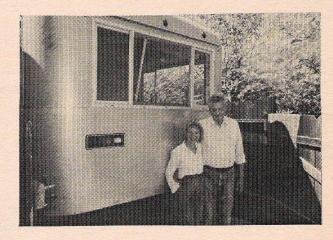


## THE LAST ULTRA VAN

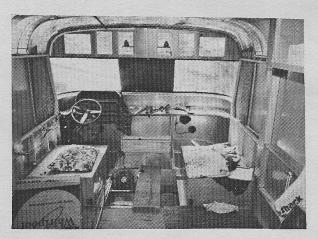
GEORGE TRUMAN finds #605 and starts to finish it.
W. Christy Barden

The last Ultra Van built in the Sanoma California plant is owned by George and Maxine Truman. Number 605 was just a shell when it was purchased from the factory in 1975. Mr. Mathews who was working for the factory at the time of closure bought it. He kept it in his back yard in Fremont California for about 8 years. George found out about the Van from David

Peterson. When he saw it, it was still just a shell. The engine, transmission and axle/differential were under a tree nearby. Mr. Mathews delivered the Van to George's home in Oroville California in 1983. Since that time George has put in the side mounted engine, installed the axle and transmission, and suspension parts. Brakes and steering are done and



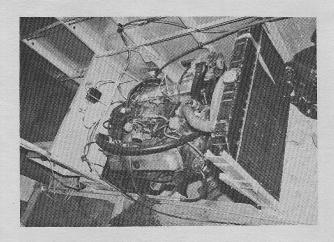
The Trumans standing behind # 605 in their side yard in Oroville.



Interior view looking foward in Ultra #605.



Looking back toward the bedroom area, galley will go on left.



Olds 350 V-8 side mounted mid engine with radiator in front. he's working out a wheel alignment problem. The interior is still bare and the motor home systems have yet to be installed. I visited he and Maxine last month

and spent the night in their driveway. The RV parking area is level and even has a dump station in place. We had a good visit and I'm sharing the photos that I took while I was there.

#### Letters to the Editor

June 29th, 1992

Dear Christy,

Its been quite a while since we corresponded. I have not forgotten old #104 Ultra Van and in fact as far as I know, it is about 50 miles from me now. I am still a strong advocate of the Ultra Van concept and of course like many others, wish it had been continued and improved as time went along. We have a new AIREX now, with Ford Power and it is a very practical motor home for us. In various conversations in campgrounds and meetings, when I get on the good things about our old Ultra Vans (and show pictures of course) I begin to wonder why I got rid of it! I guess mainly it was the untrustworthy mechanical components...mine was the 4th one built and many hand-built parts not like the later ones and it was a matter of researching how something could be Hand Made to beef it up etc. I am more into the packaging and interior work etc. and do not like the mechanical part of it.

Well, I digress...What I am REALLY writing about is just my subscriptions to Whales on Wheels. I sent a check for payment of the \$4.00 which was due...and it was cashed according to my wives' records. However got a note later that it was not paid, so dug it out and made a photocopy and mailed it to Louis Griggs in Cumberland Md. I thought it was taken care of and this is the third attempt to straighten it out. I thought I would write YOU this time and I suspect the attached part I clipped of the top of the latest Newsletter was written by YOU. Anyway, it is a minor amount of money and I am enclosing my check for \$8.00 this time and hope you can get it figured out so that this year's dues will be paid as well as NEXT (1993) year's dues!

I enjoy the newsletter very much. One thing that we have never seen that I know of, was some exterior views of David Peterson's latest version of the Ultra Van...on a minivan chassis I believe. Not that any will be for sale, but it was a interesting project...we saw a few interior views and maybe some close-ups of some of the exterior construction, but I don't remember any of it at a little distance or from different angles. Maybe he never completed it! Anyway, just a thought.

See you later, Murry Fisher

July 7th, 1992

Dear Christy,

The enclosed keys are extra awning safety pin were discovered yesterday in our Auto File. You might have use for spares, so here they are. Hope you are keeping healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Edna's new heart valve seems to be operating fine. But she got shingles in her face and head-the doctor says due to the stress of her surgery. It's a very painful experience and not much to do except let it run its course.

Noted your writing about our good friend Roy Muranaka in the last Whales. Very interesting writing. Indeed-I had seen #604 "in the rough". Hope Roy got the cooling problem corrected. Haven't heard.

