.

by Jim Craig #549

The Great Western Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet (G.W.F.T. & S.M.) was held at a new location this year, which was at the Desert Expo Center in Indio, California. It was hosted by CORSA West for Los Angeles and the consensus among a majority of those attending was; they did a terrific job.



Francis Boydston #435 in the Ultra Van swapmeet area.

Twenty-four (24) Ultra Vans with their owners attended the three day event and parked in the center of the show for all to view. In addition nine other Ultra Van owners drove to the event in their cars in order to participate.

Most of the Ultra Vans came from Southern California but there were others from Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, Canada, Pennsylvania and Florida. Also Lester Bell and The Hemstreets from British Columbia.

Al Poslus of the San Diego area and Howard and May Boso of Arizona entered their respective Ultras in the car/van/Ultra show. Congratulations go to Al Polus #401 for being selected the final winner in the People's Choice voting.

Hank Yankel, #391 won the Grand Prize, a television set on the coupon drawing; with Al Plus coming in second, winning the most individual prizes.

Many sellers were hawking their spare parts for sale, almost any Corvair part could be found. Claire Hoffman, #468 of Englewood, Colorado was found at the swapmeet, selling her homemade Christmas candies and many boutique items. Much fun was had just

watching people walking through and listening to their comments about what parts they were looking for. All the selling took place in a covered building (see photo below Ed).



Corvair swapmeet are under cover.

The week prior to the Fan Belt Toss, seven Ultra families spent the week at Rancho Sunny Vista. After the event we had 15 Ultra, three Corsa families in their RV's from Colorado. The Hemstreets, #488 of Sechelt, British Columbia, and the Lamonds from Nipomo, California visited with us in their cars. Several work projects were completed at the Rancho by the visiting Ultra folks along with a great tech session by Bob Ballew of 29 Palms (Group Ultra Member). Large quantities of food and liquids were consumed and many stories were told and retold. The single men of the group treated us all to some great pizza dinners which were consumed with delight. A big "Thank-you" to all the ladies for the great potlucks dishes.

Another two week Ultra fun time has passed and all have gone their respective ways, Looking forward to the next rally □



Ultra Vans lined up for viewing in Indio.

Powerglide "E" clip up-date.

by Art Eller#364

Almost everyone has heard about the "E" clip failure in the Corvair Powerglide Automatic Transmission. This failure causes erratic operation with intermittent upshift being the usual problem.

After completing my 95th commercial rebuild of these units, I'm sure I know the cause of the "E" clip failure!

The problem is a leaking or failed modulator circuit. This could be no vacuum to the unit, a leaking diaphragm in the unit or a stuck Modulator thimble valve. Checking old Modulators in transmissions I'm rebuilding, I find about 1/3 of said Modulators have oil on the vacuum side. The diaphragm is ruptured and the Modulator is not functioning. Most of these units have a missing "E" clip on the end of the throttle valve in the valve body.

The clincher came when a customer called and informed me that one of my rebuilds in his car wasn't working properly. The symptoms indicated "E" clip failure. I ask him if he had checked the vacuum line to his new Modulator. He informed me that he had removed and plugged the line. Why??? He liked the hard up and down shifting of this transmission!!!

Enough said! If you have hard shifting, check the Modulator or risk a much more expensive "E" clip failure (for more information on the Modulator see *Whales on Wheels*, Winter 1991). □



Author, Art Eller #364 left discusses "E" clips and steel steering bellcranks with Mel Dinesen #200 in Indio at the G.W.F.T.&S.M.

CLASSIFIED

1970 Tiara. 23 feet, 110,000 miles, Engine 455 front wheel drive oldsmobile overhauled at 60,000, new tires. To small for me and my five kids. \$3,800. Rick Vec, 216 Oak Ave. West. St Michael, Mn. 55376. (612) 497-2017.

Wanted: For restoration of Ultra #101 (the prototype). Need drivers windshield, original cut type. Does not have to be perfect. Stove and oven, good used O.K. Aluminum ribs that steering gear box attaches to. Master brake cylinder fits between the two ribs. Call collect if you have or know of the availability of any of the above parts. Jim Craig #549 (619) 366-9104.

Up-Coming Rallies

January 28 - February 3, 1992. Death Valley Monument, California. Sunset Campground. Contact Jim and Marline Craig, #549 (619) 366-9104.

January 23-26 1992. Miami, Florida. At the home of Lain and Jean Guthrie #482, 6960 SW 144th Street, Miami, Florida 33158. (305) 235-2549.

March 25 - 30, 1992. Knight Trail Park, Laurel, Florida. This is near the town of Venice.

May and June 1992. Rally to Alaska. Rendezvous '92. We'll meet in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. From there we'll tour up to Fairbanks, Alaska. Passing through Alberta, British Columbia, The Yukon and up to Fairbanks. This is the 50th anniversary of the Alcan highway, 1941 - 1992. Big celebrations are planned by all participants along the way. Mark your calendar. For further information contact: W. Christy Barden, 5537 Pioneer Rd., Boulder, Colo. 80301. (303) 530-1288. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope (legal size).

WHALES ON WHEELS IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF GROUP ULTRA VAN, A CORSA CHAPTER. IT IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND USE OF THE ULTRA VANS. This 22 foot unique motor home was designed by David Peterson and built in Kansas until 1970. About 360 units were built. Dues are \$4.00 annually, please remit to the Secretary-Treasurer. Submit all technical information to the Editor.

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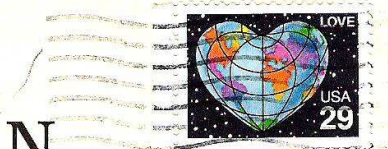
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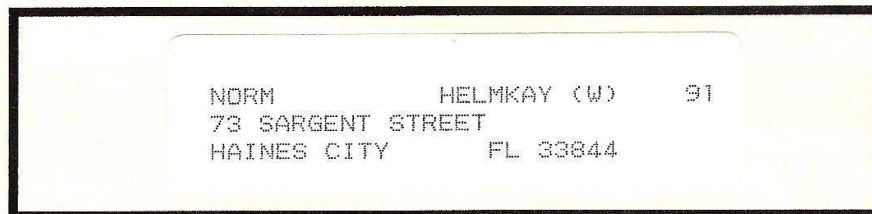


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FIRST CLASS MAIL



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