

Whales on Wheels

Number III

Volume XIX

Inside:

Edy Ryerson Remembered.....	2
Internet.....	2
From the Editor.....	3
The Helmkey Report.....	4
Powerglide Discussions.....	4
GWFBT&SW Registration from.....	5
Classified.....	9
Rallies.....	10



Ultra Vans parked in reserved parking area.

CORSA National Convention in St. Louis

By Diane Galli

What can I say? It was fun, we missed Christy, he had over heating problems with # 603. Those attending: Norm and Marion Helmkey; Walter Davison, Doug and Nancy Pratt, Ken and Penny Wildman, minus the "Wee Doggie", Wally; Jean Mc Masters, Jeff and Dena Stonesifer and children, Fred and Margaret Bozeman, and Bob and Diane Galli, Pat and Mary Fitzgerald.

Bob and I were chided for driving something other than the Ultra, I drove the Greenbrier. The Ultra was still up on blocks awaiting the finishing up of the mechanical work. The Annual meeting of Group Ultra Van, was brought to order by Norm Helmkey, a sign up sheet was passed around, and I did try to get everyone on it; They are other than the aforementioned, Kemp Swiney, Bill Garrison, Duane Gest, Gary Rockwell, Richard Weidner(?).

Norm led us in a discussion on Blower bearing assemblies, and quick fixes for various failures on the road, ie: oil filter failures, wheel bearing failures, and the reason thereto were discussed. How to prevent them first and foremost.

They had planned for 500 families and 800 people, not the 681 families and 1284 people that signed in. They were overwhelmed (to say the least) at the response. If you missed the largest gathering of Corvairs since '81 Start making plans for Lake Tahoe in 1999 and Daytona Beach in 2000.

Our own Ken and Penny Wildman got a Peoples Choice award for the Ultra Van division. Well done Professor and Penny. Walt played host to several folks and made a lot of converts. Bless your "pea pickin'" heart, Walt. Actually all of the UV folks with their coaches, played host to folks looking them over the day of the peoples choice balloting.

Thought Jean would win in the model car category, but he got aced out by a Tonka toy truck. Too bad, because I really liked Jean's radio controlled Ultra Van.

We had HOT weather, rain, thunder and Lightning, just to liven up the doin's. One night as Walt was sleeping in his coach, he felt it moving. Well don'tcha know that's enough to give anyone the "willy's"? So Walt very cautiously arose,

six shooter in hand, and asked "can I help you?" to whoever or what ever it was residing in his coach, besides himself. Well it turned out to be one of the Security folks looking for a soft place to rest, and spying Walts front door open, came in and sat, to rest awhile. Was in the act of making himself to home, when Walt was so rudely awakened. Needless to say, he apologized and went on his way. With a flea in his ear no doubt. A good week was had by all. Sorry when it had to come to an end. Bob and I made it home OK, but the next time I went to drive the Greenbrier, I dropped a valve seat, in the driveway. Someone was looking out for me. Bob said besides a dropped valve seat, we had a melted exhaust manifold on the Greenbrier. Must have gotten HOT, but the idiot lite never came on. Also had some bad valve guides Bob said. All fixed now, ready for another 80,000 miles. Thank you. See you in Oklahoma.

Remembering Edy Ryerson

On Monday, June 15, 1998 Edy Ryerson passed away. She and her late husband Len Ryerson had been prominent Ultra Van members for years. They were famous for creating the Ryerson Ultra Van Manual. They had owned an Ultra Van that was destroyed by fire as they were driving down the road. The propane tank fittings leaked inside the van and ignited. They survived, but the Van was destroyed. That caused the factory to put a fix on all the Ultra's at that time to shield the tanks to vent outside only. They bought another Ultra Van, the first of the V-8 series. Len modified them until that van until "everything" was correct, from suspension to engine and running gear. Len & Edy met during the WWII and married. Len was an aircraft mechanic and they wound up running their own business overhauling aircraft accessories. After retirement they spent many hours with the Ultra Van and the Ultra people. We will miss her cheery "Good Morning".

Date: Fri, 10 Jul 1998 11:42:45 -0400
"Charles Hardinger"
<chardinger@bhengineers.com>
Subject: Re: Former Ultra Van Employee
I ran across your page and thought I'd

Internet Stuff

drop you a note. As a 19 year old electronics student at Hutchinson Junior College, I worked part time as a service technician at the Ultra Van sales and service center in downtown Hutchinson. This would be in 1967-68. After a two year stint in the Navy, I returned to work for Ultra Van as an electrical assembler at the factory at the old Naval Air base from about May to July of 1970. After Ultra Van shut down operations, I returned to work for Belco, the company of mostly former Ultra Van employees, manufacturing the Tiara motor home until that company went out of business in the winter of 1971-72. It's great to see the photos of the vans and to know that so many are still on the road! Charles Hardinger

Charles: Thanks for the note. We really appreciate your work that has provided us with such great vehicles. If you missed the 1996 re-union in Hutchinson, there will be about 10 coaches at the Corvair National Convention in St. Louis at the end of the month. I am forwarding your note to the Ultra VAN e-mail group. Regards, Ken

Date: Wed, 15 Jul 1998 02:05:30 -0700
From: Vern Schroyen
Vern_Schroyen@bc.sympatico.ca>
Subject: renewed love affair
Ken, My good friend Vern Schroyen and my brother and I are restoring Unit #308. Would you please pass any information to both Vern and myself. My name is Fred and my email is bakewell@moody.bc.ca We plan on a few updates, but want to keep as much stock as possible...we hope. Please pass along any information regards to rallies, newsletters or other Ultra bable our way. Looking forward to meeting you at a future rally, Fred and Vern

Subject: #308 Affair
From: Gplymate@aol.com
Date: Sun, 2 Aug 1998 08:43:49 EDT
To: Vern_Schroyen@bc.sympatico.ca

