

After 24 Motor Homes, Ultra Vans are Best

Roy Moranakas' odyssey in finding the the BEST R.V.

by W. Christy Barden

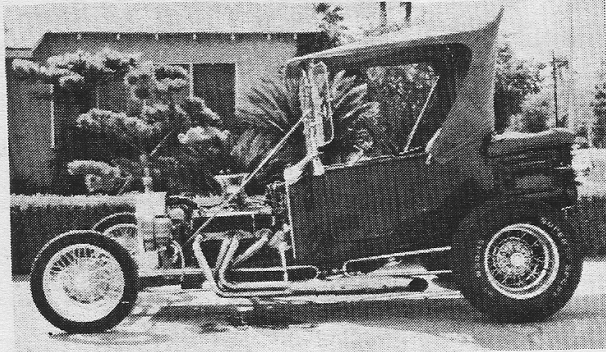
Roy Moranaka is a new member of Group Ultra Van, but not new to RVing. He has owned over 24 Motor Homes in the last 12 years. Roy and his brother run their family business, Moranaka Farms, in California, which is more than a full time job. Roy was in charge of all the mechanical equipment used on the farms including cars and trucks. He's had a varied background of drag racing, farming and motor homing. He lives with his wife Jane and teenage children, Charles and Jennifer in Northridge, California.

In the early 1970's he campaigned a 1956 Chevrolet to consistent victories in the local drag racing scene. This didn't include the family, so he switched to hi-fi equipment as a hobby. After developing a "state of the art" sound system he switched to motor homes, this would defiantly include the family for traveling. In a recent conversation he shared his motor homing experiences. I learned so much I felt it was worth sharing.



Roy at home after putting new engine in # 604.

Roy's first R.V. was in 1980. He bought a Ford Super Cab pickup truck with an 11 foot camper shell, but it was too small. Next he got a Trans Van that had no toilet or shower. So the third one was a bigger Trans Van, with a toilet and shower, but then he wanted something he could stand up in.



Roy's award winning "T" Bucket, one of his many projects.

The fourth R.V. was a 1975 GMC 26 foot Glenbrook. This was in 1982. It had 60,000 miles on it when he bought it and he put 90,000 on it. He wore it out. The 5th R.V. was another GMC Glenbrook. It had bearing noise and never steered straight. He spent much money trying to fix the problem. He traded it to a dealer for his sixth R.V. This was a 23 foot GMC Birchaven. It had a rear bath, but found it was too small for a family of four, but kept it for occasional use. The seventh R.V. he bought in 1985 was an FMC 1976 model 2900B. This was owned by Clint Eastwood. He still has this one today. He finally sold his 23 foot GMC Birchaven because he never used it. The 8th R.V. was a 26 foot GMC Palmbeach. This one had a weak front end. This was 6 years after GMC stopped making them and he had a part's problem with this one, so he sold it.

Number 9 was a change in pace, a 1982 model Revcon 30 footer. This had a strong front end, but he felt it was the worst assembled motor home he had ever owned. Every time he used it something went wrong. He sold it!

By this time (1985) GMC motor homes' prices were high and there was no service, so he bought a 1982 28 foot Airstream with a rear bath. This was the worst overall motor home he had ever owned. It was noisy, rough riding and hot in the sun up front. This was because of the large glass area and only one small Air Conditioner. His biggest complaint was that it didn't handle. Driving down the road the aluminum siding would flop back and forth because it was so soft and thin. If you leaned on it you would dent the aluminum. He couldn't get it to handle. It would weave in the wind. Replacement parts were very expensive. It overheated and wouldn't start. He spent quite a bit of money trying to get it to go down the road straight, but to no avail. When the wind blew it was "white knuckle time." It weighed 12,000 and got 10 plus miles per gallon of gas, but he still sold it.

His 11th motor home took him back to GMC, this time a 26 foot Royal model with a rear bath. The Royal model was built by Coachman. They bought the chassis and shell from GMC and put in their own interiors, electrical and plumbing. These were substantially different from the standard GMC motor homes. They had real hardwood

cabinetry instead of the Formica. Two holding tanks were used instead of one. A separate shower or bath tub was used instead of the wet bath. The "wet bath" is like our Ultra Vans, where the entire bath room gets wet when you shower. The rear bath model usually had 4 individual beds. This is what a family of 4 needs. He felt this was a good motor home, but just a bit too long. He sold it!

Number 12 was a 23 foot GMC, another Birchaven, this one with a rear bath, but it was just too small. The 13th R.V. was another change in pace, a Chinook class C motor home on a Dodge Chassis. This was a good size except for the noise. After several hours of driving, when they stopped, everyone breathed a sigh of relief. The noise and vibrations were very disturbing. Sold it! From here Roy realized that bigger was not better.

Next was a 1967 Cortez 18 footer. This had the Oldsmobile Toronado transplant. He liked it! It handled well and was very maneuverable, but 18 feet was too small for 4 people. He felt it would be ideal for 2 people, but he sold it. Roy also talked about the rust problem that the Cortez had in the panels. The wall had foam injection insulation. Because of the design of the drip rail it leaked. The factory used caulking to take care of this but when the caulking cracked the water came in. The only way to get rid of the rust is to take out the panels and insulation and remove the rust. What a job!

Number 15 motor home was a 21 foot Winnabego La Sharo. This is the one that was built on a Renault Truck chassis, with diesel powered front wheel drive. It got 25 plus MPG. It's the best riding and handling (combination of both) that he had owned, but it was really a 2 person motor home. He liked the 7 foot wide vehicle in town and on narrow roads, but it had no storage area, or gray water holding tank. Because it was foreign the parts were expensive. Seven feet nine inches wide and 18 feet long was ideal, but with 4 people it was a bit tight. He sold the Winnabego.



Roy with his son Charles riding one of the old farm tractors.

