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*Warren Suckow Remembered.*



*See page 6.*

**Ultra Van #700  
 finds new Home**

*by Jim Craig*

In a recent article I wrote that I had to stop this Ultra Madness. That is buying and owning so many Ultra Vans. Well it happen again!

Lucille Peterson (David Peterson's wife) called last week and ask if I was interested in the prototype #700. Seems she had been notified by the city of Oakland that she had to get all of the vehicies out of their yard by a certain date or the city would haul them off and charge her for it. I might mention that David had had a severe fall and broke his neck and as a result of that he wasn't able to help get the vehicles moved. So , myself and others were called to assist.

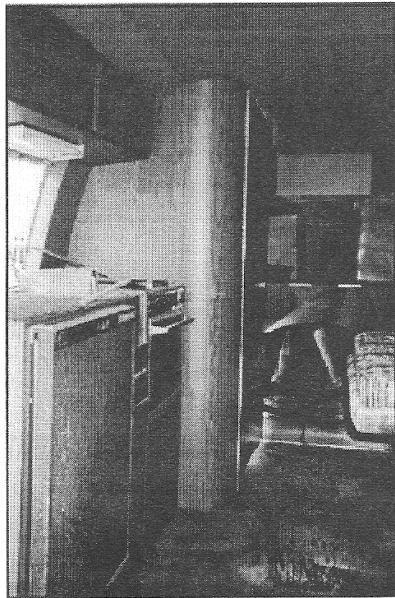


*L. to R. Glen Plymate, David Peterson, Erral Plymate, Lucille Peterson, Ron & Patsy Hussman (David & Lucille's daughter and son-in-law) in front of Ultra Van #700 at Peterson home.*

Ultra #700 ? The price was right, so I said, "Yes". Marlene is going to kill me, I thought. It turned out ok after I explained what the situation was. I told Lucille that I could come up on a certain date to move the #700 out to Mory Snyders in Antiock, CA.

I then contacted Bob Franz to assist me in locating a trucking firm in his area that could handle loading the Ultra without damaging it. We needed a rig that had a tilt bed, so it could be winched up and be able to roll it off easy. Bob found the right firm to do the job, so I made plans to ride my Harley up for the three days, get it moved over to Morys and return.

Wednesday started out as a nice sunny day. The Harley was purring great as I sailed alone across the open desert, headed north to Oakland, 465 miles away. The needle on the speedometer was hanging in the 70-74mph mark. The sage brush was only a blur thru my dark sun glasses. In the first 70 miles, only a truck or two was met. Mojave, CA. lay on the distant horizon where the often rainy Tehacapis mountains rise up from the desert floor. The gods of the sun had to be with me today for sure, but it was not to be. 20 miles east of Mojave the first drops of rain hit my windshield. Oh well, I might as well pull over now and get my rain gear on. I down shifted thru the gears as I slowly pulled onto the soft shoulder of the



Interior view shows kitchen & bed area.

road. By this time the rain was getting serious. Just what I need for this long ride, darn!

The rain fell steady from there all the way into Bakersfield, where it let up for a few minutes. I stopped at the Texaco station on 7th Standard road for gas, it was still raining steady as I pulled in and the girl said, "You look cold". She made the right observation. Not only that, the crouch of my Levis was wet from a leak in my rain suit. No use to change now, still 250 miles to go. After leaving the station and meeting Interstate 5, 15 miles down the road the rain stopped. Clear weather prevailed for the next 220 miles. I pulled into Mory and Esthers 8 1/2 hrs after leaving home. She served me my forvaite hot cup of Postum. My cold hands wrapped themselves around the cup and held it tight. I could hardly speak, my voice was so hoarse from being cold and breathing all the cold air. I was in the warm bed she prepared for me, within the next hour.

I checked the rear tire on the Harley the next morning and it was apparent the it would not be safe to travel back home on it. I called the local bike shop and they had the correct tire, so I dropped the Hog off and drove Mory's Greenbrier to the Peterson's later that morning. On arrival, other friends was there to help move #601 out of the way in order to get #700 out on the street, ready for the truck to pick it up the next day.

We had a little trouble getting it across the street gutter, because of the 9 foot overhang of the rear. We had put some 2x4's across the gutter to elevate it some, but that was not enough. David came out about this time and said, "Why don't you air up the rear air bags." Ye-Gads, air bags? It worked great. We pushed it around and lined it up next to the curb.

David and I spent the next hour looking everything over, with me taking mental notes where and how everything worked. This is a small Ultra, I could not completely stand up in it with my 6 ft. frame. David was quite comfortable in it. It is 27 feet long and approx. 93" wide & 7 feet tall (from the ground). It is powered by a 1976 Chev. Chevette engine, w/ 3sp auto. 3500 lbs. approx. weight. On a recent trip in it to Sacramento, CA. David got a little

over 30mpg! WOW! How about that?

It is about 80% completed. A lot of items are temporarily attached and will have to be redone. IT has the regular kitchen, bath & closet in it, as well as the double couches in the back. I will furnish some photos at a later date.

This is a VERY unique vehicle, one that I am very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to complete and make road worthy. I think that David started construction on it in the early 1980's. I will report its history at a later date.

A great hugh truck appeared the next morning. The 35 ft. long bed was lowered to the front of #700, cables attached and up it went. The tilt bed was such that no even the tail of the Ultra dragged as it was being winched up.

Several photos were made of the loading and with David and I standing in front of it. I thought I saw a sadness in his eyes as he gave one long last look at his #700. His thoughts, I'm sure was of all the many hours of planning and building this fine piece rolling stock. His dream was to have some company build kits of #700, so it could be sold to men with the capabilities of assembling it into an RV. Now, it is up to me to finish it and get it on the road as a finished product and be admired by all the motor heads that may have the good fortune to meet it on the highways of AMERICA.