Hi Fred and Vern, So you've taken on the restoration of #308! Congratulations... or should I say condolences? What is the scope of your project? And, where are

you located? I've just taken on the resurrection of #302 (in CA), and it needs EVERYTHING! It has turned into a massive challenge; more than I'd counted on, but I'm inspired to see how far I can get. I've recently signed up with UVMCC and Whales on Wheels, so will be getting the newsletters. Also, I stopped in at the rally in Portland on July 16. Only 2 UV's there but plenty of talk to make the visit more than worthwhile. Good luck with #308. Glenn Plymate #302

Date: Mon, 24 Aug 1998 14:10:50 -0400
Mike Saddy <library1@csolve.net
Subject: Re: Ultravan inquiry
Dear Sir: I am interested in a recent price list of Ultravans and would like to receive any newsletter or new information concerning Ultravans. I am also curious about the sales of Ultravans across the border into Canada. I can be reached at the following: Mr. A.G. Calvin, 78 Sixth Street, Midland, Ontario, Canada L4R 3X2 Thank you for any assistance in this matter

Mr. Calvin, There are a number of Ultras located in Canada. You do have stricter safety regulations for older vehicles than in the US. I've forwarded your request to those UltraVanners with e-mail. You can join Group Ultra for US\$ 6.00/year. See the webpage for details. <http://www.onu.edu/user/FS/kwildman/ultraVan.html> Regards, Ken

From: Ken Wildman k-wildman@onu.edu
Subject: Web-site hits, etc.
Web-site hits currently stands at 11,967 and should go over 12,000 this week. New on the website is a link to Egon Landsburg's Ultra/Travel page. The Eastern summer rally at Laurel State Park in Pennsylvania was attended by 10 Ultras and several SOBs. Poor weather, great camaraderie. Location was at the "bottom of a well." The EASY way out was up a 9% grade! OI' #338 actually picked up speed going up the hill (from 20mph to 25mph). If you haven't visited the web-site, check it out at: <http://www.onu.edu/user/FS/kwildman/ultraVan.html> As always, we welcome any suggestions for additions and

improvements. Best wishes, Ken
From: Ken Wildman, INTERNET:k-
wildman@onu.edu

Date: Mon, Aug 3, 17:31

Subject: CORSA Convention

Just got back from St. Louis with a reasonable portion of my money, some nifty spare parts, lots of good fellowship and a trophy for #338 in the Car Display. We had a great time. There were over 100 vendors and lots of goodies. Everything went well except for the cancellation of the concours because of rain.

For the second time in three CORSA conventions, I had a blown exhaust donut (or doughnut for Norm). This time it occurred about ten miles out of the site. Next morning got a replacement from the vendor across from the coach and with Norm's coaching got it in, in about 10 minutes. It finally seated yesterday after running about 40 miles and getting re-tightened.

A very nice, uncomplicated trip. We cruised around 60mph and everything worked well and the coach handled better than my Dodge van.

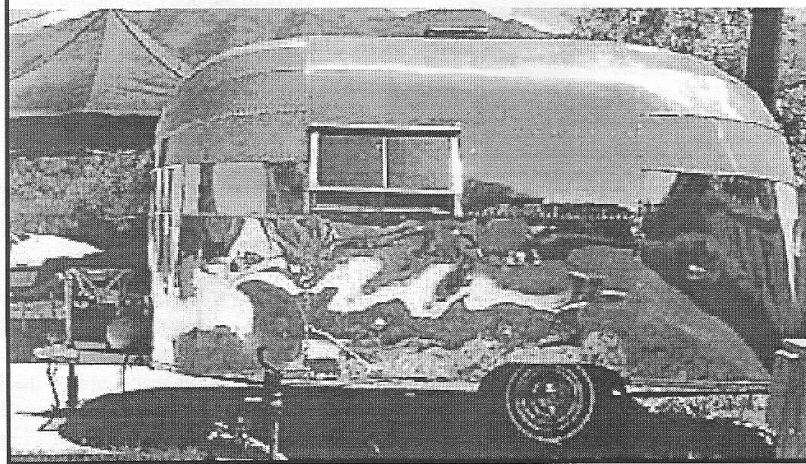
Starting to plan the next trip. Ken

From the Editor

We are pleased to welcome back Jim and Robert Craig. Robert has been traveling around the world for half a year, and Jim joined his son Robert in Europe and they spent time together there. The DKW Auto Union automobile rally in Germany was one of the highlights of the trip. They were thinking of shipping Robert Ultra #285 to Europe, but decided against it. Jim shared with me some quotes for shipping the Ultra. Schenker International. \$2765. Jacksonville, FL. to Amsterdam; Ted Rausch & Co. \$2345. Galveston, TX. to Bremerhaven, Germany; Ted Rausch & Co. \$2103. Brunswick, GA. to Bremerhaven, Germany; Schumacher Cargo Lines \$2588. Miami to Amsterdam; Schenker International, Port

Ultra Vans parked in Hotel Conventon parking lot in St. Louis.

Below: Highly polished 1953 Airstream Bubble at the Airstream convention in Boise Idaho.



Everglades to Rotterdam \$3100. Documentation \$150. Courier \$35. U.S. Customs Validation \$125. So if any of you were thinking about shipping yours to Europe, now you know the cost.

I attended a family reunion with my sister in Boise Idaho in June. The International Airstream convention was being held there at the same time. So I attended. They had over 2,000 trailers on a large field out of town with minimum electricity and other facilities. No trees and it was hot. Some people went to trailer parks to get better electrical hookups so they could run their air conditioning. All of the meetings were held at the University which was 5 miles away. I attended some of the seminars: full timing, trailer brakes, factory presentation and some of their evening programs. This is definatley a BIG organization, with smaller units belonging to the national all over the country. They do many caravans, groups of trailers traveling together on trips organized on the local unit level. Really much different that our Ultra clubs. I think I like smaller better. I did enjoy seeing all the vintage Airstreams. There is a separate club for them within the larger club. There were about 50 of them there. They had an open house where the owners gave you tours of their 25 year old or more trailers. The oldest one was a 1935 kit built by the owner who was there also. He was 94 years old traveling with his son. Francis Boydston was honored by the Albuquerque CORSA chapter. About 23 of them went up to Ruth's cabin in the Pecos Mountains. They planted a flag pole and raised the American flag. It has been about a year since Francis died and I believe this was a remembrance of all the good deeds he had done for so many people. They had a BBQ and enjoyed the cool mountain air, then back to the heat of Albuquerque.