Some of these motor homes were owned concurrently, keeping one while trying out another. So he finally sold the 1967 Cortez and bought a 1970 20 foot Cortez with the 455 Oldsmobile engine. This was a great vehicle. It handled well, measurable quiet, 4 people fit OK, it got 10 MPG, except it had a small wet bath. Roy prefers a separate shower so he doesn't get the entire bath wet when showering.

He took a trip, went 5,000 miles by himself, then stopped in Dallas to pick up his family. Then he found it was just too small for 4 people. The separate bunks when folded out had to be dodged. The folding door for the small wet bath just wasn't going to make it.

He traded it for a 1978 21 foot model Cortez, the side door model. This allowed a rear bed area. The older ones with the rear entrance wouldn't allow this, but this still wasn't it. The extra length that was added behind the rear wheels destroyed the good handling characteristics of the vehicle. The 1971 Cortez with the rear door is the best handling of all the models. At this time Roy felt that the Cortez was it. He joined the active Southern California Cortez club that has about 140 members. The national club is mainly for parts and service information.

The Vixen was next. The electrical system was a nightmare. They built 250, the last 50 were re-designed. They thought they could make it work, but it just wasn't reliable. He had a 1986 Model with the BMW 4 cylinder Turbo-Diesel model with the Buick V-6 trans-axle. There was trouble with clutches and transmissions going out. The 6,500 pounds was too much for it. It had a GM pick-up truck and Van front suspension. Roy commented that most GM truck or vans had a hard time going straight. It was also true for the Vixen. He bought it in Pontiac Michigan. By the time he got home he had had it. He had to hunched over quite a bit, because it was too much trouble to put the top up. The onboard computer interface was a big problem. Roy said it was state of the art stuff that if properly installed and maintained it would be fine, but it wasn't.

In 1986 Roy read a book on Classic Motor home Designs. (*I tried to determine which book he was reading, but he couldn't recall.*) It mentioned the Travco and its aerodynamic design, and the GMC as being a totally integrated design. Then, the FMC as being a state of the art design, the first rear gas pusher engine, and independent rear torsion arm suspension out of their tank division. Cortez, the 1st truly Class A motor home built in 1963. The Ultra Van a 22 foot motor home "that lived like 26 feet." Roy thought, Ultra Van? What's that! There were no photos with the article, so Roy didn't know what he was looking for. While he was at Disneyland with his family he saw the funny looking motor home. The unit was in poor shape, but he did say Ultra Van on it. So now he knew what he was looking for. He regularly reads the recycler ads and saw an Ultra Van for sale in San Bernadino, but it was in rough shape. He saw another ad in the recycler in Santa Clarita Valley. The steering wheel had to be turned one full turn before anything happened. The owner said this was, "No problem." It also had a stick shift and it was difficult to find the gears. Between the two problems it was difficult to drive.

On his way to a plumbing supply in Northridge, he saw an Ultra Van in a storage lot. He got the license number and called the owner. This was also a stick shift conversion. On another occasion on the way home from the muffler store he went down some side streets to miss some traffic (*he has a strong dislike for sitting and going nowhere*). He saw an Ultra Van pulling up to a house. This was the best looking one he had ever seen. As it turned out it was Bob and Roberta Franz just pulling up to Len Ryersons house. Some coincidence, eh? Bob had just had his Ultra Van painted, and today it still looks good. Roy bought Len Ryersons Ultra Manual and found out more about Ultra Vans. He joined the club and started checking out Ultra Vans for sale. He saw #357, a Tornado powered Van, for sale in Charleston Illinois.

Whales on Wheels

He bought it and brought it home. It overheated and didn't drive well.

He attended rallies saw other Ultra Vans, and wondered how a regular Corvair powered Ultra Van would drive. He heard about a Corvair powered Ultra Van #285 for sale in the Bay area, Pleasanton. Again he bought a one way ticket (his wife is finally on to this meaning that he's going to BUY a machine) and drive it home. He also looked at a V-8 model for sale in Sacramento. He felt it drove better than the Tornado conversion he had, and was easier to get at to work on. He thought the boat V-drive was funny. (*The last 45 Ultra Vans used Chevy 308 engines to a marine V drive into a Corvette rear end, because they couldn't get Corvair engines from GM any longer.*)

There was an Ultra Van up in Fraizer Park (the ridge route just north of Los Angeles). Number 315 had been parked for years and was up to its hub caps in mud. "No thank-you" Roy said. "Make me an offer?" Roy bought it! Bill Britton was selling his #236. Roy called him about selling him his Ultra Van. Roy went to look at it. Bill made him an offer he couldn't refuse. He bought it! Now it's in the paint shop getting a new outer coat.



Roy with his daughter Jennifer in front of one his many GMC's.

Number 23 R.V. was a 1978 GMC, the center kitchen Royal Model. Only 50 of these units were built by Coachman. This was the best floor plan of any motor home he had owned. The two holding tanks, a separate shower, the couch and dinette were in front and the bed in the rear. This was the nicest and most expensive one he had owned. Everyone in the family liked it. It was smooth and had a quiet ride. You could sleep in the rear while going down the road without being bounced around. This was because the GMC is rubber mounted to the chassis. Other motor homes that had chassis use rubber mounts up front but in the rear they are solid mounted and the road noise is transmitted into the motor home. The reason other motor homes don't have rubber mounts in the rear, is that their suspension won't handle it. GMC with the tandem wheels and air bag suspension takes care of that. Part's availability is also getting to be a problem. Of the 13,000 GMC's that were built 10,000 are still around. He sold the GMC in favor of getting his 600 series Ultra Van.

