

# Whales on Wheels

NUMBER II

Volume XXIII

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## Your Ultra Van on the Cover of WOW

Would you like to see your Ultra Van on the cover of Whales on Wheels? Then send a photo, with a short story. The photo should have some artistic value featuring the Ultra Van in a good location. Send your photos and stories to the Editor and have your Ultra Van be a star.

## Prez Sez

Bob Galli #504

Hi to everyone,

Diane and I are getting ready for our summer. Our first event is the Corsa National in Flagstaff. We will be leaving for this about June 20th. Any of you who are planning to come to Flagstaff be sure to allow enough time to see some of the sights of the Southwest. We have toured many of the Indian Ruins, and most of the other sights in the past years. Be sure to attend our Group Ultra Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 27 at 7:00 PM. We would like to have a preliminary discussion about a proposed merger of Group Ultra Van (GUV) and Ultra Van Motor Coach Club (UVMCC). Norm Helmkey has an article in this issue on this subject.

After this rally, we will be going to the Western Summer Rally at Rich and Tricia Shepard in Salem, Oregon, with a visit to the "Spruce Goose".

After that, we will be wandering East, couple or three days here or there, ending up at Hannibal, Missouri for the UVMCC National in September. We have gotten prepared for this by the addition of Roof Air Conditioner. Our three months in the mid-west last year pointed out the need for this.

OK, this is my effort at Editorship of WOW, Walt Davison will be your next Editor for the August 15 issue. Do you want to try for the Winter issue November 15? Let me know.

Bob

Our thanks goes out to all the contributors that made this issue possible. If you would like to try your hand at putting out an issue of WOW, please contact me for an appointment. Please mail contributions for the next issue to the next Editor:

Walt Davison  
156 Summer Place Lane  
Sylacauga, AL.  
35150-7598

Bob Galli

# Where Do We Go From Here

By  
Norm Helmkey

As most of you know, there are two organizations with the Ultra Van as the prime reason for existence. These are the Ultra Van Motor Coach Club (UVMCC) and Group Ultra Van as a chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA).

Since 1999, there have been informal discussions and speculations among Ultra Van people about the possible merger of the two groups. Last year, the level of interest increased to the point where there was discussion from the floor at the annual UVMCC meeting in Minden.

To better understand the situation, we need to look back to the reasons for the two groups.

The UVMCC was founded in 1966 by three couples. They decided only those who owned (or had owned) an Ultra Van could belong. Even then, former owners could only be Associate members who could not hold office. The club flourished in the early '70s with a membership of over 230. Rallies held during this period had great attendance (compared to today) with as many as 66 units getting together.

During the '70s, attempts were made to open UVMCC membership to all who had an interest, but early members, loyal to the founding ideas, blocked these attempts. Finally, in 1999, the members voted to open membership to all. This immediately began the thoughts of getting back to a single Ultra Van organization.

By 1980, Christy Barden saw the need for an organization that was open to anyone with an Ultra Van interest. He founded Group Ultra Van (GUV) as a chapter of CORSA. Most Ultra Vans were Corvair-powered and many owners were already members of CORSA, so it was a willing host for GUV.

Many Ultra Van owners joined both organizations, but as UVMCC membership began to drop, there was an undercurrent of resentment in the belief that GUV was siphoning off UVMCC members. As it turns

out, this was not the case, but until now, no one ever studied the numbers to learn the real situation.

Membership data was exchanged in March 2002. As of March there were 90 who belonged to both groups. The UVMCC has 70 members not in GUV and GUV has 60 members not in UVMCC. The net is there are 220 unique names with an interest in the Ultra Van.

Looking closer at the 220 "combined" members, 135 own one or more Ultra Vans or Tiaras. 74 Ultra Van owners are in both clubs and 46 belong to just the UVMCC. The surprise is only 15 Ultra Van owners belong to just the GUV and none of these seem active in Ultra Van activities.

Of the other 85 combined members: 10 previous owners and 35 non-owners are in GUV only. 13 previous owners and 3 non-owners are in both clubs. There are 11 previous owners and 13 interested members (many looking for Ultra Vans) who are only in the UVMCC.

In organization, the two groups are quite different. GUV officers are appointed, while in the UVMCC they are elected. GUV is not incorporated, the UVMCC is a California "Not For Profit" corporation. GUV does not have formal rallies, the UVMCC does.

On newsletters (which consumes the major part of the funds of both groups), GUV usually publishes 'Whales On Wheels' four times a year. The UVMCC publishes the 'Ultra Sounder' six times a year and usually prints an annual roster.

The UVMCC also hosts regional rallies throughout the year and an annual weeklong national rally. In addition, the UVMCC markets various kinds of Ultra Van related merchandise like: Tech Tip Books, Ultra Van pins, decals, VIN plates, etc.

There is a significant difference in the area of annual dues: GUV at \$6 a year and UVMCC at \$15. About 20 percent of the UVMCC annual budget goes for insurance (required by their bylaws). GUV is covered by CORSA insurance so has

no insurance costs. In 2002, the UVMCC insurance premiums were increased by 500 percent. Perhaps a reason to consider a merger.