Note you decided to install the computer up front in #603. Trust "our" coach is operating beautifully. It was a dream for all those miles to us! Do you know it got to lake Louise and Banff, also to Len and Edy Ryerson's place another time via boat across their bay, and as far south on a week in old Mexico on the Gulf with FMCA big rigs? Of course it has also seen our own country coast to coast. It proved to be very dependable and a joy to drive and live in

Are you enjoying your year of absence from the air? After retiring from business, I've had so many projects going that we are busy as when going to the office every day. Wish there were more hours in each day. It is good to keep occupied.

Let us know how you are when you have a minute. We think of you (and #603) often.

Our Love, Edna and Ernest Newhouse.

July 22nd, 1992

Dear Editor,

In reading Walt's trip around Montana and Idaho. He or you (It's Walt, ed.) seem a little mixed up. Orofino is in Idaho, it's the state mental hospital. Don't think Montana wishes to claim it. Glad he liked the dam area, did he see the little critters that run around there? The state now wishes to blow them away as they are rodents and pests. There was a picket line awhile back, so they could be saved. Guess it worked.

In the story about us. We cleaned the yard because we

had summer in March and April this year. Was a dirty winter. Took one month instead of three because of weather. So it did look nice for guests.

By the way, Christy I did name the Ultra Van "ole Ugh". Had Vern Schroyen here on the weekend and the Suckow's on Tuesday. Our very dull town was rather loud that night. Gas line blew out on the prairie. Sure was noisy. Offer is still out to stop by if up this way.

An Ultra Friend, Dee Kieth

#### **Summer Travels**

I've spent the summer doing what Norm Helmkay talked about doing in the last UVMCC newsletter. Re-Wiring an Ultra Van. His ideas are sound and worth reading. Ultra Van #603 is now 19 years old and needed some attention on the wiring side. The main problem was high resistance from the alternator to the instrument panel. This caused the voltage to get over 15 volts, which is not good for radios, engine gages and other electronic things. One #10 wire went from the alternator through a 35 Amp circuit breaker and up to the amp meter on the instrument panel. Just as Norm and Len Ryerson have talked about, resistance occurs in connectors and wires that are too small to do the job. There had been a fire in the engine compartment of #603 some time ago. Fire extinguishers were corrosive, and got into a connector used in that #10 wire that went forward to run all the automotive systems. When exposed, only about 11 strand remained in a normally beefy #10 wire. There were evidences of corrosion and the wire was brittle, which was evidence of heat. I took the amp meter out of the system and put in a volt meter. Using the other #10 that ran back to the motor home systems from the removed amp meter along with the repaired #10 wire that ran forward together gave a larger wire to the instrument panel. Also replacing the old alternator with a few burned diodes helped. So now the system charged and got some voltage up front. After all this I still had high voltage at the instrument panel, which told me there was still some resistance in the line. When the headlights were on and the heater motor running with the turn singles on and the brake lights on I was reading about 10.5 volts. If the engine was below 1200 rpm the 35 amp circuit breaker would trip and I would be going down the highway with no lights, no engine (because of on 12 volts to the distributor) no power steering and no power brakes. Well, you can imagine how I felt in this situation. I soon learned not to let the engine go below 1200 rpm when the vehicle slowed down.

As with most systems, it's usually not just ONE thing that needs looking at. It's a combination of several things. So now to look at what happened to the electricity generated by the alternator when it got up front. I peered into a bee hive of wires under the dash board. All leading to a few old fuse holders boards. I guessed that had to be part of the problem. This meant looking at the automotive system wire by wire, just as Norm talked about. If I was going to do this I might as well separate the automotive and RV electrical systems. I wasn't happy with the RV heater running down the battery on a cold night. So,

where to start!

I separated the systems. The automobile battery is easy to get. What about the RV battery? Looking at the 12 volt batteries, they didn't have enough amp hours. I decided using two 6 volt Trojan T105 batteries connected in series. This gave me 214 amp hours, and up to 750 life cycles. I put

them all in the same compartment. The automotive voltage regulator to keep battery was the sealed and did not have a venting problem. The Trojan batteries needed to be vented. Dick Campbell came up with a good idea to vent the Trojan batteries. Just like the old Corvair cars. Remember how the vent caps went into a rubber hose and down to the outside of the car? Well, we did the same thing with the Trojan batteries. Fortunately the new vent caps on the Trojan batteries are one piece for the three filling holes. So we drilled the vent caps and put on plastic fittings, then slipped rubber hose on the ends. It worked great! A relay connected the two battery systems, controlled from the instrument panel.