Roy liked the concept of David Petersons 600 series Ultra Vans, 23 or 26 feet long, aluminum monocoque construction, with the side mounted V-8 engine. He looked around for one, only 5 exist. First he contacted David Peterson but he didn't want to sell his #601 the 1st of the side mounted V-8s. Next he called Richard Nelson in Los Gatos

about his #602. This was a 23 footer that was stretched to 25 feet with a Toronado engine up front. Richard didn't want to part with his Ultra Van. He negotiated with Ernest Newhouse for his #603 but when he found out that Ernest had promised #603 to me he backed out. Next he contacted Phil Phillips about his #604 and found that it had already been sold to Len Ryerson. I guess somehow Len realized how much work had to be done on #604 to get it on the road and felt it would be better handled by someone else. Roy bought #604 from Phil Phillips. The owner of #605, George Truman in Oroville, was also contacted but George wants to finish the construction of this vehicle and use it himself.

Number 604 had been sitting for about 13 years and not been moved and there was much water damage. The upholstery crumbled when you touched it. It was damaged on both sides from a tow truck and on the left side it had been driven into a light pole. This must have been in July 1991. Roy drove it home, on the way it overheated and the brakes failed. The front linings were covered with grease and the rear seals leaked covering the rear brake linings. Roy did most of the body work. He shrank the metal rather than filling it with bondo. A friend did the upholstery work and a new paint job was put on. He drove it to the rally in Neosho, Missouri, he had problems along the way but he made it. Overheating was the problem. When Ernest Newhouse saw #604 in Missouri he couldn't believe it. I guess he had seen it in the "before" condition. Roy had done a good job in fixing it up and making it drivable. He also has changed the engine to a 350 Chevy. He put in a generator and Air Conditioning unit. Roy said he usually makes a vehicle work right first, then makes it look good. He is doing it backwards with #604.

After 24 motor homes Roy feels that an ideal length would be 23 1/2 feet and under 8 feet wide. An ideal configuration is a couch and dinette up front and a bed in the rear. He also likes a shower that is not a "wet bath" type. He feels that the 26 foot Ultra Van #604 has better livability than the 26 foot GMC motor home. If anyone would know, he would. He has test driven the big busses and large basement type models, but prefers the low profile 23 to 26 foot motor homes.

The motor homes presently owned by Roy are: Ultra Vans #236, 285, 315, 357 and 604, the Clint Eastwood FMC and the 21 foot Cortez.

Letters to the Editor

March 17, 1992

Dear Christy,

Sorry to have to tell you that we lost Gus on January 19th. He had had Emphysema for a number of years but started to fail in July of last year. Had to call 911 for him in December and they saved him that time but they couldn't do it in January. Happy to say he was mobile until the last when we had attended the Winter Dinner Meeting of the Shrine Camping Club just the evening before. He had been wagon master of that group for eighteen years and was very proud of the many friends we had made during those years. Friends had picked us up - but he was



Ultra Van #604 after a new paint job.

still driving in the day time.

Thanks for the notation in "Group Ultra Van". I have no idea why he wrote you but I do appreciate your comments.

Most sincerely, Neva Brining

From the Editor

It is sad to report the passing of two of our members, Gus Brining (see letters to the Editor) and Lou Laslo. Lou passed away on March 12th of cancer, he was 86 years old. Members Art and Millie Eller helped with the funeral arraignments, and their children helped in the Ceremony. Art & Millie made sure that Lou's wife of many years, Helen, attended the next rally in Phoenix in March. Thank-you Art and Millie.

The Rally to Alaska didn't happen. Nobody showed up. A great big thank-you to Bill and Dee Keith. They cleaned up the yard, the weather was great. Bill even painted his Ultra so it would look good. He used Acrylic Enamel, white on top and a white strip on a light green color. He likes it. We figured that the cost of gas and expenses for the trip might have been too much for most of our members during these recession times. Bill and Dee were real trouperers, they were on the CB all weekend waiting for Ultra Van calls. They did get one call from someone who was lost and helped them out. Bill says that you are still welcome to stop by and say hello, a call ahead of time might be nice. Phone (208) 687-0786.

OUT WEST is a publication for full timers. Chuck Woodbury is the Editor and Publisher. Its an "on-the-road" newspaper. For 6 months each year he explores the back roads and small towns of the American West in search of interesting people and places. (Like William Least Heat Moon in his 1982 novel "Blue Highways" Blue highways on a map are the small ones, red ones are the big ones.) He started OUT WEST as a hobby in January 1988. The first issue had 25 subscribers. Now paid circulation is approximately 10,000 and growing. Early last year he married and now both of them travel and write. He carries his

Macintosh computer and video equipment in his 24 foot Tioga motor home. Its published quarterly and you can subscribe for \$8.00 a year. Contact them at 10522 Brunswick Road, Grass Valley, CA 95945. (916) 477-9378.

My year in Ultra Van 603 seems to be going well. I haven't gotten out of the west. I'm spending time working on 603's cooling, electrical and suspension systems, also looking at the water and propane systems. No matter what the motor home, we still have all of the same systems to look at. 603 is wonderful and roomy, it gets attention where ever it goes. I have the computer (Macintosh IICx with laser printer) set up permanently in the front. I do the newsletter on this along with other stuff. Can't thank Ernest Newhouse enough for sharing his 603 with me.

Magic Chef Oven Problems

by Art Eller #364

Our #364 has had oven problems for some time. The burner shuts itself off when ever it is cycled. There was a slight gas smell also which I thought might be a byproduct of the burner going off. My chief cook made strong vocal sounds so I decided to investigate.

I called the Magic Chef local representative but was referred to the East Coast and finally down South. There a girl took my phone number. Several days later a man phoned who said he knew all about these RV stoves. I explained the trouble. He immediately said the dash mounted thermostat control was defective and should be locally available. It was, at a cost of \$125!