At Mory's, the truck driver placed the rear of the truck right at the unload place and slid #700 off. Afterwards I cleaned out all the old carpet that had got wet and rearranged things for the next leg of the trip down to Joshua Tree. That will be some time in the fall. In the meantime it has a safe place to stay.

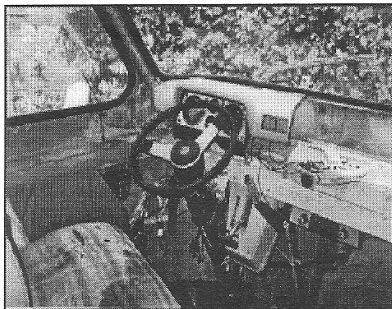
That afternoon I picked up the Harley. The boys had replaced the tire, change all the fluids and even washed it. Washing it wasn't on the bill so I furnished them with some liquid refreshments for the evening. They were smiling as well as I, when I fired up the twin cylinders and pulled out of the garage.

After a good dinner out with Mory, Esther, Their son, his girl friend & myself, I turned in about 9:00 pm to prepare for the

long trip home the next day. Hopefully it will not be raining, I thought to myself.

The Harley started right up the next morning, it was 6:30. Not wanting to wake anyone up I slowly motored down the street. Traffic was light as I hit the freeway and it was apparent there would not be any rain for awhile. Soon the speedometer was hanging on 75mph. Cars was passing me, possibly going 80-85mph. 150 miles down the road I pulled off for breakfast. I was a little chilled, so I put my rain suit on to break the cold wind. It seemed like in no time I was in Bakerfields. Over the mountains I went, ah no rain yet. At Mojave the sun was shining and I could see that it was clear weather all the rest of the way home. The Harley was really sounding good as I was running the last leg of Highway 247 thru the open desert. We was getting close to home, possibly another 30 minutes. The gate at home sure looked great as I pulled up to it and got off to unlock it and go in. 9 hours this time and my rear could attest to the duration of the trip.

So, "The Madness Continues", Jim Craig



Drivers area of Ultra Van #700.

Dear Christy

Our Ultra Van #524 has been sold to: Richard & Susan Roberts, 255 Lost River RD., Mazama, WA 98833. I'd appreciate it if you would remove it from the Ultra Van's for Sale section of Whales on Wheels. I had five calls on it, Florida, two from Washington, one each from Oregon and California. Thanks for the service, Ron & Linda Clark, EX owners of #524  
PS. We'd like to stay on as members, so keep sending the WOW as long as we keep sending money. (OK, Ed.)

Whales on Wheels

## Letters to the Editor

Christy, April 9, 1998

You may not be aware that Dave Peterson had a very unfortunate accident at his home a couple months ago. On January 14, he suffered a very bad fall and struck his head against a glass door in his house. The glass did not break but the fall was severe enough that Dave's neck was broken. Fortunately, Lucille was home at the time; she called 911, and paramedics were on the scene in just a short time. They kept Dave immobile as they transported him to the hospital in Oakland.

A very competent surgeon, a specialist in that type of injury, operated on Dave two days later, January 16. The operation was successful and resulted in a "halo brace" being installed to keep Dave's head from moving while his vertebrae knit back together. He was allowed to go home 5 days later to a hospital bed at home. For the first several days, Dave was confined to the bed, and special care nurses would come to the house to assist with his care. As his recovery progressed, he was able to get out of bed, and walk with the assistance of a walker. Now, he is able to move without the walker and even ventures outside for walks around the block to get some exercise. He will have to wear the "halo brace" for another two to four months, according to his doctor's prognosis. It has been a very painful and frustrating time for Dave, and has certainly disrupted his life.

I'm sure Dave would appreciate a card or two from his UltraVan friends with your wishes for his recovery. Dave also is expanding his use of the computer, and has recently signed up with AOL. You can send him e-mail at: N43V@aol.com. An e-mail message would be a novel way to send your greeting, and I'm sure Dave would be thrilled to get such a form of communication.

For cards, Dave's snail mail address is: 93 Vancleave way Oakland, CA 94619

A friend, and Dave Peterson admirer, Glenn Plymate

Christy, June 1, 1998

Many, many thanks for all the copies of past "Whales on Wheels" newsletters. They were waiting for me when I got back to Alameda from our last two-week trip to Oregon.

Wow! That is ONE impressive newsletter you publish! I skimmed off the high points, and now will read every word from cover-to-cover. There's a lot of good information, both textual and visual, and it's very inspiring. I don't see

how you can publish and mail it for 6 bucks a year, but I'm sending some money to Louis Griggs today so I can continue to receive "Whales on Wheels". Also, I'm going to sign up Dave and Lucille who are not currently on the mailing list.

The inspiration the newsletters conveyed was very timely. It got me all charged up and I spent Sunday afternoon working on #302. The immediate challenge is to get it running and moved from the Peterson's yard. I removed the carburetor and master brake cylinder and will try to get new or rebuilt replacements today. There is an endless list of things to do to restore #302, but most of those can be done after I get it started and moved to a place I can work on it.

For the #700 picture, my wife's name is Erral. Also in the group were Dave's daughter and son-in-law, Patsy and Ron Hussman. And, I'm sure you can recognize Dave and Lucille. It was raining that day and Dave had a towel over his "halo" brace. Too bad. That brace is quite an interesting sight. (see cover)

Incidentally, I noted in one of your articles, you thought Dave was about the same age as Ernest Newhouse. Dave's just a kid compared to Ernest; he's 83... with a birthday coming up in July.

Dave said to me yesterday that there were about 17 UV's built with Toronado 455 engines. I thought #302 was a one-of prototype. Do you know of any others?

Keep up the great work with "Whales on Wheels". I'm immensely impressed!  
Best regards, Glenn Plymate

Dear Sir,

This is to inform you that I do not wish to continue my subscription to "Whales on Wheels". In this past year I have not located a suitable Ultra Van to purchase, and have decided to keep and use my Ford diesel Van that I built up for travel.