Where do we go from here? There is a general consensus that the future of the Ultra Van best rests with those interested in the Corvair. This makes a case for coming under the CORSA umbrella.

This notwithstanding, there are at least four possibilities to consider:

1. Do nothing and continue to operate as two independent clubs.
2. Merge under CORSA as GUV
3. Merge under CORSA and change chapter name to UVMCC
4. UVMCC become a new chapter of CORSA.

Options 2, 3 and 4 have been discussed with CORSA. From a CORSA position, there is no problem with any of these options. Harry Jensen, CORSA Executive Secretary said Options 2 & 3 would be the easiest, as no new charter application is necessary as is the case for Option 4.

The biggest obstacle of becoming one club is the name.

Those who favor the GUV name say, it is already an established entity in CORSA with a 12 year history.

The UVMCC group point out among other things, the 36 year history, formal incorporation and standing within antique vehicle community.

If the clubs were to merge under the existing GUV, it would likely mean a change of their operation to elected officers, new bylaws and incorporation. This would also bring into play the disillusionment of the UVMCC under their present bylaws (not an easy process) and the surrender of the 1967 California charter. Under Options 3 & 4, the existing UVMCC organization could be retained with minor bylaw changes and notification to the State of California.

So now, it is up to you. If a formal proposal comes along, you will be the ones that have to decide.

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## In Memorium

Olive Hunter died April 25th. She was Len's partner for 63 years. They were club members for over 20 years. Their first rally being in 1978 after their trip to Alaska with their Ultra. Olive and Len made many dear friends during the many rallies they attended. She will be greatly missed. Olive loved the outdoors especially the birds and plants, knew the names of most. She was always at the rallies giving a helping hand where needed.

Pete and Rose Schuler

## Spring Rally At Galli's

The spring rally was small but fun, The following Ultra Coach's were in attendance, Craig's 604, Dell's 292, Gist's 413, Boso's in their Travoy, Franz in their tent trailer. Also in attendance but staying in a local motel were Eric Kirven #345, Ed Gurr and Family , and Joanna Spinoza from Cayucos, a very near neighbor, of about 25 miles.

Forrest, Eric and Jim worked on Forrest's coach. Revamped parts of the front end which needed an up grade, Graham worked on de flashing his heads and other needed stuff under the Ultra Van. You might say the rally was one big tech session.

Bob had bought a portable carport for us to use as a gathering place for potlucks, craft sessions were we inclined, card sessions, tech sessions, etc, well wouldn't you know it turned off cold, Bob and I loaned Graham a heater for his coach as Jake couldn't keep him warm enough. Jake is his very nice Standard Poodle.

We had some very nice potluck dinners, and two dinners out, the first was a result of our trip to Morro Bay and the Embarcadero and Morro Rock, the Embarcadero is a nice touristy place to wander up and down and visit the shops. At least I think so,, but then I am biased as I live near. On the way to Morro Bay, we stopped in at a Local State Park to check out the camping facilities for a future rally. Nice place back in a few miles off the main highway. As it was early in the "season" there were no campers yet so we got to talk with the Ranger and take pictures, Sally Gist has sent pictures to go with this article.

Eric and Graham had to leave early but then Ed Gurr and Joanna Spinoza came to visit, and so "took up the slack" as it were.

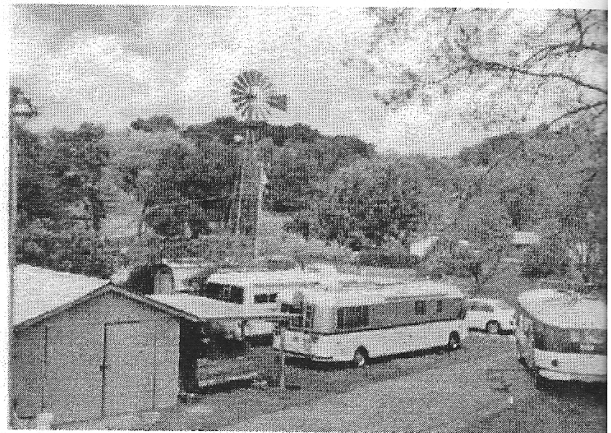
On Saturday we all went to Paso Robles for Chinese dinner, only one small problem, I forgot

the name of the place, so looked it up in the phone book, called and made reservations for 12, and off we went at the appointed time in 2 cars. Well as we get to Paso I notice the address I had thought was the correct one, wasn't. So I continued and found the correct one, well it was full to the "brim" and folks were waiting, so back through the parking lot, out to the street, and off to the one I am sure now is the wrong one, but the one who has our reservation. All was not lost, the food was good, just not as good as the right place would have been. Sunday saw everyone leave but Craigs and Gists, who got to help Paolo our Grandson celebrate his 19th birthday. We Bar B Qued 3 Tri tip steaks and all the trimmings and contributions from all assembled. Monday the rest left and it got mighty quiet around here.

Hope I didn't leave out too much of the important stuff, I am sure I will be reminded of it if I did.