I choose to remove the stove (three wood screws on either side of the Burner Box Trim and the gas supply pipe that attaches to the right hand end of the burner feed pipe; Fig 1, see page 6) and take it to the local stove expert. He showed me the small screw, Fig. 2, that adjusts the pilot which was set too low and blew out. As we watched the burner cycle, we noticed a small flame at the point where this burner pipe entered the rear wall of the oven. His words were to the effect that I had a leak in the feeder pipe.

He removed the 1/4" aluminum pipe that starts at the back of the thermostat, passes through the upper back of the stove and continues down the back of the oven to an opening behind the burner. On removal and examination of said pipe, there were corrosion holes out of which the gas was escaping. A new pipe solved the problem. The job cost \$49.50. Most of it was for a service charge. You had

better look at yours! Condensation running down between the oven walls collects on this pipe and causes the corrosion.

Travels in #366 Around the USA

by Walt Davison

At the request of the editor (WCB)...a few lines about the cruise of the Ultra #366 in the summer/fall of 1991. First the driver...an early 1928 model..standard..no options..next the coach..#366 a Corvair/power glide/3.55/175x14 tires..a very light unit..3500 to 3700 lbs on the road weight..driver only. Unit has about 250,00 total miles, with about 125,000 miles on the drivetrain at start of trip. #366 is maintained by owner (of eight years) to give "hands off" touring. Work at home I don't mind..but I like to cruise trouble free.

Leaving Miami in early July..already to warm (read HOT)..north by way of several Ultra friends..Thanks "you all"..to US#2..then west on #2 to Glacier N.P...west across the park on the Going to the Sun Road the evening of arrival..back across to St. Mary's C.G. Up in the morning to cross over again for breakfast overlooking Lake McDonald..food was fair (I'm the cook) view was MAGNIFICENT. Back east to visitors center for second coffee...To backtrack a bit..on #2 coming across..stop to see the Peck Dam..just west of Wolf Point, MT nice quiet o'nite of high ground overlooking lake/dam..very nice..nice price too..free. For a little change of pace take the tour around the Bowdoin N.W.L.R. just east of Malta, MT...birds...birds..galore..a really neat drive.

Back to Glacier...leave east side on #89S to 287S to #200W to the rest stop about fifteen miles from Missoula MT...good o'nite..quiet..good water..yep, FREE. Great cat/dog story here..ask me sometime..into Missoula..nice town..good newstand..supplies..nice touristy day...south out to town to pick up #12W..the Lola trail...Lewis/Clark route. Fifteen miles out of town on #12 is nice new N.F.C.G. So for a few bucks we go first class. Nice. Leave next morning for a very lazy easy day to Orofino, MT...up to the Dworshak Dam..nice place to o'nite..neat..quiet..you guessed it..free. Into Lewiston/Clarkston the next morning..re-stock..shop..while away a few hours in very nice park along side of Snake River..on Clarkston side..on #93..continue south into Oregon..into Wallowa N.F...off the road a block or so..ah..paradise..just the music of the breeze in the trees..this is not my first day/night in "this woods", and I sure hopes its not my last. Next