Next, under the dash and the fusing of all the automotive systems. This was a little more of a job. Most of the wires were marked to show their destinations, but some weren't. Where there had been only nine 10 amp fuses before, I finished up with 12 fuses on the automotive side, and 10 fuses, through a relay on the ignition side. Another 5 fuses in the RV side up front. I still haven't figured out where the fuses are for the RV systems in the middle and rear of the Van.

As many of you know #603 is a side mounted V-8 engine with a side mounted radiator. I was having trouble with

shaft that drove the engine cooling fan. It also partially blocked the air flow into the radiator plenum area. After thinking about it I decided to use an electric motor to run the fan. The fan uses 60 amps DC, which meant I needed a high out put alternator. I purchased a 160 amp alternator system from Wrangler Power Products, Inc., 7901 E. Pierce Street Unit A, Scottsdale, AZ 85257-4607. Phone (602) 945-1514, 1-800-992-2616. They sell a full line of alternators from 120 amps to 225 amps, along with relays, shunted amp meter (that work), wires connectors, etc. If you phone them they will send you a catalog and price book free. Very reliable people to deal with. At idle rpm (675) the system will put out 80 amps. It needs about

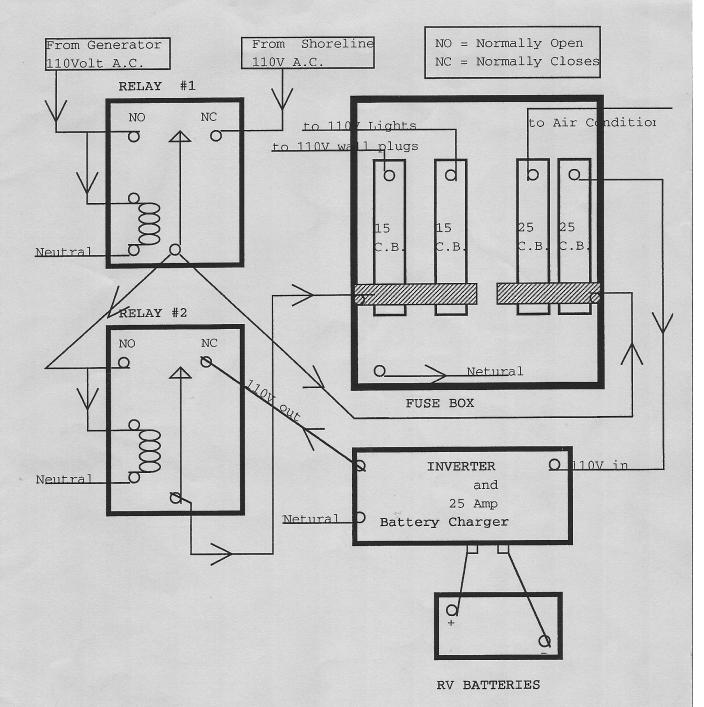
> 1800 rpm to put out 168 same time, using the

amps. It used a reworked alternator which out puts AC current to an external box that has the transformer rectifiers with a cooling fan. They have a special voltage regulator as well. This unit will charge two different systems at the

voltage regulator to keep either system from overcharging. This system is so much better than the splitter systems that many motor homes use on their battery systems. All of their systems worked as advertised, which today is saying something.

To alleviate any voltage drop problem I ran #4 wire from the alternator system up front the instrument panel into a power distribution block. Then used #10 wire to power the relays for the headlights, horns, running lights, emergency flasher systems, fog lights and the ignition system. I used 3 shunts, one to measure power used by the automotive system, the RV system and the other to monitor the engine cooling fan. Then using a 3 position switch on the dash to a single amp meter and volt meter.

One ought wire was run from the alternator through the shunts to the batteries. A one ought ground wire was also run from the alternator to the batteries. To help ground the systems up front I ran a #10 ground wire from the batteries to the instrument panel. Now the instrument gauges don't move when I turn on the headlights or rev the engine. I did use a Chrysler 12 volt instrument regulator to run power to the gauges. This keeps the instrument voltage at 12 instead of 13 or 14, which give a more accurate and constant reading.