I might suggest that you tell the people who put ads in your publication to sell their Ultra Vans, to please call or write you when they sell the unit, so you can delete them from your listing. I have called numerous ads, only to find out the van had been sold, only to find the ad in the next issue.

Robert & Betty Albright, Rt. #1, Box 59  
Burrton, KS 67020

(You are correct Robert, Now listen up you people, LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU SELL YOUR VANS, YA HEAR! Ed.)

Spring 1998



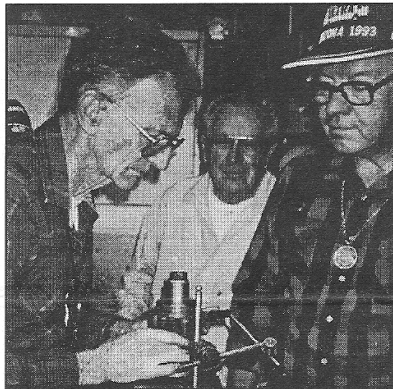
Country Drive in a Greenbrier.



Ultra Vans in the front yard of Bob & Diane Galli. April 16-19, 1998



Milt & Gene Reyburn, with sons.



Bob Galli, Bob Franz, Bob Reinhardt.



The wood pile.



Dinner at the Galli's home.

Photos by Jim Craig

## Presidents Rally at Atascadero, CA

By the first lady

The first to arrive were the Bells; Lester and Gladly, with Evy Shephard, I had gone somewhere, and when I got home there they were, I was followed in short order by Jim and Marlene Craig. As we were it, we opted for dinner at the local "Greasy Spoon".

The next day brought Dan and Betty Reinhardt from AZ, Steenburg's (Arnie and Edna), and Franz's ( Bob and Roberta), that was the group. Small but, what fun we had, the weather held goo for the most part, and a good thing, as the "guys" changed the axle bearings, and then the u-joints on Bob's coach. We gals hit the Outlet Mall, and had a good time doing that, beat sitting around cooking, and whatever else we do.

We called Milt and Gene Reyburn , to find they had moved into a care home. And Gene thought it would be too much for Milt if we all came calling, so opted for the phone call. Well din'cha know there was a knock on the front door one AM, and there was Milt and Gene, and Wayne and Ken (son's), come to call! What a surprise, and definitely a good one. Not a dry eye in the house. I hadn't seen Wayne since a class reunion. He and I were in the same graduating class, and he lives not far

from Bob and Roberta, so they exchanged address and phone numbers. They are both looking good, Milt has slowed some, but I do not believe Gene has. Their address is as follows: Mr and Mrs Milton Reyburn, c/o Atascadero Christian Home, 8455 Santa Rosa RD, Atascadero, CA 93422. I hope you will take the time to drop them a line, those who knew them. Milt is 92, and Gene is 90. And I might add they do not look it.

Dan and Betty bought the Yamaha motor scooter I had, and it is zipping around Church Camp as I write. He and Jim built a rack for it, to attach to the back of his coach, very good job too, for a quickly, as Dan and Betty were leaving the next day.

We had had some very sad news , Warren Suckow, had Gone Home, Jane and Ed Harrison had kept us apprised of his failing health, via e-mail, thank-you Ed and Jane for being there with Nobia.

The last night, we all decided to try a new Chinese place we were told was good, as Bob is not a food lover of the Chinese type, I said OK reluctantly for him. It was GOOD, not the usual fare of Chow Mien or Chop Suey. This was (is) Mandarin, Szechuan, I can't remember the other, but it was all good food.

Looking forward to a return bout with it, next year. Gladly said we got voted to have next years Spring Rally.

Monday, Bells, Evy, and Craigs and us, went to Hearst Castle. Saw the movie on the building of it, lunch in San Simeon, and looking around Cambria. Soldier Factory, (lead figures) being Bob's favorite, followed by the Gallery that sells Disney cells. WE all went home tired.

Tuesday it was just US again, after everyone went home, and lots of leftovers to wade through, which Bob manfully did. A lot of fun was had by all, I hope, was for us, we knew not a darned thing about putting on a rally, but managed to shlepp our way through, I hope.

We just got back from the work rally on 101 at Craigs. Bob and I were there a week, lots of work was done too. Wish more could have attended, maybe next year. Diane and Bob Galli.

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Ken, May 12, 1998

I just got back and saw your message about the Vintage RV Meet near Dearborn. That would have been fun to go to. If you did go, maybe you could do a short story on the event and maybe send a photo or two if you took any pictures. How many were there, some interesting ones, and the people. I noted your interest in the Hunter House Car. I did an article on that a few years back, a real interesting vehicle. I feel it may take forever to get caught up after being gone for over 2 months.

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Let me hear from you, Christy Barden

Christy May 22, 1998

You missed a great! show. Among other beauties, the star of the show was a 1936 Buick Sedan pulling a 1936 Bolus (pre-Airstream) Trailer. Wonderful. I haven't got the pictures back yet, so I will have to wait a few days to see if I have anything worthwhile. This was a terrific group of people. Very friendly and open. Mostly airstreams, but also a 1968 Newell Coach (30 foot), two restored GMC MotorHomes, etc. As a result of attending the Camp Dearborn rally, I was invited to bring the Ultra to the Greenfield Village/Ford Museum Motor Muster - a very select rally. It all depends on the boxing schedule in Ohio for that weekend. I now have a professional boxing judge's license and I hate to turn down an assignment. Regards, Ken Wildman

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Date: Sat, 6 Jun 1998

Ken,

Just thought I would drop you a line to tell you that I will be an Ultra Van Man in the near future. In May I found out that I had won the grand prize in the WebCrawler online sweepstakes! While surfing the web I saw a banner that said "click here to win a Spider" So I clicked and about a month later I found out that I had won a Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce Commemorative Edition. As you can tell I need another orphan brand like I need another rusty floor pan, so I am selling the Spider and buying John and Claire Hoffman's Ultra van #468.