Your Reporter,

Diane Galli #504



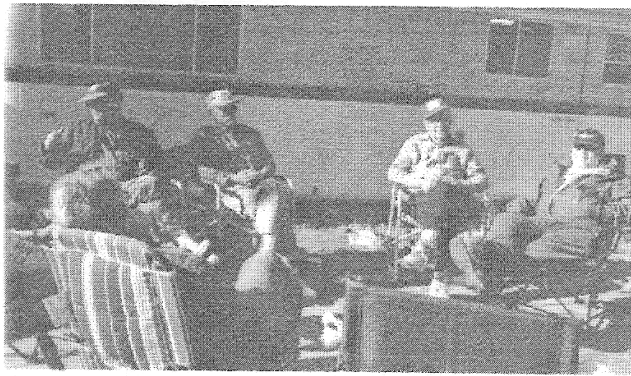
The view from above



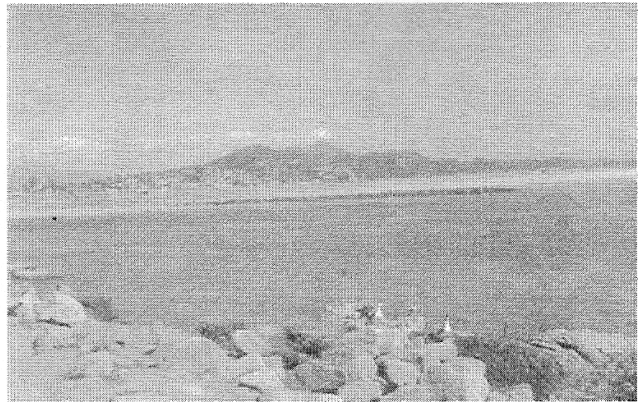
The Ultra Girls



Cerro Alto



Talking it Over



Morro Bay



Jim, Eric and Forrest



Squirrel and Gulls

## VairFest 2002

### a CORSA event

by Richard and Gayle Finch # 443

This bi-annual event is usually held in Cambria, California, up near the world-famous Hearst Castle. But this year, the Cambria Pines Resort priced us out and so the event was held in my old home-town of Santa Maria, California, at the equally famous Santa Maria Inn. And it was a very relaxing and pleasant event once again.

Four years ago at the Cambria VairFest, my wife came rushing up to me in the swap meet area and said " I have found what we NEED !". I of course asked her what she had found and she said " A " TRAVELON" , Corvair powered camper van". And of course I said to her, "International Harvester makes a "Travelall" but the Corvair powered unit is called an Ultra Van ". And of course I was partly wrong again. What Gayle had seen that we needed was a Dave Peterson designed Travelon, S/N 5 that is now owned by Paolo Galli. And of course we soon purchased our Ultra Van to make us all happy.

This year we drove from Tularosa, NM to Blythe, CA the first day, making 644 miles from sun-up to sun-down. We really enjoy staying right on the banks of the Colorado River at the Riverside RV Park. Our 11 year-old neighbor boy, Daniel Rascon was with us this trip for his first-ever time out of New Mexico. The second day of the trip had us passing by the vast windmill sights at Palm Springs, CA and through smoggy L.A, then on up to our former home of Santa Barbara, CA.

We stopped at my former residence at East Beach in Santa Barbara so that Daniel could wade in the Pacific Ocean, and as usual, a constant crowd of curious people came up to our Ultra Van in the parking lot at East Beach to ask about the RV. One of the curious couples said, " Hi, our neighbor designed this RV ." And as usual I thought to myself, sure, sure, you don't know what you are talking about . And I then said to him, " and who is your neighbor ?" And the man then said to me, "Well, he is dead now, but he was David Peterson ".

I gulped a big gulp and said to him " How long did you live by David Peterson ?" to which he replied, "all of the time that he was designing and building the Ultra Van RV design and until he moved just before he passed

away." The mans' name is Richard Birkie and he agreed to let me interview him for a future article about being a neighbor of the designer of the Ultra Van. I am still in awe at the coincidence of meeting him.

We turned 1,041 miles on our trip odometer as we pulled into the parking lot at the Santa Maria Inn and I thought that we might get the long distance award again, but Graham Dell, Ultra Van # 292 came all the way down from Belleview, Washington for a trip distance of over 1,200 miles. Congratulations to Graham for his first long distance trip in his still under restoration Ultra Van. Since the parking places were all reserved, they made Graham spend the two nights at a local RV park, but he was able to take a temporary vacant spot in the swap meet area on Saturday. Graham is going to have a luxury unit some day when it is all finished, with his Flexsteel couch , captains chairs, 12 volt refrigerator, and electronic gadgets galore.

The host of the 2002 VairFest were Bob and Diane Galli # 504, and Don and Bev Weaver of Central Coast CORSA. The Friday night spaghetti supper was wonderful and was attended by over 75 people. The Saturday night awards banquet was a tri-tip steak feed and was the best. Those winning awards were:

- \*Early open... '63 Monza ...Mike Hughes
- \*Early closed '64 Monza...Greg Peterson
- \*Late open.... '69 Monza....Kevin Tompson
- \*Late closed... '69 Monza... (blue '69 ?)
- \*Forward control '62 'Breir.. Paolo Galli
- \*Special interest, '69 U/V #443 Gayle & Richard Finch ( the only one entered) !!!
- \* Best of show.' 62 Monza...Vance Piper

( it should be noted that the '62 Greenbrier restored by Paolo Galli was begun when Paolo was only 14 years old and completed by him before he was old enough to get a drivers license ! And Paolo was wonderful to take our neighbor , Daniel Rascon under his wing all day Saturday at the car show and swap meet.)