110volt switching system for Ultra Van #603 (all automatic) Showing the hot line only, the netural is assumed. Using two each Single Pole Double Throw (SPDT) 30 amp realys mgf. by Dayton #1A489E, from the Granger calalog.

Make a copy of this page 6 and send in that copy. That way you can keep your issue of Whales on Wheels in tact.

# 15th Annual Great Western Fanbelt Toss & Swap Meet November 13-15, 1992

Red Lion Inn Ontario, California

NAME:\_

ADDRESS: Street Addre	SS	City	State	7ip
RES	ERVATION DEADL	INE NOV	. 1st	
Our receipt,not	R NOV. 1st REGISTR postmark, of Reservation form ation saves money and ensures	denotes date	of Reservation	n
Registration				\$ 5.00
Banquet Dinner	\$ 25.00/person	X	=	
Big Splash? Kick Off Party	\$ 5.00/person	X	=	
Car Show	\$ 5.00  Entry	X	=	
Model Car Show	\$ 3.00 Entry	X		
Creative Arts	\$ 3.00/Entry	X	=	
Craft Boutique	\$ 15.00/Weekend Indoor Space	X	=	
<i>Swap Space</i> Free Swap Space" When Re	\$ 15.00  Weekend egistered At Red Lion Inn	X	=	-
RV/Camper Space	\$ 35.00/ Weekend	X		
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T-Shirts-Reg/White M mall Med. Large mall requires special order Your Corvair Club Affiliation		/ Registrat	tion \$ 12.00 =	at Show
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To top off the system I put two solar panels on the roof. They are the MSX60 Solarex Module. They out put about 6 amps DC at 13 volts. I used the Trace C-30A Charger Controller that will handle up to 30 amps. I had a conflict between the two charging systems. I started the engine once and the alternator system didn't work. It took me a while to figure out that the automotive system cuts out charging at 14.1 volts. The solar charger controller cuts out at 14.7 volts. When the motor home system sensed that the system had 14.5 volts it thought it didn't need to do any charging, so it didn't. Turning off the solar panel switch fixed the problem. This only happened in warm sunny conditions.

The last addition to the system was Inverter and Battery Charger. Ichose the Trace 812/SB, which has the 25 amp battery charger option. This will charge the batteries when 110V house current is available through the shoreline or generator. It also provides 800 watts of 110V from the batteries to run the computer or other small loads. I bought the inverter and solar system from: Solar, 14415 N. 73rd St., Scottsdale, AZ 85160. 1-800-999-8520. This company is owned by Noel & Barbara Kirkby, one of our members.

The 110 volt system changes power sources automatically. By using two relays it selects between, normal house

power (shoreline), the generator, or the inverter. There are commercial versions of this, but elected to wire up my own. Mine does not have a time delay when going to the inverter, so if switching takes place I make sure that systems are off first. I have a drawing that shows this on page 5, labeled, 110 volt switching for Ultra Van 603. The advantages are that no manual switching is necessary. The inverter is always available in the idle mode, this draws a small amount of power. When you start the generator or plug in to 110 volts it changes as well. You are limited to 30 amps 110 volts. If the number one relay fails you always have the shoreline. If the number two system fails you always have the inverter. This system would work well with one relay to decide between generator power, or shoreline supply, if you have no inverter.

#### From the Editor

Yes, I'm still on the road. I spent most of the summer working on the electrical system on 603, along with the cooling system. The electrical system works like a champ now, but the cooling of the radiator water is still disappointing.

I owe a big apology to Roy Muranaka, not Moranaka. In our last issue I misspelled his name in the front page

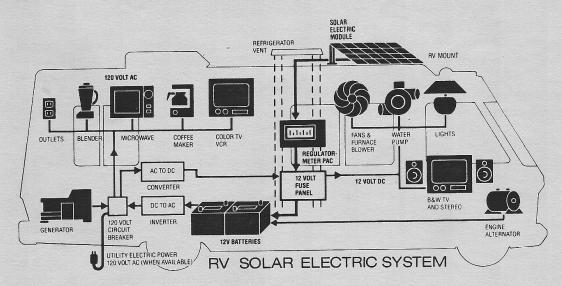


Photo courtesy of Kyocera America, Inc.

headline. Its part of my ongoing difficulty with auditory discrimination of vowels. It falls into the dyslexic category, problems with o and u; i and e; a and e. It's just part of my being and leads to the misspelling of words and names when it comes to vowels. This isn't sloppiness, just my dyslexia.