I have wanted one for a while but now I have no excuse! I hope to be able to pick it up and drive it to the Ultra van special reserved area at

*Whales on Wheels*

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# Internet Stuff

the Saint Louis convention. The Hoffman's just completed their last trip in the coach by taking it to Jim Craig to sell. So I will be able to pick it up from him. Claire tells me that all I need to bring is clothes, chow and cutlery as they left it pretty much outfitted to cruise!

John tells me that the coach has around 89,000 miles on it and it has only had two "no go" situations since they have had it starting in '82. The last one was on their trip out to Jim's when the recently replaced u-joint took leave of its place in the yoke. They had it towed to Albuquerque and fixed it there before resuming their trip. John highly recommended AAA ultra RV plan. It paid to flatbed the rig quite a distance. Any advice for me is more than welcome. Thanks in advance.

Just thought of a question before signing off - Is there a clean way to install air conditioning on the Ultra without resorting to a roof unit? I had been thinking of a rear unit looking much like the back of the Greyhound busses in the 60's up high and in the center of the back panel. Maybe some low profile surface ducts to the main salon area, too. What do you think?

Dan Davis - Seattle member Corsa NA, Corsa NW <dandavis@w-link.net>

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To: hank@discovernet.net (Hank Brakman)  
From: Ken Wildman <k-wildman@onu.edu>  
Subject: Re: ultra vans On May 2, 1989 you wrote:

Ken I'm just starting to think about getting a RV, and as the owner of a "few" Corvairs, I'm considering an Ultravan. The problem is that I really don't know the first thing about them, other than having seen one at the Corvair Ranch in Pa. I was hoping that you could "steer" me in the right direction to start. Thanks, Hank

Dear Hank, You could start at the UltraVan webpage. The URL for it is: <http://www.onu.edu/user/FS/kwildman/ultraVan.html> On the page I list history, specifications, clubs, and units currently for sale, etc. You should also think about joining Group Ultra. For \$6/year you get 4 quarterly newsletters with lots of information, including dates of ultra rallies. If you could drop in on a rally you will be well received and could learn a lot about the Ultras. I am forwarding your note to a few of our "gurus" for their information. Perhaps you will hear from them. Ken

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## Ultra History

*By Murray Fisher*

I really enjoyed the 10 years we had the

UltraVan and STILL am very enthused about the whole concept. I have many articles and records of ours and others that I collected over the years.

I will enumerate some information I gleaned from various sources re the history of the UltraVan. I am sure many others have more and this is just a drop in the bucket but for what its worth department. Bear in mind the names I have as people who were former owners are no doubt long gone and changed by this time as these records were made maybe 15 or 20 years ago. I DID talk to Dave Peterson on the phone a couple times and got some postcards from him in response to my queries....so I think MOST of the following is correct. I have seen other stories that are different tho so my stories could easily be wrong.

#101 Dave Peterson started his prototype in 1960 and completed it in the summer of 1961 over a 4 month period. He told me the rear was a direct copy from the Spartan aluminum trailer and the front designed around a 61 Chevrolet Step Van windshield and front area. (*see WOW, Fall 1990*)

#102 Dave built this one also, to use as a demonstrator. (present owner unknown) (*Known as #200, rear ended in May 1998, Restored by Mel Dinesen, See WOW Fall 1989*)

#103 Sold to a Dr. Watson of Walnut Creek, CA summer of 1962 (now owned by the Beatties of California.) (*Owner Ed Wooldridge, Ridgefield, WA*)

#104 First van built by the Prescolite Corpn, a light fixture company. Dave said they built a few but failed in this idea and gave the rights back to him. This one was renovated by yours trully, Murray and Bettye Fisher who owned it for 10 years...it has had two owners since that time. The latest lives in Pendleton, Oregon. (*Owner Phil Street, Pendleton, OR*)

Dave told me that the first ten made were with dual wheels and the 24 foot length....in comparison with the ones after that which were 22 feet in length.

The extra two feet was a one foot longer wheelbase and a one foot longer "snout" in front of the front wheels. Most of the known ones with dual rear wheels were converted to single wheels in one way or another except for our #104. As far as I KNOW it still has the duals.

I had an idea to build a drivers door into my rig and consulted with an aircraft airframe specialist about it. This was going to be a relatively easy thing to do but of course this was due to the extra one foot in front of the wheel wells. I drew up plans and had dummied up a lot of the components but decided to sell 104 before I got it done.

Then in about 1970 Dave designed a new version of the Ultravan with an Olds V8 engine side mounted in a closet. In Mid 1970 a group started to produce this new version but were under capitalized and did not go ahead with it....there were four finally completed, some with the owners help.

#601 Daves prototype (Owned by David Peterson)

#602 Owned by Richard Nelson (He is making this unit a front wheel drive)

#603 Owned by Ernie Newhouse (Owned by Christy Barden, Boulder, CO)

604 Owned by a Phillips (Owned by Roy Muranaka, Northridge, CA)

605 Owned by George Truman. (Owned by Roy Muranaka, Northridge, CA, see WOW Summer 1992)

#221 Was converted to the side mounted power and also the newer rear shell was added.

#201 According to Dave, some numbers were skipped and this was the first one with the redesigned single wheels in the rear and the shorter 22 foot length. Now owned by the Austins of Florida. (Owned by Jim Guider, Chattanooga, TN)

#215 This was the first UltraVan made by the new company in Hutchinson Ks. now owned by the Williams of Seattle, WA (Owned by George Weller, Seattle WA)

#512 First with the Chevrolet 307 V8 engine. Now owned by the Plante's of Mass. (Present owner unknown)

There were a total of 360 Ultra Vans

Whales on Wheels

## Warren Suckow, 1919 - 1998

Warren passed away on April 17, 1998 at the age of 79. He was born in Klemme, Iowa and at the age of 14 moved to De Ridder, LA. Later they moved to Jennings, LA. Where he and I met and were married on May 25, 1946. We had two sons: Randy and Daniel. Randy has been a pastor of Valley Cathedral in Phoenix for over 20 years. They have two daughters who traveled with us in their earlier years. Dan lives near Seattle and is an engineer at a semi-conductor plant. They have two daughters and a son. Warren was very close to his sons and his grand children were a big part of his life.