On Sunday morning we said goodby'es to many Corvair friends, had breakfast across the street at the great Perko's Restaraunt and departed for points east again. Part of our homeward journey took us up the famous Grapevine Grade just south of Bakersfield, CA where many, many vehicles have died from overheating because of the very long and steep mountain pass that kills any engine not in good condition. We were pleased that our # 443 went purring right up the pass, going by

many trucks, overheated cars and even slower RV's.

But as we entered the I-5 freeway, we were hit with a serious 40 to 50 mph crosswind that would plague us for the rest of the trip home.

The first night out, we were only able to make it to Barstow, CA, which is rumored to be the "arm pit" of California, not a good place to live or work. Even the RV park smelled like a sewer that night. But the wind and sand was too much to buck on the desert east of Barstow. So, it was better to stop in the safety of the RV park rather than get caught in a desert sandstorm out on the road.

The second day saw us going into Kingman, AZ where the wind had knocked out the power to most of downtown. We found an A&W place that still had power and had lunch. Our next gas stop was in Seligman, AZ, one of the old Route 66 towns. Be sure to stop there if you are on the road between Flagstaff and Kingman. The second night we made it to "Black Bart's RV Park" in Flagstaff, just across the road from Little America Hotel where the 2002 CORSA National Convention will be held. The restaurant at Black Bart's is a 10+ but the parking hook-ups are a 2-, all lumpy and sloping so you can't level your rig without a lot of work. There are much better RV parks in Flagstaff than this one.

The third day out we drove the 30 miles from Flagstaff down to Sedona, AZ which Gayle and I and our Siamese cat think is the most relaxing place on this earth. We love to stay at the Sky Ranch Lodge near the airport at Sedona. Daniel was able to swim and hot tub with a boy from Washington State at the Lodge.

The fourth day, we drove to Meteor Crater and enjoyed the museum there. Since we were there 3 years ago, they have completely redone the displays. But in the parking lot, I had to go hide # 443 between a row of cars so the wind would not topple her on her side! They said we had gusts to 90 mph that day! We stayed in our favorite NM RV park in Gallup that night and the wind was still rocking us around.

The fifth day, we stopped off at Daniel's grandparents house in Albuquerque, NM for lunch and really enjoyed their hospitality. Taking the road home from Albuquerque via Socorro, NM, we found more highway work going on between San Antonio, NM and Carizzozo, NM. Forget that route for a few months! We arrived home before dark with

not a single glitch from our Ultra Van Corvair engine other than needing to set the timing twice due to low octane gas in the high octane pump at a fuel stop in Arizona. Our total trip miles were 2,400. During the entire trip I taught Daniel how to figure gas mileages and he reported from 14.6 to 16.8 mpg for the entire trip, including lots of headwinds.

.....rf & gf...



Gayle and Graham Dell



Lon Wall Selling his wares



Vance Piper's Best of Show

## Travels with Jake & Orca

By Graham Dell

Jake, my 65 pound standard poodle, is getting use to the slumber strips. First one we wandered on to was startling. After awhile, no big deal. Getting use to 8' wide versus 6' in my normal vehicle takes a little time. But after a 2,500 mile trip to the rally in Atascadero, both of us are feeling at home with Orca.

The trip south started late Wednesday as I finished last minute fixes including an XM satellite radio that proved a pleasant addition. I was bound for the Vair Fest in Santa Maria, California, hoping to arrive Friday in time for the Spaghetti Feed. Of course, in my hurry I forget a number of important items including the lap top computer that changes the parameters for my FI engine. Fortunately, the engine only had a slight problem with hot starting and the computer was not missed.

Traveling with out a gas cap (now have a radiator cap that fits), probably losing who knows how much a day to evaporation, Orca managed 17 miles per gallon, even with a heavy right foot. There were only a few climbs in the Siskiyou that required low range and travel in the truck lane. Otherwise cruising at 3500 rpm, 8 inches of vacuum was quite comfortable. One

night of dry camping gave me a chance to try out my inverter to make coffee and toast in the morning. Nice to have that convenience.

At the California fruit inspection station, the inspector, seeing Jake, asked if I was traveling with any other animals besides the dog and the whale. Sharp guy, probably tipped off by my license plate "Orca292".

At the Atascadero rally, I learned how to replace the front shocks. Very labor intensive work. The coach does ride a lot better and reacts a little less to passing trucks. That is still something that needs to be worked on, maybe a front spoiler will help. Bob Galli encouraged me to remove the heater boxes and deflash the head openings over the combustion chambers that were nearly closed. Working with a drill the holes were enlarged considerably. Travel south was mostly at 390 degrees, travel north 320 degrees, and the hot start problem was gone, thanks Bob.