Gordon & Ruth Harvey stopped by my place in Boulder for a few days. They had been visiting her daughter in Longmont (12 minutes away) and need a rest. They were the perfect guest. I hardly saw them, but they were here to rest. Gordon helped me hang the rear tail gate on my Suburban. They are welcome back any time. If you are going to the National Ultra gathering in Oklahoma you might want to stop by the Alabaster Cavernes State Park. There is a write up in the current Trailer Life magazine. Its located 6 miles south of Freedom, off highway 64 (580) 621-

3381. I will not be able to make to Oklahoma because of prior commitments. See you all at the GWFBT&SM in Palm Springs California. Bob Ballew, from 29 Palms is planning to bring to Palm Springs a Engine assembly unit that set up test rebuilt Corvair automatic transmissions. This is a very quality assembly mounted on wheels that is all in one unit. It is all painted to Concours condition. Bob will be running it to show what pressures are at certain shift points, cruise, reverse and etc.

The Helmkey Report

by Norm Helmkey

We are scheduled in to St. Louis on July 28 with Pat & Marge Fitzgerald and possibly Jeff Stonesifer of the Corvair Ranch. Jeff is planning to go to St. Louis in my V-8 Ultra #547.

Julius Bruggeman is now up in Portland visiting his daughter, then will drive 513 back across the US to New York. He got to Northern California without trouble and I have not heard from him since, so presume he is OK. Just got word that #512 owned by Norm Plante (now 90 years young) is being put back on the road. Norm is the original owner and has given the Ultra to his grandson Rick Sanger who contacted me this week. I sold my UV 356 to Leon Pearsoll here in Canada, so now in Ontario we have six Ultra Vans.

I wonder why they call them Conventions?

My wife and I certainly had a great time at Collinsville (St. Louis CORSA convention) and I think all things considered the Show-Me folk did a great job. Its the first time I remember anyone considering the Ultra Vans in their convention planning. Hope it won't be the last. Marion got to taste those cold coffee drinks in the bottles and is hooked. I found several parts I need to put our next Ultra Van #408 on the road. I put a lot of faces to friends I've made on VV. Has there ever been a club that didn't have a convention problem now and then. At Williamsberg we were not allowed to (officially) stay in the Ultra Van at night. Ken and Penny Wildman drove off-site, Bob & Diane Galli (those rich folk from California) had a hotel room. We just went

to bed early with no lights on after dark. At Lake Placid there was a campground in town, but parking around the convention hotel was pretty tough for a 22 foot long Corvair. We were lucky at Collinsville that Murphy wasn't the chairman. Along Bill Hubble's idea, how about a mild gymkana for the Ultra Vans. I once ran mine in an autocross at the Ontario Trillium and when I got home, my wife who did not go with me wondered how I was able to jumble up all the dishes and canned goods. I had forgotten they were in the cupboards.

At the convention, I was suprised to see some vendors were curling their fan belts into three coils to (I suppose) save packing space. I've had two bad experiences of using belts that were stored coiled in this fashion. The first was one I coiled myself and the second was from a NAPA store. Both hopped off or shredded within 50 miles. Now, I keep 'em flat.

Concerning Ultra Van #200. I have been in touch with Ben Knepper of the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University and he just sent me the following web site to review regarding the trip across the US of Rirkrit Tiravanija the five art students from Thailand.

They are going to try and retrieve UV #200 for an exhibit in Philadelphia, but if it is not possible, I have suggested we will try and locate a vehicle to loan them for the exhibit.

You need to read the Journal day by day to learn the problems they had with UV200. It seems with these six people and their gear, they were a little overloaded. Go to <http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibits/ontheroad> I am curious as to how Rirkrit came by Ultra Van 200? Where did he find out about it? When did he pick it up, etc? I noticed from the pictures that IBM was one of the sponsors of this cross country trip. What other companies were involved? Where was the advertising painted on? This will make a great story for our two newsletters and maybe even the Communique. Is there anyone out Arizona way that can check to see if UV200 is still in the scrap yard?

History on Ultra #200. Bought in 1962 by Harold Zastro of Linthicum, MD (first titled owner) he sold it to Oren Hines of White Marsh, MD who sold it to Henry & Pauline White of Savage, MD who sold it to Mel & Millie Dinesen I will let Ben Knepper know the details of the insurance sale to the towing co.

PowerglideDiscussions

Ask the Professor,

by Larry Claypool

Below are some questions that were ask of **Larry Claypool**, CORSA's Technical Editor. He has been working on Corvairs since he was 17 years old, that has been some 27 years now. There were some posts on the internet about Powerglide transmission leaks that I thought would interest us. Bob Ballow has some fixes also that we have written about in previous newsletters. (Ed.)

Q. Can you suggest a good method for repairing leaks in the Powerglide shift cable? Mine has worn through the same areas, and is leaking fluid into the tunnel. I am looking for a "fool-proof" method that will stop the leaks COMPLETELY and will stay that way for a long time. I have heard this procedure is covered in the CORSA Tech Manual. I just joined CORSA and will receive the manual in my member packet?

The professor replies: Glad to hear you've joined CORSA! Welcome. The Tech Guide you referred to as the Tech Manual, is a publication CORSA sells. Order forms are in the CORSA Communique. There is an original Tech Guide and a Supplement; you 'll need both for full coverage.