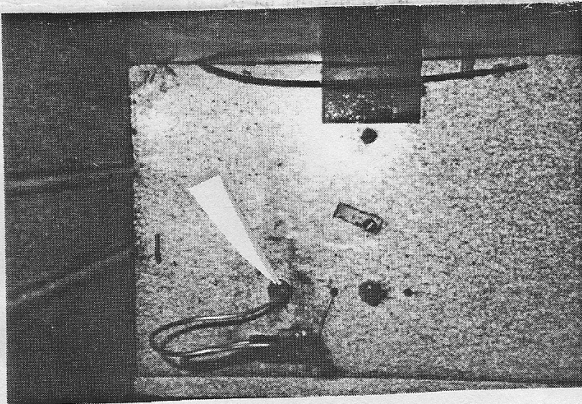


Figure 2

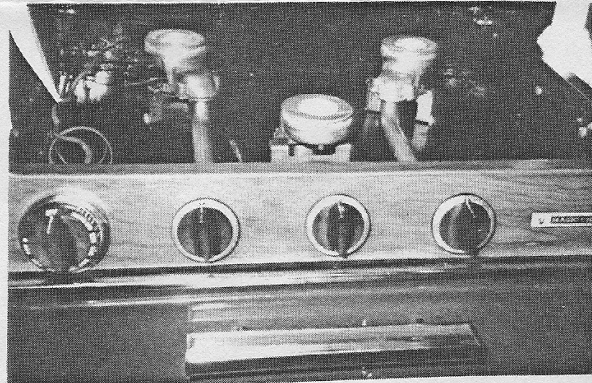


Figure 3

MODELS 165,265 / 185,285
WHEN ORDERING PARTS GIVE COMPLETE
MODEL NO. AND SERIAL NO. OF RANGE
AS INDICATED ON NAMEPLATE

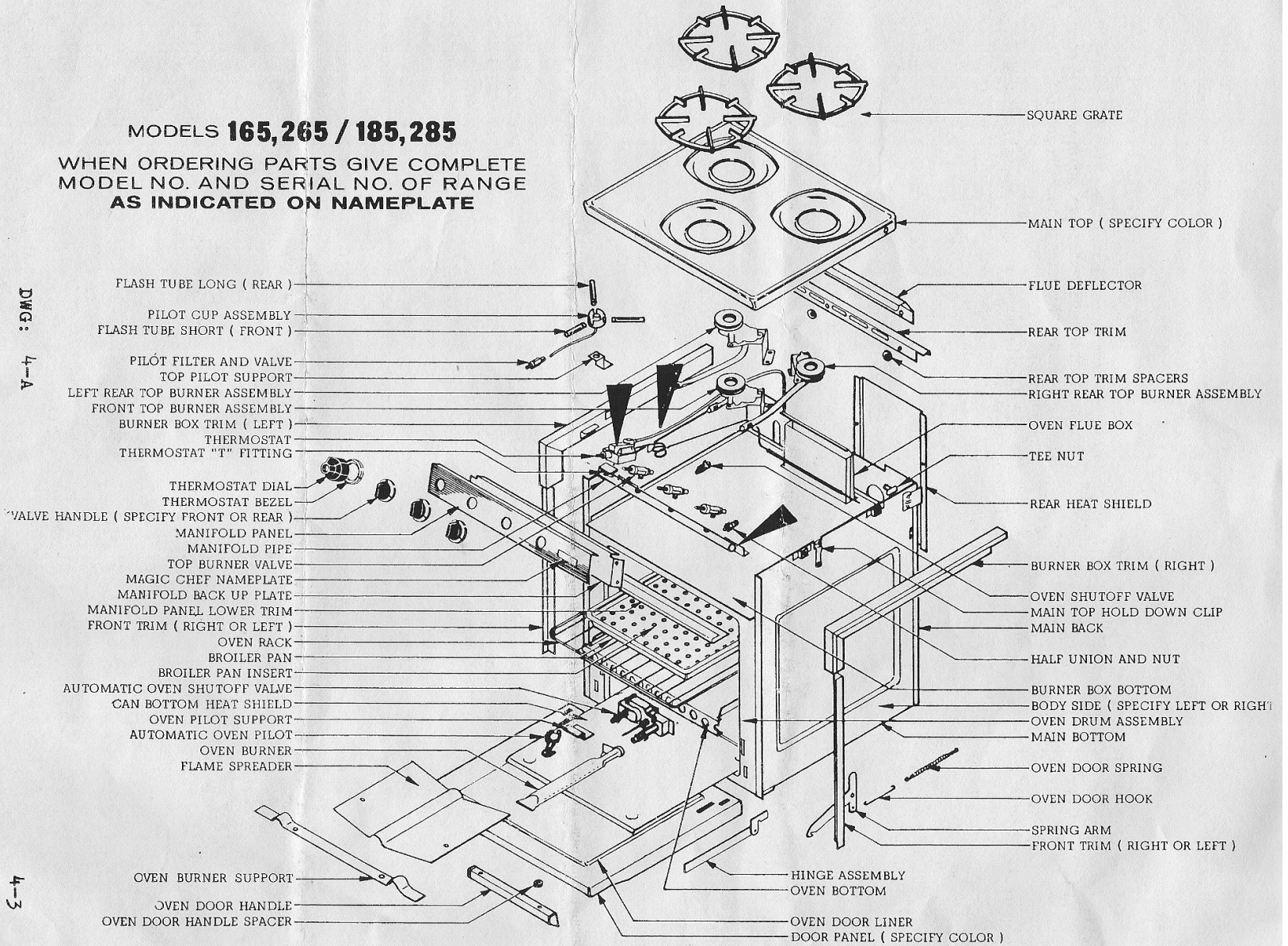
DWG: 4-A

Figure 1

6

Spring 1992

4-3



morning into Enterprise OR...check out the yummys at COMMON CAUSE..downtown Enterprise. Over through Joseph to Wallow S.P....great place to spend the the afternoon...great hiking in the Wallowrange, butnot this year...nite at Joseph airport..very lonely..very quiet.. and very free. Next night at Boardman OR. where I-84 meets the Columbia river..nice city park right along the river..if the camp gound is full..it often is..the picnic ground parking lot works well for me. I-84 into Portland OR...all the good/bad of the big city..but Portland has a lot of good memories for me from my working (what ever that is) days. Met #250 at camping supply..REL.on Hayden Island...Tim Verschuy! and and his two sons on a little cruise...Tims new to Ultras but is doing some very nice things to his unit. (a separate HELLO to Chris and Jake..hope your holidays were great guys). Of course Portland is just a skip/hop from McMinnville... old time Ultra folks know that McMinnville means the Learys...Fred turned eighty this year (Elinor is of cours nowhere near THAT old)..hard to believe but Fred sold his beloved #434..and doesn't even have a Corvaire car...drives a WATER!!!pumper..aKilladac I think its called..something like that anyhow. Back through Portland..don't miss the fantastic field of "wild" flowers at the Argyle Wine Co. in Dundee..right on Hiway 99W (#699 to be exact) between Mac and PDX...checked out Powells Book store..Tenth and Burnside..we're talkeing BIG..BIG..west to Hillsboro, home of CORVAIR UNDERGROUND (TAH.TAH)..Lon and Linda Walls.. I picked up a couple of#rare finds" for my stash..on out to the coast and turn right..cool..cool..who needs AC. The month of August was spent along the Washington coast and in various Wash. S.Parks...all VERY nice...short crossing into Canada and then down to Seattle and Boeing Surplus (south of town 208th St and 84th Ave) talk about GOODIES!!!!...Early Sept finds us headed east towards Boulder...not direct of course but by the SCENIC route...Lake Koocanus..just east of Libby MT is good for a few days./then back across Glacier Park..still great..still love it...now turn south and in a couple of days arrive at..McConnel River Access..right on the Yellowstone River..about five miles north of Gardiner Nt..nice spot to start a cruise of Yellowstone from..BUT..rainy/overcast..oh well YSNP is still a TEN..weather be darned!! East through Cody to spend the night in the city run RV park in Lovell WY...dinner AND breakfast at The Rose Bowl...just might be the best pancakes I've ever had..nice town..roses...neat...a ten..out of Lovell on #14A headed east...across the north end of the Bighorns..a somewhat steep climb but well worth it..through to Sheridan and south to Buffalo good supply town...back to west on #16..crosses south end of Bighorns..worked out just great...Next day into Thermopolis...one of my favorite towns...Tee-Pee Hot Springs...soak..swim..steam..swim..tough life!! South of Therm along the Big Horn river are a couple of State GGs..a marina..and a picnic groundPoison Creek..overlooking the Boysen Reservoir..what a great place to spend the night..miles from anyone..look out the big rear window and watch the skeeters and contrails turn into a million stars...in this setting the Ultra shines just like one of those giant stars..THANK YOU David Peterson (designer of Ultras). Continuing south through Saratoga...pool/hot springs closed for season...bummer..on the #130 up into the Snowy Mountains...I first crossed the Snowy's in 1951..busier now but thankfully just as magnificent as ever..my grade? ten plus..nostalia I suppose...Morning cruise into Laramie...supplies and things..townstuff, you know...out of town westbound on #230..approaching the WY/CO border..big engine problem..power falling fast..cold damp day..you're right..our old "friend" carb ice..oh well..off to side of road..make a cup of coffee..residual heat melts ice..fixed!! (wish everything was that