My new electronic speedometer never read higher than 24 mph. Despite numerous changes to dip switches, I never could get it to read correctly. Pulling out of a rest stop in Oregon, my water bottle fell to the floor.



Reaching for it at my feet, I glanced at the tach and saw it pegged at 5500 rpm as I accelerated into traffic. Letting off the gas and shifting to N did not change the reading. Fuse blown and also affected the speedometer, and all electric gauges. I was driving by head temp and vacuum gauge to judge when to shift to L climbing in the truck lane. Makes you one with your vehicle in a hurry.

First thing on my list is to put the tach and speedometer on separate circuits.

Second thing on my list is to get the plumbing, cook top, furnace and insulation/ceiling finished. Then my next trip, to the NW Rally in July, will also include Nancy. Your right Ken, an Ultra Van is a work in progress.



Jake's Turn at the Wheel

# In The Beginning

## Part 3

“Well Barbara, guess what happened today”?

“What? Something good I hope”.

“Oh. Yes, They delivered “the EGG” today, she’s beautiful.

“Can we go back and see her”?

“Sure after we eat”

Now it’s June 23, 1996, and a warm evening, “where do we start” were her first words when she stepped inside.



“clean out all the cabinets and remove the drapes I guess”,

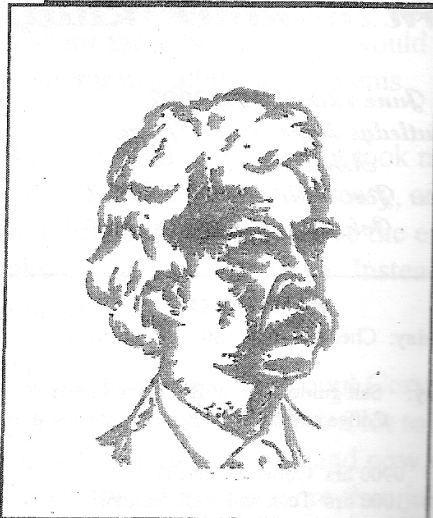
“sounds good”.

So we spend a couple of hours and then head for home. It’s hard to concentrate on work, when you are thinking of something else, but I did it.

We only had the weekends and some evenings to work on her, every unused moment I was thinking “what about this, what about that”.

Our next time was the week end, Barbara cleaned and I worked on the engine, after 6 or 7 hours I got the engine started; “Oh God, can you hear that”? It was running very erratically and knocking bad, very low oil pressure; I knew immediately the engine was in very poor condition, it had to come out. I better go get the manuals and read what to do. The more I read the more I realized that there are a lot of flaws in this vehicle.

The number one thing I read was how to correctly jack up and support the unit



## 36<sup>th</sup> Annual "Ultra Week" Sept. 9th to 13th, 2002

Close your eyes and imagine you are nestled beside the Mississippi with the sound of an occasional owl hooting as you sleep under the stars near Mark Twain's old stomping ground.

Sounds like a perfect end to a day filled with Ultra camaraderie, sight-seeing and cave explorations. Where is this place? It's a quiet shady spot at the **Mark Twain Cave Campgrounds**, just a mile south of Hannibal, Missouri on Highway 79. Attractions and shopping by free bus just 2 miles away.

The campground is AAA, Woodalls, Trailer Life and Wheelers approved. There are two super-clean shower houses and toilets, two washer/dryers and shelter pavilions. Also, there is a fire pit and picnic table on every site. Stay 6 nights and get the 7<sup>th</sup> FREE! The closing banquet will be catered at Olivia's Restaurant, right in the campground.

What's it going to cost? We have a special Ultra Club rates depending on what you want.

Full Hook-up with 50 amp electric, water & sewer	\$20.00
Full Hook-up with 30 amp electric, water & sewer	\$18.00

All the sites around the pavilion where the activities will be located are \$18.00.

Just water & electric sites are available in the park, but they are less than a dollar a night cheaper.

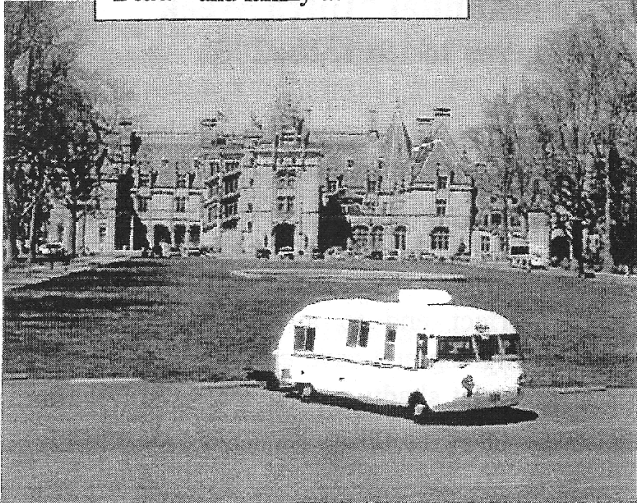
You need to call **1-800-527-0304 Extension 23** and talk to Glenda to make your reservations.

Don't put it off, do it now, so we will all be together. Some of us will be there a day or two early to look around the town. Remember, if you stay 6 nights, the 7<sup>th</sup> is free.