Warren worked with his dad selling oil. Then moved on the Missouri and worked for Trail Mobile in Springfield, MO. Then to Neosho, Missouri. He built a "Compact Camper" but was unable to get a patent on it. We took lots of vacations in it. 30 years ago we moved to Phoenix. Warren was retired but we had rentals that kept us busy.

We had a large memorial service where many people got up and told how Warren had touched their lives.

Thank-you, Nobia Suckow

(Warren was always willing to help, the club will miss his humor and prayers. Ed.)

produced from 1965 thru 1970. 310 of these had the Corvair power and 50 had the Chev 307 V8 power.

Of course as I mentioned above...probably most if not all of the above listed owners names are probably wrong by now. I got a lot of the above info from Club Directories and newsletters listing changes and new owners etc.

Incidentally, I have subscribed to Whales on Wheels since its inception by Christy Barden and in fact acted as Sec/Treas for a couple years I think. Mostly I was in charge of money for stamps and mailing out the quarterly blurb!

Murray Fisher, Ex #104, 1011 Hobson Street, Walla Walla, WA 99362 (509) 529-0916

(I agree with Murray's history and add some myself. ED)

## Ultra Van #101 Restoration Rally May 18 - 14, 1998

The Restoration Rally #8, has come and gone. We had a small turnout of only five workers, but as the saying goes, "never have so few, done so much", held true.

Bob & Diane Galli was the first to arrive. Bob & I went right to work repairing a fuel leak in the integral tank. It was apparent that I had missed a small hole under a upper flange of one stringer. It was a type that would only leak when the tank was completely full. And boy did it leak ! It had leaked enough that it had saturated the fiberglass insulation under the floor and had soaked into the plywood. In



This is a brochure Warren had printed to advertise and sell his "Compact Camper"

the fiberglass insulation under the floor and had soaked into the plywood. In the process of filling the tank to overflowing, we found one other small leak at a repair patch on top of the tank. Both areas were resealed and the next day we refilled it to confirm its integrity. It is fuel tight now.

Actually, for this rally we tried to detail out and finish up some of the jobs that had been done in preparation for last November's Corvair Fan Belt Toss at Palm Springs. Such as completion of the wall paneling in the front dash area, around the left side bay window and installing the cover plates over the 110volt plug ins. Bob removed the center flooring and cleaned out the bilge's of the gasoline smell and also installed a rubber boot over the emergence brake cable assy. to keep the varmints out.

On the second day of the rally, Marlene, Diane, Gwen & Mary drove over to Laughlin, Nevada for a day of fun. Diane drove them in her restored 1964 Greenbrier. Later that evening, about 11:00 pm Bob and I called Diane on her cell phone to see how they were doing crossing the open desert. When I contacted her I said, "this is B & J Towing, how are you doing out there?" A slight pause then Diane said, "are you sure you have the right number?" As she talked we could hear the others in the back ground laughing and obviously having a good time. At that moment we lost the signal, but we knew they were ok. Later Diane told us that at the moment that I called they were passing an accident scene, which had red & yellow flashing lights. that explained her previous answer to me. They had a full 16 hours of fun.

Dan & Betty Reinhardt, Nobia Suckow and Threasa Vandersteg arrived from Phoenix on Wednesday. After greeting everyone, the ladies started some card games and Dan went to work on a problem we had with the head lights. After trouble shooting the circuit he found a couple of wires that were not installed correctly. We have all lights working now.

We all spent half a day removing the kitchen cabinet's and the bath room door and walls from a donor Ultra to later be installed in #101. They first have to be re-

*Whales on Wheels*

faced with the new paneling to match the 101 interior paneling. That will be done by some of workers at a later date.

Arnold & Edna Steenberg arrived on Friday. Arnold had changed into his working clothes within thirty minutes and was ready to go to work. He removed all the bumpers and other items to prepare to exterior for painting at a later date. Many small jobs was competed such as; installing all the curtain rods for the left & right side windows, changing out the rear axles to ones with longer studs for attaching the dual wheel adapters that Bob Galli had made. All four wheels was installed than we found that the brake hubs was rubbing the backing plate. Regular Corvair car springs will be temporarily install until we actually need the H.D. ones. This will be done at the next rally.

The ladies kept all of us in good food and cookies for coffee brake times. They had lots of cards games going to pass the time in between preparing meals and etc. After Arnold & I finished up the installation of the curtain rods, I made a comment that we was ready for the new curtains to Marlene. At a moment when all the men was out of the 101 she and Edna installed some new ones to our later surprise. They look great! Sure dressed it up.

Bob & Grace Ballew put on a Desert Bingo game for us one night. Bobs dad had created this game some years ago and we all had a lot of fun & laughs for a couple of hours.

We stopped work one afternoon to visit one of our friends, Mary Fuchow. She wanted to show us her beautiful garden & orchard. A couple of hours was spent as she explained the many varieties of flowers, fruits and vegetables that they had planted over the many years. Two hot houses contained Orange & Grapefruit trees. Wow! A true oasis in the desert. Afterwards she gave us a tour of her spacious house, which had a neat basement that was cooler than the upper floors of the house. Tea & cookies was served along with a good amount of friendly conversation. Then it was back home for a good nights rest.

Arnold & I finished up some last minute jobs than it was time for them to depart.

We all talked about meeting again in October to finish other items.

101 is now parked in the garage to protect the unpainted rear fiberglass panels from the summer sun.