Whales on Wheels

easy)..on south we go..check out the yacht club at Rand,Co..great hot chocolate at general store..self service..on south thru light snow to Denver Creek N.F.C.G. about five miles north of Ganby. Up in the AM snowy scenes..boy this sure ain't Florida..on into Ganby.. road over Rocky Mountain Park is closed...but may open later in day..I wait..it does..what fantastic views..snow..leaves turning to gold..wow!! At high visitors center. 12000 ft..a bit TOO cool for this Florida boy..so down the hill to Boulder we go..join up with a half dozen other Ultras at the famous "Barden Spread"...let the good time roll..and they sure did...thank you Christy B.

Technical summary to date: Left engine oil dipsitck out one day..BIG MESS...ran over truck recap/bent lower engine heater doors..straighten...I use a simple on off switch for ignition...the little handle broke off..weird..replaced..High engine oil temp..212 high glide temp..158 (digital gauges) one qt. Mobil One 10/30 per thousand..19 plus miles per gallon on 87 octane...I cruise not race..fifty makes it nifty.

Stay tuned for next issue; Through CO/UT/NV/CA ..the GWSMFBT..the 935 mile day..and #366 arrived back in SUNNY FLORDIA.

Walt Davison 1208 Asturia, Coral Gables, FL 33134..305/4441937

(Walt has been working with an air dam in the front of his Ultra Van and prompses to share with us his findings. This artical was not edited in any way as per the authors request. Ed.)

D.C. Electrical Trouble Shooting

by Len Ryerson #513

Tooling or Test Instrument (s)

Low reading voltmeter like 0 to 5 volts or 0 to 3 volts.

1. Battery ground(s) (-) negative to body structure.
 - A. One lead on battery (-) post
 - B. One lead on body structure at or near ground connection area.
 - C. Operate starter to crank engine. (this is max amps draw.)
 - D. Read Volt Meter

Any reading shows some resistance is present. Prox 0.2 volts to 0.3 volts is too high and shows need for cleaning connections and/or need for better ground cables or straps.
 - E. Repeat test(s) after making correction(s), ON ALL TESTS.
2. Engine block to body structure. (-) negative.
 - A. One lead on Engine block.
 - B. One lead on the body structure at or near ground connection.
 - C. Operate starter to crank engine.
 - D. Read voltmeter.

Any reading shows resistance is present. Prox 0.2 volts to 0.3 volts is too much. Possible need of a ground strap or cable from the engine block to the body structure.
3. Battery positive post to starter solenoid main post.
 - A. One lead on the Battery (+) post.
 - B. One lead on starter terminal.
 - C. Operate starter to crank engine.

Any reading indicates a resistance from the battery (+) post, thru battery switch and cables to starter post. Any reading shows resistance (s) due to imperfect contacts in battery master switch(es); cable terminals; connections or cables are too small.

4. Battery master switch to main fuse panel bus bar. Will test circuit(s) from master switch thru all wiring up to fuse panel.

5. Running Engine - Tests

Alternator + lead to battery master switch will test charging circuit from alternator to battery switch thru ammeter (if used) resistance in this test will tend to cause erratic or inconsistent charging system operation.

Note Any circuit can be tested by this method. For poor connections; lack of good grounds; corroded terminals; or any condition causing high resistance(s).

Up-Coming Rallies

June 29 - July 3, 1992. High Sierra-Kings Canyon Campout. Kings Canyon National Park. East of Fresno California. June 29,30 at Loggers Flat (6500 feet), July 1,2,3 at Cedar Grove (4500 feet). \$4.00 per night (for seniors). Ask for directions at the park entrance.

July 12 - 18, 1992. Summer in the Mountains. Smoke Run PA. At the home of Gordon & Ruth Harvey in the oak tree grove. Primitive site. Contact: The Harveys, Box 53, Smoke Run PA 16681. (814) 378-5363.

September 23 - 29, 1992. National U.V.M.C.C., Inc. Rally. Admiralty Park, 1485 North Ellison Drive, San Antonio, Texas. 1-800 999-7872. This is a large park with many amenities. See the Alamo, the famous river walk and more. Fee will be about \$15.00 per night. Contact: Pat Fitzgerald, 1079 Bay Shore Drive, Englewood FL 34223. (813) 474-6468 or Norm Helmky 73 Sargent St., Glen Este Estate, Haines City, FL 33844.

January 25-28, 1993. Las Vegas Rally. Circusland RV Park. 1-800 634-3450 to make your own reservations, or sent \$10.80 (cost per night) deposit to John and Claire Hoffman, 3890 S. Nellis #286, Las Vegas NV 89121 by December 20, 1992

April 1993. Sadona Airzona (?). Hosts: Dan Reinhardt, 5201 W. Camelback A255, Phoenix, AZ 85031.

July 1993, Sechelt, British Columbia. Hosts Len and Edy Ryerson, 18618 Rayen St. Northridge, CA 91324

September 1993. U.V.M.C.C. National Rally. Colorado.