I'm a little late with this issue. That's because I'm on a year off, have nothing to do, so of course I'm behind in everything. I've been doing this newsletter for over ten years now. It doesn't seem possible. I remember the earlier issues. It would be a real effort to get it out, especially with my dyslexia. I would go out to California every quarter and with the help of Dick and Leona Campbell I would get it done. He would help with all the proofreading, she would do the typing and I would paste it together. Now with the help of the computer it has become much easier. I still make errors even with the help of my spell checker and grammar checker programs. They can't know that "form" is really "from", "tow" is "two", etc., they all seem like good words to the word processor. I have learned to live this. From the lack of complaints I'm assuming that you have also learned to live with this. Thank-you one and all!

I'm planning to go back to work in December, so maybe then I'll get back on schedule.

"REST AREA GUIDE TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA." This is the title of a pocket book put out by: American Travel Publications, 6986 El Camino Real, Suite 104-199, Carlsbad, CA 92009. (619) 438-0514. They sent me a copy of their June 1992 printing and I liked it. It lists all the official rest stops in the US and Canada. Its easy access format makes valuable information readily available to you in easy to understand terms and symbols. The book lists each state and province separately. The feature I really use is the listing of RV dump stations. As I plan my day I would check to see if there is a dump station along the way, this saves me having to pay \$3.00 to \$5.00 to dump my holding tank. The cost is \$9.95, but if we buy a bulk order for the club we could get a substantial discount. Any one interested in handling this?

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

The Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet is being held at the Red Lion Inn, Ontario, California. See the enclosed application form on page 6. Jim and Marlene Craig will be holding their annual High Desert Rally in conjunction with this. You can get a complete information

packed by sending to the address listed in the rallies section. Here are the highlights: RV/camper space or Ultra Van space \$35.00, NO HOOK UPS, for 3 days and 2 nights. No arrivals before 12:00 noon on Friday and departure should be by 3:00 P.M. on Sunday. The area will have security. The Saturday night banquet will be held at the ballroom of the Red Lion Hotel. The dinner menu will be: Chicken Cordon Bleu, Salad, Vegetable, Rice Desert, Coffee or tea. A vegetarian plate will be available upon request and will feature pasta primevera. The registration form explains the rest of the information. The red Lion Hotel, 222 N. Vineyard, Ontario, CA 91764, (714) 983-0909 or 1-800-547-8010.

#### Western Rally Report

The rally in July held in the Sequoia National Park was a real treat. There were eleven rigs in the group campground that provided us with our own private area bordered by a babbling stream and many pine trees. With a wide open area for a campfire, benches and potlucks, an area to play horseshoes, a net strung between two trees with a dual purpose for volleyball and badminton, enough space for a rousing game of softball, and plenty of room to park beneath the trees it satisfied all our needs. The weather was cool but pleasant with one little sprinkle the first night. Instead of the hot weather that we expected it was beautiful and quite mild.

The wildlife included one large bear that ambled into camp and proceeded to climb into the dumpster to select his own smorgasbord from its contents. With complete disregard for his audience he sat down and totally enjoyed his meal then wondered off to see what else he might find in the next campground. The deer that we saw while hiking in the beautiful meadow area was so tame she allowed the camera buffs plenty of time to snap her picture. The picnic lunch we had in this area was delightful beside the meandering river in the cool shade of the trees.

Leonard Tekaat and Mel and Millie Dinesen did a great job of hosting and planning this event. Everything ran very smoothly. The spectacular Sequoia trees were so awesome they are hard to describe. Anything that old and that large just needs to be viewed in person because pictures just don't do them justice. The ranger's talks plus the visit to the Visitor's Center gave us a great respect for these majestic living things.

The second campground was more the traditional type with the pull-in individual campsites but there again we were very happy to find ten sites fairly close together so the evening campfire and potluck were still available to everyone.