Thanks to you all for your support & assistance in the continuing restoration of #101. Jim Craig.

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## **Michelin Tires**

**by Ken Wildman #338**

I've talked to a lot of you about tires for the Corvair Powered Ultras. Many suggestions have come my way, but I've been concerned about weight capacity. I believe that my coach goes down the road at about 6000 lbs. I do need to weigh it loaded sometime. The last set of tires I bought (about 6 years ago) were Michelin P205/70/R14's with a maximum weight capacity of 1330 lbs per tire. That's running "on the margin", actually the wrong side of the margin.

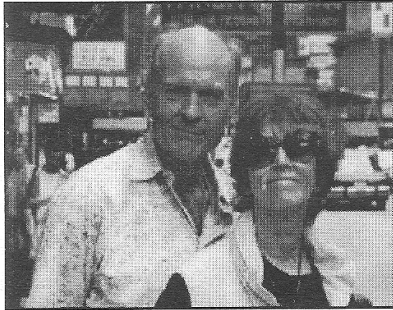
So I've been researching 14" tires. I finally called Michelin and asked for technical assistance. They came up with a 14" Load Range D (8-ply rating tire) that has weight capacity from 1680 lbs per tire at 45 psi to 2300 lbs per tire at 65psi. I decided to try them since the local tire distributor guaranteed satisfaction. The tire is the Michelin XCA 205/75/R14 priced at \$90/per. These are special order tires. Your local Michelin dealer will probably not have them. I got them at NTB (National Tire and Battery) a Sears subsidiary.

I had them mounted and drove the 25 miles home. I can't tell any real difference. They feel like the previous tires w/ about 5lbs more pressure than usual. I have to play around with front pressure to reduce a little wind sensitivity and I may have to re-do my speedometer calibration chart (true vs indicated speed).

My reasoning is real simple. In a heavy coach if a bearing gives out, you're stuck. If a tire gives out you're stuck to whatever you hit.

Will keep you posted on how they work out.

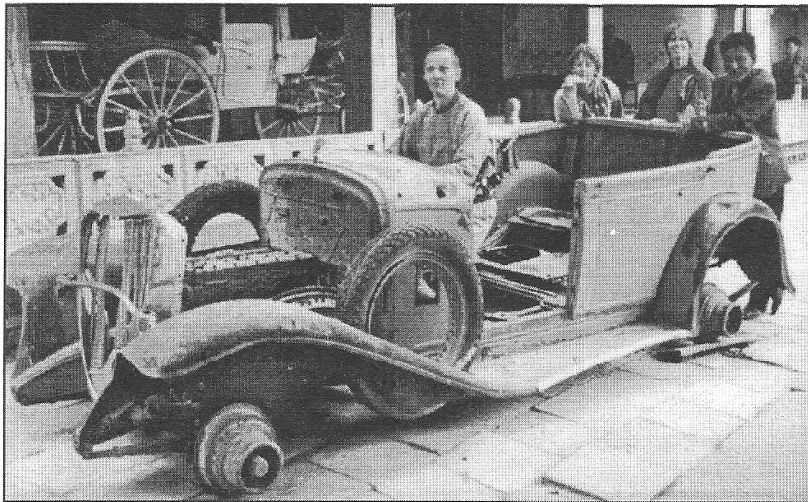
# From the Editor



*Christy and Gail in Hong Kong.*

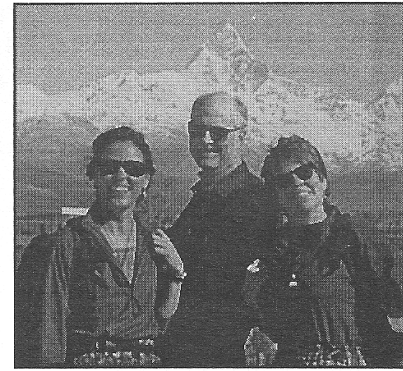


*Christy's new trekking outfit in Nepal. Leather paints to hot!*



*Traveling companions in The Dali Lama's 1932 Dodge Phaeton. Carried in piece by piece. Finally assembled in the 1950's. Photo taken outside the Transportation Museum in Lhasa, Tibet. There were also two 1927 Austin Sedans along with about 50 carriages.*

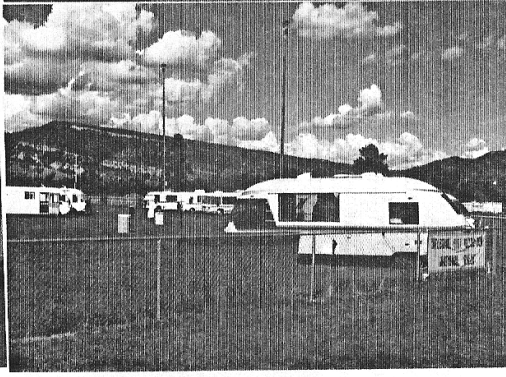
I'm back from a good trip in Asia. In March I joined 12 other dancers from Colorado for a trek in Nepal. Fifteen days on the trail. The Nepal people are happy and fun loving. They were helpful in every way. We went to the Anapurna region and up to base camp (13,500 feet) where it was snowing. The experience of being on the trail every day was invigorating. The longest day walking was 9 hours, the shortest was 4 hours. We figured we when up 25,000 feet and down 18,000 feet. Up and down, up and down. Once I found my pace, I had no problem going all day. My pace was a bit slower than the others, but that was OK. Getting back to Kathmandu the group went back to Colorado. Then I joined up with Gail Imler, a friend from Los Angeles. She and I went overland from Kathmandu to Lhasa Tibet. We traveled with a German family of 3, with a driver for the Land Cruiser and a guide. It took over 4 days on dirt roads and mountain passes of 16,500 feet. Not many tourists on the road, mostly trucks. The places we stayed were not the best, and the food was worse. Yes I got sick, but thank goodness for Imodium, that stopped thing up. By the time we got to Lhasa, I was feeling better. In the country you mostly have barren landscapes like northern Arizona with farms run by