Classified

1967 Ultra Van #278, Rebuilt: Corvair engine and transmission, reinforced rear suspension, 4:11 gear, brakes and cylinders, packed wheel bearings. New: Shocks and mounts, gas gauge and tank unit, water pump, upholstered seats and new tires. Paint and bumpers good condition. New Curtains, ultra light weight. \$8,500. Howard Boso, 1536 W. Roundup, Apache Jct, Az. 85220 (602) 982-1596. After September 1st.

1968 ULTRA VAN, # 391, 110 H.P. Corvair engine, 15,000 on recent overhaul, rebuilt trans, 4:11 differential, New tires, original paint, has the steel bellcranks. Parked inside most of its life. Original owner.

Hank Yakel, 7878 Normal, La Mesa, Calif. 91941. Phone (619) 463-1480. \$6,900

1969 Ultra Van, #497, 140 H.P. Corvair engine. 1800 miles on rebuilt engine, 50 miles on rebuilt Powerglide transmission. New windshield. Needs body work. \$4,900. Donald T. Elliott, 32 Weiss Hill Road Oroville, CA 95966. No Phone.

1969 Ultra Van #510, 305 Chevrolet V-8, fruitwood interior, air conditioning, some tinted windows, awning. Asking \$6,000. Mark H. Simmons, 97 Beverly Place, Xenia, Ohio 45385. (513) 376-1504.

1970 Ultra Van #550, new 307 Chevrolet V-8, White ash interior, new suspension, new tires, new roof air and refrigerator, color TV, New batteries, to many items to mention here. This Van is in excellent condition and is ready to roll. Call Joseph P. Alvarez, 14345 El Vestido St., San Diego, Ca 92129. (619) 484-6726. \$9,990.

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.

1961 Corvair Rampside Custom flat bed. Chestnut Brown, 140 H.P. engine, 4 speed transmission, 3.55 rear end. Air Conditioning. A really unique unit. \$5,000. Digger Nichimoto, 671 N. Villa, Dinuba, CA 93618. Home (209) 591-7535, Work (209) 638-5882.

1965 Corvair Monza Coupe, 110 Automatic. A senior division car, 97.8 points. A #1 winner time after time. Just like new. \$6,500. Leroy Hammond, 4749 E. Brown, Fresno, CA 93703. (209) 252-2271.

FOR SALE, A Corvair business, or at least all the new and used parts and over 100 cars and trucks. \$25,000. Bud Hicks, 1506 N. Blackstone, Fresno, CA. 93703. (209) 264-1083.

Ultra Van parting out. #441 burned very badly, Toronado conversion. Saved transaxel, drive axels, front & rear fiber glass, radiator, holding tank, and the strangest cooling fan drive set up ever, and other parts. Steve McDaniel, 18131 W. Lake Desire Dr. S.E., Renton, WA 98058. (206) 255-6751 SASE please.

Wanted: For restoration of Ultra #101 (the prototype) 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.

Want to buy an Ultra Van:

Lex and Sue Adams	AND	Bruce Bigler
965 Waikiki Drive		6186 Bennington Drive
Merritt Island, FL 32953		Newark, CA. 94560
(407) 453-1665		

FOR SALE. Ultra brake master cylinders (see page 11-8, fig. 11-F of Ultra Manual) Brand new Lockheed Units-\$39.95 each. Original foam bumpers (have 3) \$39.95 each. New distributor plates (special bushed pivot pin) \$12.95 each. Many other new and used parts-Inquire. Jim Craig #549, (619) 366-9104.

LOST FORK! Help, Please, Huge Reward (well, maybe small

reward). Stainless dinner fork last seen at Barden estate in September 1991. On back is stamped "Hackman Finland 18/8". Fork is 7 1/2 inches long and has four tines. Fork is part of a set with great sentimental value. Walt Davison, 1208 Asturia Ave., Coral Gables, FL.33134. (305) 444-1937.

New Fuel Wrench

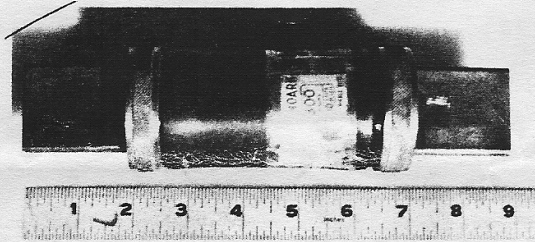
by W. Christy Barden

Fuse Protection for your Ultra

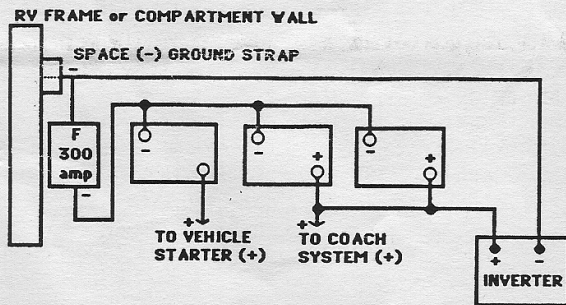
by Noel Kirkby

Author of "RVers' Guide to Solar Battery Charging"
14415 N. 73rd Street, Scottsdale AZ 85260

Where several large batteries are hooked together and large #6 or #4 gauge wires supply heavy starters, the generator or inverter, a "catastrophe fuse" (located in the negative wire as it exits the battery) can avert a vehicle fire. An inexpensive, renewable construction fuse (Buss #REN300, 300-amp), available at any electrical supply house, can be bolted to the frame. A ground strap is also advised. As ground, insulation is not critical, except to the negative post of the battery. The 300-amp fuse is heavy enough to allow operation of the starter, inverter or generator, but will blow if a short-circuit occurs.