This is the method I use at my ship to fix powerglide cable leaks: 1. Thoroughly clean the cable with brake cleaner, let it dry. 2. Prepare a length (12-15 inches) of 3/8 I.D. fuel line hose by slitting it length wise. 3. Remove the bracket that holds the shift cable to the body just above the parking brake cable. 4. Fill the fuel line hose with RTV silicone sealer, then push the hose over the shift cable. Make sure you have covered at least one inch of the short metal tube the cable terminated at near the transmission. 5. Smooth over any silicone that oozes out of the slit. 6. Refit the bracket over the cable and fuel line, then re-fasten to the floor. I prefer to use a nylon retainer rather than the original steel one, as it is less likely to dig into the hose (cable) and cause a leak.

It will take a couple of hours for the silicone to set up, but that should cure the leak. Of course, if the cable jacket is torn or worn at any spot beyond the hose

21st ANNUAL GREAT WESTERN FAN BELT TOSS & SWAP MEET
NOVEMBER 6-7-8, 1998, Palm Springs, CA

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CANDIDATES FOR "LONGEST DISTANCE" AWARD - MILEAGE _____ (DRIVEN CORVAIR VEHICLES ONLY)

CANDIDATES FOR "OLDEST ATTENDEE" AWARD - AGE _____

	QUANTITY	PRE-REG FEE	ON SITE FEE	SUB-TOTAL	
FAMILY REGISTRATION	___1___	___\$5.00___	___\$10.00___	\$ _____	
RV SPACE (FRIDAY & SATURDAY NITES ONLY)	___NITES___	___\$12.50/NITE___	___\$17.50/NITE___	\$ _____	
WELCOME PARTY AT HOST HOTEL FRI NITE. NO CHARGE, BUT NEED HEADCOUNT _____ PERSONS					
ENTRY IN "AMERICA'S CUP TIME TRIALS" AT HOST HOTEL FRI NITE. NO CHARGE _____ ENTRIES					
BANQUET					
PER ADULT	___#___	___\$25.00___	___\$30.00___	\$ _____	
PER CHILD	___#___	___\$13.00___	___\$18.00___	\$ _____	
SWAP MEET SPACE (20' X 20') ENTIRE WEEKEND	___#___	___\$12.00___	___\$20.00___	\$ _____	
COMMERCIAL VENDORS	\$8.25 PER DAY CITY LICENSE FEE.	___#DAYS___		\$ _____	
(FEE AND RESALE NUMBER REQUIRED) _____ RESALE NUMBER					
ALL VENDORS NOTE: IF YOU WISH TO BE LOCATED NEAR OTHER VENDORS, PLEASE LIST THEIR NAMES ON BACK.					
PEOPLE'S CHOICE CAR SHOW	PER VEHICLE	___#___	___\$5.00___	___\$10.00___	\$ _____
MODEL CAR CONTEST	PER ENTRY	___#___	___\$2.00___	___\$3.00___	\$ _____
"CREATIVE PARTS" CONTEST	PER ENTRY	___#___	___\$2.00___	___\$3.00___	\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT				\$ _____	

PLEASE NOTE: ALL RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AND CONFIRMED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS. THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AND/OR ENTRIES IN ANY GIVEN EVENT MAY BE LIMITED.

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO : "SDCC GWFBT&SM" MAIL TO: GWFBT&SM, P O BOX 609, POWAY, CA 92074

PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 27, 1998

ATTENTION all Ultra owners that intend to attend the Corvaair Fan Belt Toss and Swap Meet in Palm Springs, California, Nov. 6, 7 & 8th, 1998. ONLY ten spaces have been reserved for parking of the Ultra's on the Swap meet field. The city of Palm Springs will not allow any RV

parking, overnight in the parking lot near the field. Private campgrounds will have to be used if you don't have a prepaid reservation to park inside. Send in your money and reservation. Include a \$5 pre-registration fee and mail before October 27th. Ultra Van camping spaces; \$12 50

per night . \$25. total for Friday and Saturday. You can contact the event chairperson at www.integrators.com/sdcc or www.integrators.com/sdcc/GWFBT&SM

repair, it will leak there. A common problem area is just inside the rear tunnel cover where the parking brake cable may be rubbing against the shift cable. Repair this area in the same manner as above, and secure the shift cable with a nylon wire tie to prevent it from further contact to the parking break cable.

Q. It seems my Powerglide cable has a few leaks, and my pan is still bent around the bolt holes. I will attempt to bend the pan back into shape and again replace the gasket. What has given people the best results? Cork gasket with some type of gasket sealer?? RTV sealant with no gasket? Gasket only?

The professor replies: This is how we fix the Powerglide pans in my shop: 1. Remove and clean pan. Set sealing edge of pan on a sturdy, flat surface (we use our big shop vice) and beat down all the bolt holes until they are flat. 2. Use RTV silicone sealer to make two 1/8 inch beads along the inside and out side edge of the pan. 3. Place gasket (we use paper type gasket - we find cork and rubber one squish to much) on pan. Put two beads of silicone on tip of gasket as above. 4. Install pan and gasket on transmission, using large flat washers under the bolts. Orville Eliason makes neat little square washers just for this purpose. This helps distribute the load and prevents re-warping the pan. 5. Wait at least two hours for the silicone to set up before installing the fluid.

Q. I have a usage problem. Transmission fluid of about half pint a week. When the car is pointed down hill (steep driveway) no leakage. When it is pointed up hill lots of oil leaks. I have replaced the pan gasket. Shifter looks good. However the governor looks like it is dripping fresh transmission fluid. So, is there an o-ring behind the governor? And could that explain usage during driving? I did replace the modulator, though I didn't know there was a seal behind it. It doesn't seem to leak on that side of the transmission anyway.