*Trekking buddies, Lee & K-Lynn. Annapurna II peak in background.*

Tibetan. In the city mostly Chinese with a few Tibetan's in the old downtown section of Lhasa. From there we flew to Chinduo China. We spent 3 weeks in southern China, seeing many Buddhist Monasteries, farms, factories and tourist sights. The Chinese are traveling quite a bit in their own country. All the tours we went on were in Chinese, so there was quite a bit we didn't understand. Some of the people on different tours spoke some English, so that was a help. We spent three days on a boat going down the Yangtze River. Saw where they are building the big dam. We toured some of the places that will be covered by water when the dam is finished. China is a modern country. They have 10 Billion people and are feeding them. Every foot is planted with food, or had buildings. The cities are going through urban redevelopment. Tall buildings in all cities. The currency is strong in Asia. Cellular phones everywhere, western clothes, and still lots of bicycles. The young people learn English in school and want to practice speaking with you. They were very interested in making their country a better place. The one child per family is strictly enforced there. I spoke to some people about it, they didn't like it, but understood the reason for it. The southern area was green and lush this spring. That part of the country is beautiful that time of year. We finished the trip in Hong Kong. That was a big change from the mainland China. Steaming with people from, India, Pakistan and other places. English is spoken everywhere there. I'm sure there will be some changes with the British leaving last year. A real busy city. China will play a big part in the worlds affairs in





Pictures from the 1997 Durango National Rally

Taken by - Christy Barden #228 & #603

\* Note picture in upper right hand corner is of Francis and Ruth.

the twenty-first century.

Ultra Van # 200 was owned by Mel Dinesen for many years. I remember when he came by Ed Martins house in Los Angeles in 1977 with it. He had just purchased it from some one in the southeast. It was in poor condition. He spent many hours to make it a vary respectful Van and used it for many years. The Van was sold to Rirkrit Tiravanns early this year. While driving back to New York with it he was rear ended in Arizona. He was climbing a hill at 35 MPH in a 70 MPH zone. A pick up truck ran into him. The insurance company called me for a value on #200 and told me they has sold it to the towing company for \$400 (their charges). The company is St. David Towing, 196R So. Hwy 80, Mile Post 304, St. David AZ. They are 50 east of Tucson. Mannie was the name of the contact person there. Phone number is 1(800) 720-9925.

I attend the Tri-State (Colorado, New Mexico & Utah) Corvair meet in Lake City, Colorado. **Francis Boydsen** was honored with the establishment of a Memorial Award to be given out each succeeding year of the meet. The first winner was **Jim Pittman** from the New Mexico Club. He has been editor of their newsletter for 19 years. That's longer than I've been doing this newsletter. Jim gave a nice talk on how Francis became known as "**St. Francis of Corvair**". Francis was always willing to help anyone when it came to Corvairs. Their Club does miss him, and so do we. The Tri-State meet had 111 people, and 37 Corvairs in attendance. Lake City has a population of 343 people and Hinsdale County (the smallest in Colorado) has 680 people. It is at 8,671 feet south of Gunnison. Good fishing and hiking and a great RV park. Check it out when you in that area.

**Jim Howell #216** has made arrangement for 20 - 30 parking places at the National CORSA Convention being held in St. Louis. He said there will be electricity for 8 - 10 Ultra Vans. First come first serve. Parking will be right next the host hotel and your Ultra's will be on display for the entire time. Jim would like to see a good turnout for this event. July 28th to August 1st, mark your calendars now. Group Ultra Van meeting will be held Wednesday July 29th at 7 PM.

*Whales on Wheels*

## Calssified

**1967 Ultra Van #278**, 110 H.P. Corvair (889 Cam) 3,000 miles, Powerglide. New interior, fridge, brakes, packed bearings. Rear suspension and shocks modified. Swamp Cooler, 3:89 gears, new tires. Howard E. Baso, 1536 W. Roundup St., Apache Junction AZ, 85220. Mon. - Thur. 8 - 5 PM, (602) 288-8166. \$7,000.

**1967 Ultra Van #295**. Reduced price! Buick fuel-injected V/6, 3.8 Lt., 3 speed lockup Trans. New tires, carpet, drapes, Optima batteries. Good paint, 3 solar panels. Video & Photos and detailed list \$8.00. Excellent, ready to travel. See "Whales on Wheels", VOL.XIV,#1, Winter of '95. Bill Binney owner, \$6,295 OBO. Serious to sell. Seller: Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com.

**1967 Ultra Van #304**, 110 H.P. Corvair, Powerglide. Good white paint and Cherry wood interior. Microwave, small safe. Good tires w/hub caps. Bumper front and rear. In estate sale. \$3,595. Video & Photos, \$8 ppd. Contact: Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com. or owner Lee Lenhardt, (503) 682-8874.

**1968 Ultra Van, #331**, 110hp, 4 speed Trans.w/3:89 gears. Solar panel, Dash air cond., white paint, 3 years old. Price; \$7495. Video & photos avail. \$8.ppd. Jim or Marlene Craig (760) 366-9104 or jrcraig1@juno.com

**1968 Ultra Van #396**, 110 H.P. Corvair, Powerglide. New paint and interior. Good Mechanical condition. Ready to travel. Asking \$8,500. Warren Romberger, 904 NW 59 St., Oklahoma City OK 73118. (405) 842-2879.

**1969 Ultra Van #492**, 110 H.P. Corvair, Powerglide. Lots of extras. Clean in and out. \$10.00 refundable video. \$7,975 Hal Honer, 6136 Simms St. #1, Arvada CO 80004. (303) 940-6804

**1969 Ultra Van # 503**, 110 H.P. Corvair, Powerglide. excellent aesthetic & mechanically condition, Airstream windows, always garaged. 3240 magnetic converter. \$11,750. Ronald Hodges, 5577 Kenowa Ave.SW, Grandville MI49418. (616) 534-6179.