Watch for the next newsletter for ordering banquet tickets and T-Shirts.

## Eastern Summer Rally

"Beau" and family at Biltmore



### Visit Biltmore Estate News

**Biltmore Estate** named in Top 50 American Destinations **National Geographic Traveler** has selected Biltmore Estate as one of its 50 must-see destinations in America. Featured on the cover of the October issue, Biltmore was chosen as one of ten national wonders by the magazine, which described the locations as manmade or natural spots that America cherishes.

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June 12th - 16th, 2002  
Rutledge Lake Travel Park  
Asheville, NC

Hosts: Jim & Rosemary Howell  
John & Betty Howell

### Activities:

**Wednesday:** Check in & Registration (visiting)

**Thursday:** Self guided tour of Biltmore Estate.  
Coffee and Snacks after we get parked

**Friday:** 0900 hrs Coffee & Snacks  
1000 hrs Tech and craft sessions  
1300 hrs Business meeting  
1800 hrs Potluck hosted by Campground

**Saturday:** 0900 hrs Coffee and Snacks  
Free day for exploring area or just visiting

**Sunday:** 0900 hrs Coffee and Snacks & Goodbyes

**Costs?** Everyone probably wants to know what its going to cost. The campground is **\$23.00** per night and Biltmore is **\$29.00** per person. The rally fee is a one-time **\$10.00** charge per coach. We need to make our reservations **NOW** at the campground so they can reserve us a spot together. The reservation phone number is: **1-800 368-3209**. We will also need to get a 'head count' of how many are going to Biltmore, Email or call me with that. My email and phone # are on the back cover. Let's have a great rally! Jim Howell

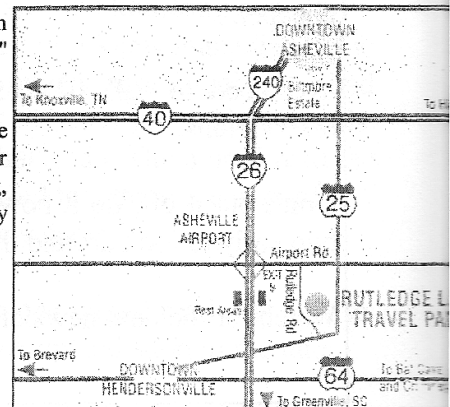
**Rutledge Lake Travel Park, RV Park, Campground** in Asheville, North Carolina Rutledge Lake Travel Park is an RV Resort, RV Park and camping center, campground located in Western North Carolina near Fletcher, Lake Lure, Asheville and Hendersonville.

We know you'll enjoy your stay here in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina. We've planned carefully to provide the necessities and many of the "extras" that will make your camping experience with us one you'll long remember.

You'll enjoy the lake-fishing or canoeing, or walking through the woods along the nature trail. Our large multi-purpose recreation building is a great place to gather with others to picnic, watch satellite television, or make your own fun, dancing, strumming, singing...it's up to YOU! Start making your own scrapbook memories by staying with us soon!

### Rutledge Lake Travel Park

170 Rutledge Road  
Fletcher, NC 28732  
Phone: (800) 368-3209 (828) 654-7873  
website: [www.campingnorthcarolina.com](http://www.campingnorthcarolina.com)  
Reservations only - (800) 368-3209



with out damaging any panels. Thank God for these two books. I would have never known all these problems.

Well, I pulled the engine, it took me over 3 hours to do this, dirty, greasy, and kind of a different way to remove the engine; take it down and roll it out. Instead of lift it up and take it out.

I don't know anything about Corvair engines and boy do I have a lot to learn. Barbara is still cleaning, and now we realize this project is more than just a little cleaning and decorating.

We sit and ponder, knowing now is decision time. We can't do this part of the way, we will have to do it all, that means down to the bare bones, this is going to be a long haul, and there is a lot to learn, and a lot to do. That's OK because we love her, and besides it'll only be a few thousand dollars.

I decided to built a moveable stand to sit the engine/transmission on, easy to work on and put away while I wait for parts.

My big concern regarding the body is the windshields, they are in terrible condition. Reading the manual, I find they are from a 50's Chevy Step Van, P.G.#-----. I have a niece in the auto glass/upholstery business, so we look up the windshield, order number, in an older catalogue, the price it \$125, per side. Oh great, order the two I need, \$250, great. Well 6 days go by and I've pulled out the old windshields being careful not to

crack them, just in case. Then the news comes, they aren't \$125, they are \$600 each, that's more than I paid for her. Back to square one, there is only one solution now, see if we can cut off the bad edge, and salvage them.

Well the first one cut beautifully, took off about 6", polished the edges, looks good. Now for the passenger side; cut the one side perfectly, turn it over, to cut the 2nd side, going great, hit a scratch in the glass, oops a run, stop move over 2" recut again, the crack continues, keep cutting. Complete the cuts, now the windshield is 9" smaller and has a crack in it. We drill a hole to stop the crack, we must save this, we cannot afford a new \$600 windshield. After 10 hours the two cut pieces and a new center piece are installed and look good except for the small crack. Now we can proceed.