The grandchildren of the three Ultra families had a ball each day, everything from games to fishing and falling into the stream or taking a chilly dip in the inviting natural pools near the camp. They brought a special joy to us all with their laughter and seeing the awe in their eyes when they caught sight of the wildlife.

The drive down into King's Canyon is breathtaking and very steep, it reminds you much of Yosemite the closer you get to the bottom. All the Ultras pulled it out in low gear! Thank-you!

We were so pleased that along with our children the grandchildren were able to attend this rally and enjoy the special fellowship that is always there with our Ultra Friends.

Marlene Craig - #549

### **Up-Coming Rallies**

November 7 - 20, 1992. High Desert Mini Rally, Joshua Tree, CA. This rally will be held prior to and after the Annual Corvair Fan Belt Toss, held in Ontario CA. Tours of the local area points of interest are available, in addition to the usual potlucks, games and tech sessions. Engine tear down and aluminum repair are planned. No fee. Contact: Jim and Marlene Craig #549, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA 92252. (619) 366-9104. Rally will be held at the Craig's home.

November 13-15, 1992. G.W.F.B.T.& S.M. (Great Western Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet) Ontario CA. This annual affair will be held in Ontario CA this year, at the former sight of the National CORSA convention. There will be a charge for parking. For further information contact Debbie De Luca, Vintage Corsa Of Orange County, P.O. Box 6, Placentia, CA 92670. (714) 993-2808. (Look elsewhere in this newsletter for a registration form.)

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 1 - 4, 1993. Wickenburg, Arizona.** Hosts: Dan Reinhardt, 5201 W. Camelback A255, Phoenix, AZ 85031. (602) 846-2300; Threasa Vandrsteeg, 9716 Loma Blance Drive, Sun City, AZ 85351. (602) 977-43358; Warren & Nobia Suckow, 3129 W. Haywire Ave. Phoenix, AZ. 85051. (602) 841-0911.

July 1993, Sechelt, British Columbia. Hosts Len and Edy Ryerson, 18618 Rayen St. Northridge, CA 91324. (818)349-5058.

**September 1993. U.V.M.C.C. National Rally.** Estes Park in the Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado.

#### Classified

1967 Ultra Van #278, Rebuilt: Corvair engine and transmission, reinforced rear suspension, 4:ll 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, #374. 283, V-8 engine. Original Owner. Asking price, \$5,000.Emil Miller, 4935 1/2 Briggs Ave., La Crescenta, CA 91214. (818) 248-1082.

1968 Ultra Van, # 391, 110 H.P. Corvair engine, 15,000 on recent overhaul, rebuilt trans, 4:11 differential, New tries, 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 #463. Death in family forces sale of this loved van. \$10.000. Marie Valdisera, 5468 Cloud Way, San Diego, CA 92117. (619) 275-0259.

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 on left side and rear. No structural damage. \$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.

Wanted: For restoration of Ultra #101 (the prototype) Aluminum ribs that steering gear box attaches to. Master brake cylinder fits between the tow ribs. Call collect if you have or know of the availability of any of the above parts. Jim Craig #549 (619) 366-9104.

65

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 (have3) \$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.



# GROUP ULTRA VAN

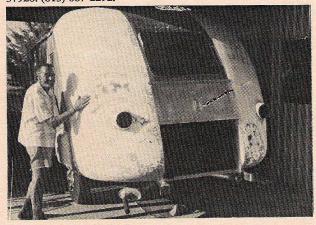
5537 PIONEER ROAD BOULDER, COLORADO 80301



#### FIRST CLASS MAIL

FOR SALE. 1969 complete running gear as removed from Ultra Van #467. 2,000 miles after complete overhaul, with 140 heads and 110 heads. All cooling fins cleaned out, 3.89 gears with ring gear mounting modified to accept 6 or 9 bolt ring gear. \$895/offer. Jerry Dute, 15544 Whitehead Rd., La Grange, OH 400050. (216) 355-4101.

Ultra Van WANTED. Corvair powered, mid price range. Average condition O.K., he is willing to do some work on it. Want good running gear. Contact: Jim Howell, P.O. Box 5942, Knoxville TN 37928. (615) 687-2292.



Jim Craig doing final inspection before painting Ryerson's Ultra.

WHALES ON WHEELS IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF GROUP ULTRA VAN, A CORSA CHAPTER. IT IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVA-TION 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.

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Summer 1992

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