The Professor replies: There is indeed an o-ring behind the governor. It looks like a push rod tube o-ring, only bigger. Replacement are available in Vino as well. A governor with a faulty p-ring should leak no matter which direction you park the car, so I can't say for sure this is all of your problem. But since you indicated the governor is wet, it is surely some of it. The throttle lever o-ring is suspect since it

is at the rear of the transmission; when you park downhill, most of the fluid will go away from the throttle lever. When you park up hill, it goes towards the lever, especially if the drivers side of the car is tilted down. Hope this helps.

Reinforcement Plates for Transmission Pan Bolt Holes by Orville Eliason

The corvair automatic transmission unit has always been a prime source of fluid leakage and the biggest leak area on the transmission unit is the oil pan gasket sealing area. The pan is made of thin steel with ribs pressed into the sealing face to maintain a smooth stiff surface for a good gasket seal. This is all well and good until the stiffening ribs reach a bolt hole. At that point the rib has to be eliminated to give the bolt head a flat area to press against. The bolts are supposed to pull the ribbed area down tightly to give an overall seal. However, the flat metal area under the bolt head can only stand so much downward pressure before it begins to distort. Further tightening just cones the metal downward under the bolt head. The coning effect forces the gasket material around the hole outward and causes it to split. Additional tightening just makes things worse. Hot transmission fluid requires an unusually tight seal.

To rectify the transmission pans weakness around the flat bolting areas, (corvair assistance) has designed special stiffening plates that fit ontop of each of these fourteen flat bolting areas. These plates are made of especially stiff 1/8" cold rolled steel that is sized, drilled and beveled to fit and reinforce these weak areas. They not only eliminate the distortion and coning under the bolt heads but the very stiff material also transmits the sealing pressure outward to the ribbed area between the bolt holes and sideways to the very stiff verticle structure of the pan. A regular round washer does not have the stiffness or the size and fit to transmit the sealing pressure to where it is needed. The plates also make it possible to use increased sealing pressure without distortion at the bolting area.

Installing the transmission pan using reinforcing plates. The pan should be clean and the sealing surface should be closely inspected for possible imperfections. The metal around the bolt holes

must be flat and level with the adjoining surfaces. If it is distorted it should be tapped flat with a small hammer. Back up the under side with a solid piece of flat metal that is larger than the distorted area and tap the area until the surface is level. Next, lay the pan upsidedown on a clean surface. Lay the plates into the bolt hole areas to be sure they lay flat and their hole centers out with the pan hole. Note: the holes are very slightly off center so rotating 180 degrees will give a different hole position. Be sure all plates lay flat and the holes line up decently. Note: the pan bolt holes are oversize so an easy fit to the transmission casting can always be accomplished. This means that the bolts are not always centered in the pan hole and in turn this will move the reinforcement plates. The plates are designed to give some adjustment in all directions but you are still going to have to make a determination that the plate is going to end up flat on the pan metal, when it is tightened down. If it is riding on a rib or sitting on a pans' side curvature, the plate cannot do the job that it was designed for. Gaskets come in many types and thicknesses. In most cases your regular pan bolts should be long enough. However, if a very thick gasket is used you may have to go to the next size longer in bolts. If so, use at least a grade five bolt with a lockwasher. Use what ever gasket sealant is your pleasure. I usually use only a light coat on the pan surface and nothing on the aluminum side. With the gasket in place, install the pan loosely with four bolts on the four ends (no plates). Now you should be able to get some idea of how the bolts will center in the pan holes. Next install four more bolts with plates (again on the four sides). Slide the plates down the loose bolts to see if they will set flat. Adjust as needed and tighten bolts enough to hold things in place. Install all the rest of the bolts and plates in the same manner. If a plate will not sit flat and turning or jiggling will not improve the fit, remove the plate and file or grind as needed to allow it to lay flat. I doubt that there will be any fit problem at all but pans can be slightly different and with the oversized holes, can assume different positions. Just remember, if the plates do not fit flat they cannot do their job. Tighten all bolts evenly and do not overtorque. Gasket sealant is slippery until cured and extra pressure may cause gasket squeeze out. After a little time has passed

and the transmission has been hot from running, you can go back and retorque the pan. One last word. Installing plates on an already leaking pan will not help. You must start with a new gasket and a flat sealing surface.

Almost all transmission leaks end up dripping off the pan bolt heads, no matter where they originate. I will name a few so you can keep these areas in mind. The governor on the left side of the transmission has an o-ring that can leak. On the right side, the seal at the modulator valve can be loose or faulty. The pan filler tube can seep where it screws into the pan. The transmission vent on the upper side of the forward case cover is a sneaky leak area. It can vent fluid as vapor (which does not even leave an oil trail). The cool air turns it back into a fluid and of course it drips off the pan. The usual reason for this is that the transmission has been overfilled and is being foamed by the planetary gears running in it. I have also heard that it is possible for a damaged (internally) torque converter to cause the same problem. The shifter cable can have a bad o-ring where it enters the transmission case. The cable sheath can leak where it joins the metal end or the sheath itself may crack or have an abrasion. The throttle shaft (tv shaft) has a small o-ring slot on the shaft just inside of its entry hole into the case, that can leak. The joining surfaces where the transmission and the differential units bolt together, can leak and is caused by loose bolts or a bad gasket. Finally, transmission oil can drip out of the bottom of the bellhousing if the converter seal is faulty. Engine oil can also drip from this area so check as to whether it is red transmission fluid or black engine oil.

Corvaire assistance, Orville Eliason, 1010 W. "H" Street, Ontario, California 91762. (909) 986-6543. (Orvaire makes and sells these kits, Jim Craigh also sells orville's kits, ed)

Torque Converter Full of Fluid. by Bob Ballew

This is in the form of a letter that Bob Ballew sent to Bob Kirkman on July 18, 1994. Bob built a jig to hold the converter in a vertical position. Then he used a drill press to spin it. He wanted to know how much more fluid it would hold if he spun it at 400 RPM, as if it were at idle in a car. He did it and these were his comments. (Ed.)