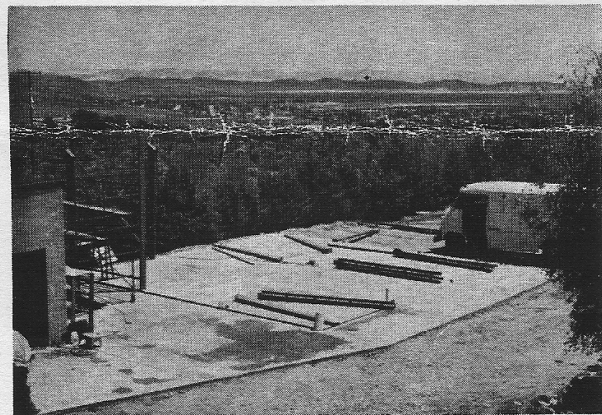
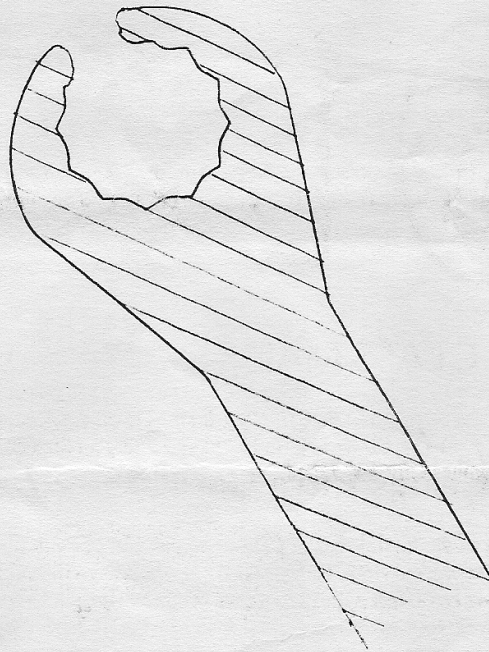


A 300-amp catastrophe fuse for use in the negative wire at the Vehicle frame.



Adding a heavy-duty fuse in the negative line, rather than the positive line, prevents accidental short circuits or contact and protects the entire system.

Napa sells a new GM fuel inlet nut wrench, Part number from Balkamp is 700-2001, for about \$10.00. This is a substantial wrench, heavy and solid. It fits all Rochester carbs. This includes Corvair, "J" and "X" cars. Thin wall construction allows for use of two wrenches side by side. This one to hold the fuel filter nut, while the flair wrench tightens the gas line nut.

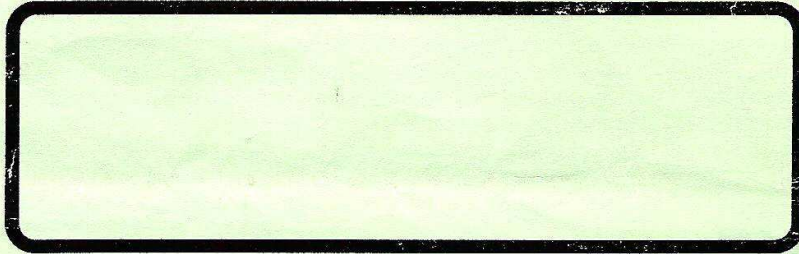


View from Jim Craigs home before the building of the new Ultra Garage. See page 10. Note the Chevy step van with Ultra Van windshields at right of photo.



GROUP ULTRA VAN

5537 PIONEER ROAD
BOULDER, COLORADO 80301

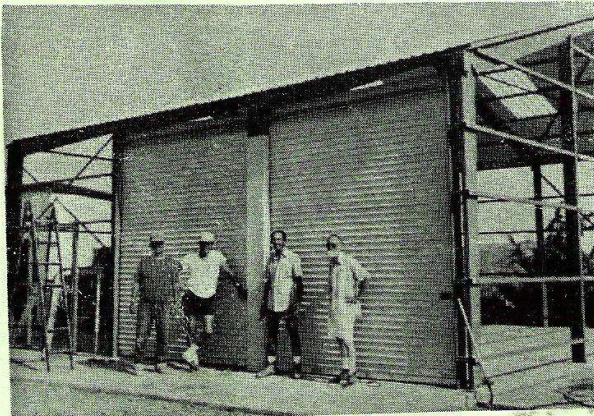


FIRST CLASS MAIL

Jim Craigs Ultra Garage

Jim lives in the high desert of California, just east of Palm Springs. Plenty of space and view. He has added a new building to his property. Its a 30 feet by 30 feet with 12 foot eave height and includes a covered 18 feet by 30 feet lean-to roof and slab area on the east end. He made all the concrete level with the existing 2 car garage so that he can roll engine stands, etc. from one building to the other without having to lift items over a ridge or drop off.

The building is ail steel except for the fiberglass panels on the roof. He and his wife Marlene and friends did all the work except for the concrete. He truly is a strong contender for the most Ultra working space award.



Jim Craig and crew during the building of his Ultra garage.

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 untill 1970. About 360 units were built. Dues are \$4.00 annually, please remit to the Secretary-Treasurer. Submit all technical information to the Editor. Proof reading done by Dick and Leona Campbell.

PRESIDENT

Jean McMasters #330
916 Lighthouse Drive
No. Palm Beach, FL 33408
(407) 626-0388

VICE-PRESIDENT

Jim Bents #446
6571 Spring Path Ln.
San Jose, CA 95120
(408) 997-7438

SEC.-TREASURER

Louis Griggs #334
626 Brookfield Ave.
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 722-2991

EDITOR

W. Christy Barden #228, 603
5537 Pioneer Road.
Boulder, CO 80301
(818) 786-7815

DIRECTORS

Eastern

Pete Kehloer #465
27446 Beacon Sq.
Farmington Hills, MI 49018
(313) 478-0906

Western

Art Eller #364
3873 Shannon Rd.
L. A., CA 90027
(213) 660-3880

Corvaair Society of America (CORSA)
P.O. Box 550, Midlothian, Illinois 60445-0550
(708) 339-6241