Knowing that I will need upholstery work later on, I ask my cousin if we can trade labor, what would you need done that I can do? She said the big overhead doors need painting, 5 units in total. I said OK, you have a deal. So not wanting to do this later on in the project I did it right away, evenings and a Saturday, 34 1/2 hours total, but I've paid for the upholstery work needed.

Now from July 14, 1996 through December 12, 1998, we restored just about everything in this unit. Now its time for the upholstery, the bed cushions and seat cushions, taking the items to my cousins shop. I waited from

December 12, 1998 to July 8, 1999, for my upholstery work. Never again do I trade labor, 7 months to do 32 hours of work.

Well we get out insurance policy; they don't have nay idea what it's value is, so we pick an arbitrary number, get our policy. Get out new plates which read: 68 Ultra and were on the road.

The first place we went to is a car show, and everyone loves it, and we were as proud as Peacocks. Sure enough we take 1st place, boy this is great. People look as you go by, hopefully not saying the thing I said the first time I saw her.

Now it's time to tally up all the expenses---Sticker shock I believe they call it.

Only \$374 in labor welding on the water tanks, all the rest is materials total:

Mechanical \$3,350.16

Tank \$742.36

Body work \$6,455.94

Interior finish \$1,091.42

Accessories \$170.19

Special tools \$676.40

TOTAL \$12,860.47

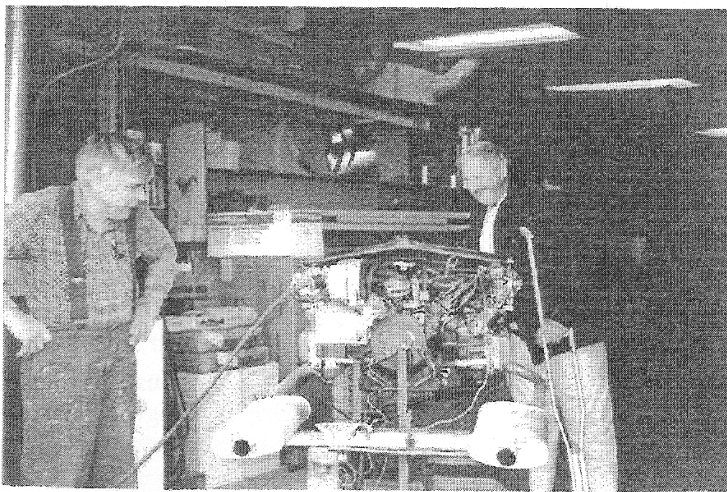
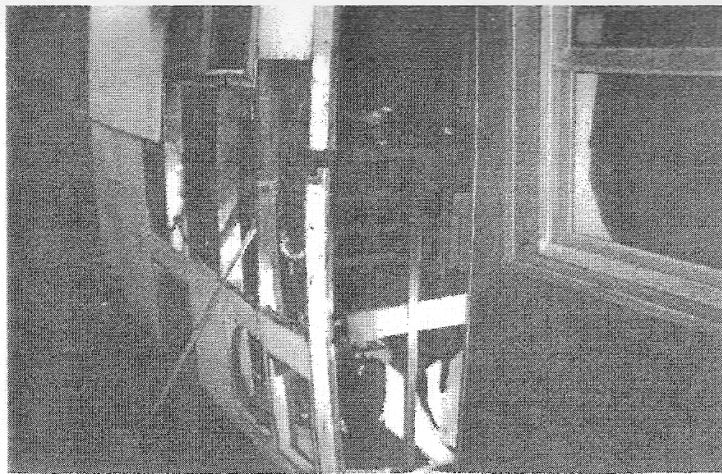
A far cry from the \$2000, Thank God we didn't add it up as we went, now we will tally up all the hours, we kept a record of our time, total man hours 1,341 hours

Not one regret for a moment as our love of the most beautiful motor home in the world grows.

We call our Ultra Van, The EGG, just as in the Beginning.

Paul Piche'





# Oil pans, Gauges, and other Stuff

By Jim Isbell

When I bought my ultra I had a fair amount of knowledge about the Corvair from owning three of them previously, but I knew nothing about an UltraVan. So, I am learning. I am trying to read everything I can such as "How to Keep Your Corvair Alive" by Richard Finch, the Ryerson Manual, and the Corvair shop manuals. But even after that there are things that I learn on my own and I try to pass them on. Some times someone will say.. "Hey, dummy, everyone knows that!" when I post to the Ultra list. But, everyone does not know, I didn't know. There are people out there, like myself, that I am writing to.

One of the things I recently found out was that my finned aluminum oil pan was not stock. It held an extra quart of oil for one thing. For another, the extra quart of oil was doing nothing but lying coolly in the bottom of the pan. The nice fins were cooling that oil at the bottom, but the PO had never lowered the oil pick up to where it could take advantage of the cool oil in the bottom and it was still merrily sucking up the hot oil off the top of the pool. Now that really sucks. So I lowered the pick up by about 7/8".

This is not an easy task since the inside of the pan also has fins so that it can suck the heat out of the oil and transfer it to the fins on the outside to be blown away in the wind. These fins won't allow you to drop the pick up very deep into the oil. So the first thing you have to do is to mill away the fins in a circle just below and slightly forward of where the current pick up position is. The reason for "slightly forward" is that when you lower the pick up it will move slightly forward if you do it the way I did.