**1969 Ultra Van 95 H.P.**, Corvair, Powerglide, 4:11 gears. Power brakes and steering. Front and rear stablizer bars, roof air, Gen., Microwave, new tires. Includes painted-to-match Honda 600 tow car. \$15,000 OBO, (941) 371-4592.

**1970 Ultra Van #513**. Chevy 350 V-8, 3 speed auto trans, 4:11 axle. This is the Ryerson's Ultra Van, which they purchased new. Len,

who wrote the RYERSON ULTRA VAN MANUAL, accomplished many modifications in the electrical, mechanical, and structural areas including completely redone suspension using air bags (it handles.) New (3 years old) three tone paint job, tires, carpet, seat upholstery, curtains & walnut interior paneling. Gen. and roof air. Ready to travel. Details, photos, price \$15,000. Len died and his wife is selling the Ultra Van. Edy Ryerson, 18618 Rayen Street, Northridge CA 91324. (818) 349-5058.

**1970 Ultra Van #538**, New Chevy 350 V-8. New batteries, shocks, water pumps, starter, alternation, completely refurbished interior. Ready to travel. Dori & Joe DeCamillis, 1045 Green Springs Ave., Birmingham AL 35205. (205) 324-3995. \$7,000

**Other Makes.** 1991 Xplorer, Extra-Van model #603A. Dodge 250 V-8, 27,368 miles. 20 feet long, 7 feet wide. Fully self contained motorhome. Easy to drive. This unit has extras and additions that would fill this newsletter. It has been well cared for and garaged all its life. Age and health are the reason for selling. New price was \$49,500, all reasonable offers will be considered. Contact Earnest Newhouse, 15239 Soneto Dr., Whittier CA 90605-1646. (562) 698-1740

**1962 Corvair Rampside.** Has a walk in mounted camper. Stove, ice box, bed & etc. 95hp engine w/4spd. & 3.27 gears. Paint is excel. (Adobe Biege) w/ white stripe. Overall in excel condition. John Hoffman, 3760 S. Huron St., Englewood, CO 80110, (303) 781-8617. \$4,800.

**Windshields;** Originals from Ultra Inc. Cut to orig size & fully tinted. Price; \$795. ea. 4ea. L/H side and 3ea. R/H. Only a few avail. Pickup at Joshua Tree. Reproduction windshields also avail. Full size, uncut (cannot cut these without breaking them) Full tint and slightly thinner than the origs. Price; \$595. at Joshua Tree. Delivered to your home or Glass shop, \$745. ea. ALUM. OIL PANS; 2ea., 2 qt. size. Clean & ready to install. W/new gasket \$84.ea. W/O \$75. ea. Jim or Marlene Craig, (760) 366-9104 or jrcraig1@juno.com

**Ultra Van replacement parts.** Many new items now available. I have any part that you may need for your Ultra. Jim Craig, #163, 760 366 9104.

**SPECIAL TOOL;** NEW, for Ultra Vans, Corvair & V/8. Rear spindle press off or knock off tool. this tool is 4130 aircraft quality steel, 1 3/8 x 3. It threads onto the spindle for removing the spindle from the hub. Prevents damage to the threaded end of the spindle. \$19.95 plus \$3. post.

**THERMISTER ADAPTER;** FOR 95. 102 & 110 eng. This allows you to install the orig. thermister to use with your Spyder or CORSA dash. \$15. ppd. Also I have 5ea. used orig. Corvair Thermisters. ( These was stock on all 150.180 & 140 hp eng.) Tested & guaranteed. \$100. ea. Jim Craig #163, 760 366 9104 or UltraVan@aol.com

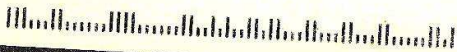
# Group Ultra Van

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## Rallies

**July 19 - 22, 1998, Portland OR.** Evelyn Shepherd's at 7260 SE Tenino St., Portland OR 97206 (503) 775-4469. Hosts: Evelyn Shepherd, Gladys Bell, Edy Ryerson. Come with empty holding tank and full water tank. Parking will be in a field across from Evelyn Shepherd's house.

**July 28 - August 1, 1998, CORSA International Convention, St. Louis, Mo.** Host hotel is Holiday Inn in Collinsville IL. Reservations call (800) 551-5133. Information contact Robert Landers (618) 692-6741 or Tom Leith (314) 481-2512. Special Ultra parking on convention site. Group Ultra Van meeting Wednesday, July 29th at 7:00 PM

**August 9, 1998, Ninth Annual Front Range Corvair BBQ and Swap Meet, Boulder CO.** Rocky Mountain CORSA does it again at Christy's place in Boulder. Biggest Corvair swap meet in the state, BBQ etc., you please bring a pot luck dish to share. Contact: Christy Barden, 5537 Pioneer Rd., Boulder, CO 80301. (303) 530-1288.

**September 23 - 29, 1998, National Ultra Van Rally, Indian City, (Anadarko) OK.** Randlett Park, phone number (405) 247-2481. The campground was selected by Don and Micky Richards, 5303 Wilkerson Lane, Waynesville, OH 45068 (513) 897-6546. Hosts: Gordon & Ruth Harvey, Box 53, Smoke Run, PA 16681. (814) 378-5363 Summer, (813) 541-3433 Winter.

**September 1999, National Ultra Van Rally, Ruidosa, New Mexico.** Hosts: Bob and Diane Galli, 5000 Cascabel Rd., Atascadero, CA 93422. (805) 466-2737. e-mail: rdgalli@tcsn.net

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 VAN. This 22 foot unique motor home was designed by David Peterson and built in Kansas until 1970. About 365 units were built. Dues are \$6.00 annually, please remit to the Secretary-Treasurer. Submit all technical information to the Editor.

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