As you can see from the enclosed pictures, finding how much additional ATF one could get into a torque converter was a little more than I had bargained for. Why would a normal, sane person want to do this? Well, it's all your fault for asking about leaking transmission shift cables. How much additional ATF could I get into it? ONE OUNCE SHY OF TWO QUARTS !!!! This is what's available for your garage floor.

Now, if one has the proper amount of ATF in his P.G. (at the HOT full mark) the ATF level is already at the level of the oil pan gasket. The shifting control cable is only 1 5/8 inches above that gasket. The distance of the marks on the P.G. dip stick between FULL and ADD is 15/16", which only takes a pint of fluid to change the level that 15/16". The oil pan is filled up with the valve body and other goodies, that's why just a pint of fluid will raise the level almost a full inch. The insides of the P.G. is equally full of stuff, so any added fluid there will raise the level about the same amount.

It can be seen that, if only half of the fluid above the center opening of the torque converter were to drain out, the level of the fluid would now already be 1/4" above the shifting control cable. When the other half of the fluid above the center opening of the torque converter drains out, (approx. 4 pints total) the fluid level will now be about 2" above the opening to the shifting control cable!!

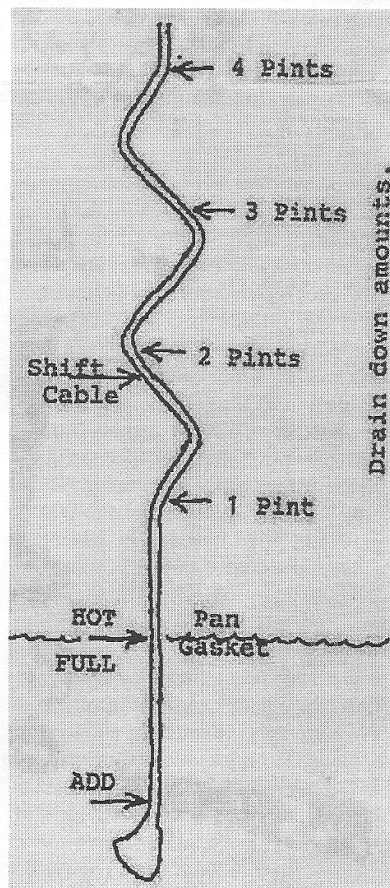
How does it drain out you ask? Here's a partial list: 1. Some seeps past the #2 spool of the pressure regulator. (if it didn't, the valve would be stuck "frozen" in place) 2. The small steel ring on the pinion shaft. (this ring assists in maintaining pressure in the converter during operation) 3. 1/8" and 1/16" holes in the turbine shaft. (to lubricate the planetary gears during operation) 4. A 9/16" passageway along the right side of the differential housing leading to the P.G. sump. 5. A total of nine (9) bushings, all of which require clearance for lubrication during operation, and which will allow ATF to drain past when the engine shuts down. 6. The two spaces between the rotating shafts which lead to all these holes, bushings, etc..

These parts on our 200 thousand mile P.G.'s are quite worn, and the speed of converter drain down increases with age. Out here in our 120° desert heat, it's quite rapid.

Oh, did I mention there are other components in our P.G. besides the converter which will also drain down at engine shut down? The governor system is above the center line: the drive clutch and reverse clutch and their passageways are up there. Of course the front and rear pump being up there will add to the ATF available to leak out of the shifting control cable housing.

I have drawn the bottom end of the P.G. dip stick approximately to scale. On the left side I have marked a few of the locations of various parts of the P.G. On the right side I have listed the various ATF levels in pints. These ATF levels are based on the fact that adding a pint will move the level of the ATF from the ADD mark to the FULL mark which are 15/16" apart. Of course the dip stick is not straight up and down, therefore all these measurements are not all engraved in stone. Well so much for spots on the garage floor. I've solved that problem however all my Corvairs are parked outside.

Happy Corvaireing, Bob Ballew



The Powerglide Brake

by Norm Kelmkay

Dual master cylinder brake systems and handbrake aside, Power Glide equipped Corvairs have a safety brake system not realized by many owners.

This is an edited version of an article I wrote in the Canadian Old Autos newspaper in March 1993 called "Bulletproof PowerGlides." Many of the facts and figures come from the six Corvair SAE papers conveniently put together in an 85 page book by Clark's Corvair.

A remarkable fact about the Corvair Powerglide as abused in the Ultra Van, is how trouble free it is. Most are over 30 years old and many transmissions have been driven 200,000 miles or more.

From a backyard restorer's point of view, the PowerGlide is perhaps the easiest automatic to service. Also, the drag racing crowd also thinks its a damn good transmission.

Today, most of we Ultra pilots (many of whom treat their coaches as rare collectibles) would never think of shifting from forward into reverse at full throttle, which happened to be one of the design criterion for the automatic transmission on which we still depend.

It is however a comfort to know that in an emergency, if all else fails (with the brakes that is), it is possible to bring a 6,000 pound Ultra to a stop by shifting from forward to reverse without damaging the transmission.

A great story was told by Larry Knipe, Ultra Sales Manager back in the sixties. An 80 year old man spent the usual two days learning all the in's and out's of the Ultra Van before he ventured away with his new coach. Six miles down the road he was so happy with the way his Ultra was running in "D"rive, he tried shifting into the "R"acing gear to go faster. The vehicle came to a screeching halt. When put back in Drive, it would not move. The pinion gear had spun, but the PowerGlide was undamaged. The Ultra training course was immediately altered to include backing-up.

For those who interested in how this remarkably reliable transmission came to pass, some very informative reading on the Glide can be found in an SAE paper on the Corvair Automatic Transaxle by F.J. Winchell. As I mentioned earlier, most of the facts and figures for this article comes from this paper (Pages 28 to 41 in Clark's

book).

The Corvair PowerGlide has a very pedigreed heritage. When the Corvair came on the scene in the fall of 1959, the Glide had been in continuous design study since 1954 and nearly 7 million had been made.

In 1959, GM statisticians calculated Glides had been run over 200,035 BILLION consumer miles! With that many miles behind it when the first Corvair was delivered to the public, engineers at GM were confident the transmission could take almost any customer abuse, since Corvair gear stresses were thought to be only 60% of those that might be encountered from a full size Chevrolet V-8.

It came as a big surprise when transmission failures appeared in early Corvairs, until it was learned that a few new owners, trying to show off what their new Corvair could do, began power shifting at full throttle. Occasionally (since there is no reverse lock-out) shifts were made from forward to reverse, putting horrific strains on the drive line.

GM immediately set new standards that a redesigned Glide would have to meet. To insure adequate "abuse" capacity, the "new" Corvair Glide would have to survive shifting from low to reverse with a wide open throttle, no less than ONE HUNDRED times on dry pavement. Surprisingly, even when the changes were made, there was still no lock-out to prevent going from forward to reverse at any speed. Some of the changes involved better air cooling around the converter which was based on high temperature tests encountered in heavy city traffic, turnpike cruising, desert driving and climbing Pikes Peak.

The "worst case" scenario had to cope with a many variables such as how much energy was delivered to the clutches, fade characteristics of the clutch material, pump delivery, clutch plate temperatures, and last but by no means least, the engine speed at which an owner might shift from forward to reverse, which could be anywhere from idle to wide open throttle. Being a slightly scaled down, the Corvair PowerGlide shares many parts with its bigger Glide brother. This provides plenty of reserve capacity, which in the Ultra Van translates into very long life, even with the overload abuse some Ultra owners give it by lugging around nearly double the design dry weight of 3,400 pounds.

The real killer of any automatic transmission is heat, so if you don't have a cooler on your Corvair, I suggest you read on. If the fluid is kept cool, there is every reason to expect over 100,000 miles in highway service. To emphasize the point, the following chart was put out by the National Automotive Technician Certification Board and shows the fluid life is cut in half with every 20 degree F rise in temperature. In the chart below, the first column is the converter output temperature.

TEMPo (F)	Transmission Life
175.....	100,000 miles
195.....	50,000 "
215.....	25,000 "
235.....	12,500 "
255.....	6,250 "
275.....	3,125 "
295.....	1,500 "
315.....	750 "
335.....	375 "
355.....	185 "
375.....	90 "
395.....	45 "
415.....	30 minutes

I highly recommend doing the dual master cylinder conversion when renovating an Ultra Van which must include replacing all the brake lines and hoses. Most auto parts outlets stock standard lengths of brake lines with flared fittings already installed, so for just a few dollars, all the solid lines can be changed. The rear flex lines are also readily available. The Ultra front flex lines being 33 inches long were not so easy to find, until Jim Craig had a batch made to DOT standards.

The final point of this article is to make sure all Ultra Vanners and owners of Corvairs with automatic transmissions know they always have a Brake of Last Resort, just move the shift lever to "R"acing.

Doug Pratt #373, "e"clip

I am having problems with my transmission. All was fine until I changed differentials to 3.89:1

1. Would not back up—I thought it had to be the shift cable, but called Howard Boso just to get some support. (I thought I got it in right this time)
2. Then: slipping going down driveway—would never make it up the hill at the end of the drive—call Howard again! I had attempted to adjust low band before standing the transmission on the front to

measure for shims as the book said. Readjust low band per Howard (tight with small wrench, then back off 3 1/2 turns). Driveable, but shifts to Drive at high speed—when letting off accelerator at 30 or 40 mph to try and let it upshift it would go into what feels like Neutral (no engine braking apparent), then the engine must rev up to match ground speed of Low and then it would finally shift up at a higher speed. Went to weekend campout—on the return trip it would not shift into Drive/High at all, with no engine braking in D but everything seem normal in L.

3. Dropped pan (I'm not sure that the shift cable was in correctly—I had not checked the book before removing it). This time I looked as I installed the shift cable and made a gauge to adjust the Manual Valve. No more slippage, but still will not shift up to Drive. On the flat there is no noticeable engine braking, but going down hill (we live on a big one) there is a difference noted in N, D & L. I just went out and ran the down hill test with a vacuum gauge hooked up to the balance tube. Down hill, foot off the accelerator: Neutral—low vacuum; Drive—medium vacuum; Low—higher vacuum. What does this say about the "e" clip?

4. After reading Bob Ballew's article "P.G. Caught in the HP Race???" I wonder if the difference in relative speed between the front pump (faster engine speed) and rear pump (rear wheels) with the 3.89 rear end as opposed to the 3.55 that was in there has something to do with it. This transmission worked fine before this. Could it be that the "Detent Valve" needs to be adjusted to reduce the "Throttle Valve" oil pressure? See Ballew article page 13 of Winter-Spring 1996 Whales on Wheels—middle column, middle paragraph.

5. Of course I am overlooking the famed "e" clip, but the fact that it seems to shift to high (has a medium engine braking effect as compared to Neutral and Low)going down hill puzzles me. If I pull the valve body to check the "e" clip can anything except the low servo piston come loose?

Dear Bob and Pat You were right! The "e" clip was missing. Where did it go? And Why? "E" clip and gaskets are on order should have them by the first of the week. There were a couple of small metal pieces in the pan and some very

small 'shiney stuff'—could that be all that is left? Should I do anything special—like change the fluid a couple of times? or whatever? Thanks for the help. I was hung up on the fact that it seemed to shift into Drive going down hill with a closed throttle. Doug Pratt—#373

Classified

1967 Ultra Van #278, 231 V-6 Buick engine (rear) Radiator in front. Runs great and cool. White with aluminum bumpers. A/C & Evaporative cooler on roof For more details call Howard E. Baso, 1536 W. Roundup St., Apache Junction AZ, 85220. Mon. - Thur. 8 - 5 PM, (602) 288-8166. \$10,000

1967 Ultra Van #295, V/6 eng. 3.8 ltr., 3sp auto. Excellent thru out. Ready to travel. Health of owner forces sale. All reasonable offers considered. Serious to sell Video & photos, \$8. 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, 110eng., 3: 55 gears, Good paint & interior. Currently ungoing a valve job. Will be ready by the time you read this. This is a real good buy running or not. \$3595. (I, Jim Craig, owned this unit about four yrs ago. It was one of the best Ultra engines I have had. This IS a plug). Video & photos \$8. Contact: Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com.

1968 Ultra Van, #331, 110hp eng. 4SP. TRANS. w/3:89 gears. Excellent condition and REALLY clean. Ready to travel. Good radials, 14, Dual mufflers, Solor panel, Dash air cond. V/G ext. paint, 3 yrs old. Dual bats. TV ant., Alum eng.oil & valve covers., Radio, AM/FM, spec. steering wheel.If you have been looking for a good Ultra with a manual 4 speed trans (like Walt Davison has), now is your chance to purchase one of the best around. Price;\$7495. Contact Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com.

1969 Ultra Van #499, 110H.P. Corvair, Powerglide, 3:89, newer roof air and water heater, 3 KW Generator, New front and rear wheel bearings, wheel cylinders, U-joints, rebuilt Diff. \$6,500 Craig Miller, (916) 638-9868. vairboy@aol.com (located in Sacramento, CA).

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

1970 Ultra Van #540, Chevy V-8, automatic. Contact Richard Anderson, 7001 142nd St. N. Lot 3358, Largo, FL 33771. (727) 538-2815.

1970 Ultra Van #547, Chevy V-8, Automatic. Many upgrades. Needs paint, \$6,900 Contact Jeff Stonesifer at the Corvair Ranch, (717) 624-2805.

1974 Ultra Van #604, (26 foot side mounted mid engine, only 2 built) Olds 350 V-8, 350 Hydromatic, 4 wheel disc brakes, recently upholstery. Custom cooling system, runs COOL. 35,000 miles. Need space to finish Ultra #605. \$18.,500. Contact, Roy Muranaka, 11119 Salt Lake Ave., Northridge CA 91326. (818) 366-9602

Ultra Van Wanted Corvair powered, should be ready to travel, But not perfect. Will pay cash, will give it a good home and take it to lots of CORSA events where it can show off. Richard or Gayle Finch, (805) 683-5346, or fax (805) 683-8868.

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

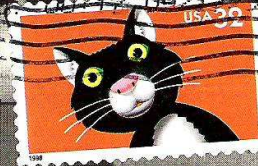
1962 Corvair Rampside. Has a walk in mounted camper. Stove, ice box, bed & etc. 95hp engine w/4sp. & 3.27 gears. Paint is excel. (Adobe Biege) w/ white stripe. Overall in excel condition. John Hoffman, 3760 S. Huron St., Englewood, CO 80110, (303) 781-8617. \$4,800.

1962 Corvair Rampside, 95hp, 4sp. 3:27 gears. Excel. cond. w/orig. style walkin camper. Stove icebox & etc. New paint. Excel.tires. Video & photos avail. \$8. ppd. \$2995. W/O camper. \$3295 with. Contact Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com.

Parts for Sale. Alum. eng. pans, 1ea. 2 deep. \$80, 2ea. 13/8 deep. New pan gaskt. \$9. New & used Ultra Van parts. V/8 parts also. Many structure parts. Advise what you need. Reasonable prices. New/orig Ryerson Ultra manuals.\$60. plus\$6. UPS. New Firestone rubber air supension bags, \$75,ea. New orig. Ultra windshields, tinted, cut to correct size. \$695. Reproduction Ultra windshields,full size/uncut. \$595. (Pickup in Joshua Tree). Shipped to your door or your auto glass shop, \$795,ea. Windshield rubber moulding \$25. (25FT.) New reconditioned Ultra bellcranks,Upgrade kits. inquire for price. Alum., orig. type beams for frt. spring, used, \$85,ea. New Ultra AUTO shift cables, Modified w/ Ballew O ring, will NEVER leak. \$95. ea. Contact Jim Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, CA. (619) 366-9104, FAX (619) 366-9104 or e-mail jrcraig1@juno.com.

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Rallies

September 23 - 29, 1998, National Ultra Van Rally, Indian City, (Anadarko) OK. Randlett Park, phone number (405) 247-2481. (513) 897-6546. Hosts: Gordon & Ruth Harvey, Box 53, Smoke Run, PA 16681. (814) 378-5363 Summer, (813) 541-3433 Winter.

October 28 - November 10, 1998, Ultra Van #101 Restoration Rallie #9. Desert Rendezvous Ranch, Jim & Marlene Craig, 7011 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree, Ca 92252, (760) 366-9104. Registration Fee \$5 which goes to the "Project Fund". Camp fee, \$1 per day per person.

21st Annual Great Western Fan Belt Toss & Swap Meet (GWFBT&SM), November 6 - 8, 1998 Palm Springs, California. See pre-registration form in center page. Limited Ultra Parking, so send in early. Contact: Stan Ozenbaugh (619) 748-6695 Internet: william@access1.net.

March 11 - 15, 1999, Eastern Spring Rally, Titusville, Florida. Manatee Hammack Campground. Hosts: Jean & Betty McMasters, 916 Lighthouse Drive, No. Palm Beach FL 33408, (407) 626-0388.

June 20 - 23, 1999, Eastern Summer Rally, Carryville, Tennessee. Cove Lake State Park. Contact: Jim & Rosemary Howell #216 (423) 687-2292; Jim & Ann Guider #201 (706) 866-1158; Albert Ramsey #509 (931) 526-5120.

Ultra Van early Tech Tips can be found at:
<http://membrrs.aol.com/crisest2>

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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