I am fully aware that there are pick up's sold by after market vendors, but they cost in excess of \$45 and I modified mine for under \$2 worth of parts. I am also fully aware that some think I am tight. This is not so. It's just that I am an engineer and cant see paying someone else to do a job I can do better and cheaper.

My method of modifying the pick up is simple and requires only a propane torch, some solder, two 45 degree copper fittings and about a half an inch of copper tubing of the same diameter as the oil pick up tube. I cut the original tube as far from the pick up screen assembly as possible but still on the straight piece of tubing entering the assembly. Then I cut about 1/2" off the tube as it heads back to the block entry. Then I placed the two 45 degree angles with the 1/2" of tubing between them into where I removed the original piece of tube. By twisting these around and trying them at different angles you will find you can lower the pick up right where you want it. After you have determined that you have it right you need to mark all the pieces so you can get them back in that configuration again, then disassemble them and clean all the oil off of them. You should sand the places on the steel tubing where you are going to solder. I was amazed to find out that the solder will flow very nicely onto the steel, must be some unusual alloy because I have never in the past been able to solder to steel and was expecting to have to braze this assembly.

After cleaning it you can use the propane torch and solder everything back together just as you have it marked. If you have already had the interior fins milled down to within about 3/8" of the bottom, you are almost ready to reassemble it.

But before you reassemble it, do you have an oil temperature gauge in the dash? What? You don't? Well, you should, and now is the time to add one. If you are depending on the "over temp" switch to save your ass, you are in deep do-do. The "over temp" gauge will turn on just as the engine melts down. Shades of Chernobyl. An oil temperature gauge will tell you long before you are in trouble. With this gauge in the dash you will know what your "normal" temperature is. Then when it changes from "normal" you will know something is up before the whole thing comes down. I put quotes around "normal" because the temp is different for every engine and every sender installation. The location of



the sender will make a difference, as will your engines various modifications. But the thing is, to know what your engines "normal" is. As someone once said, "It all depends on what the definition of is is."

If you have an Otto or similar aluminum oil pan then you will find a boss on the starboard side forward where you can drill and tap a hole for your oil temp gauge. Picture #1 shows the sender installed. If you have a stock, pressed steel pan, then you will have to find another place to mount the sender, but now that you have the pan off you will be able to clean up the chips after you drill the hole where ever you put it. Richard has a recommendation in "How to Keep Your Corvair Alive" that is on the aft wall of the block. I chose to use the boss on the aluminum pan because it tells me the temperature of the oil that the lowered pick up is ingesting for the engine. You can also place it on top of the oil filter, the hottest place, which does not require the removal of the oil pan.

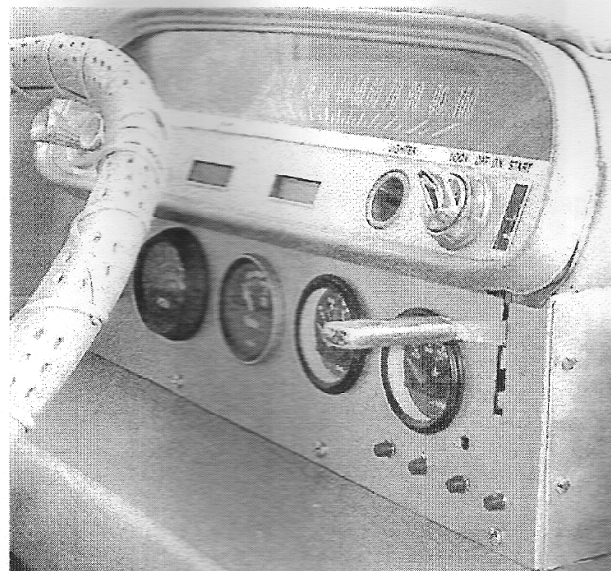
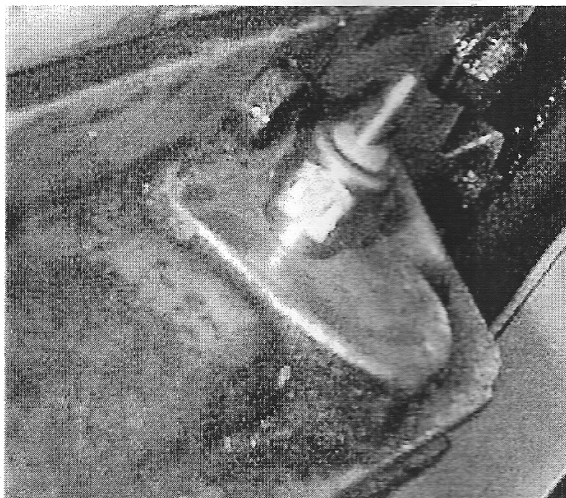
Now, a word of caution....If you look closely at my sender picture you will see a mounting bolt above it that is to hold the pan on the block. This was a

mistake on my part because now I have to remove the sender to remove the pan. Admittedly that is not an every day occurrence, but if I had it to do over again I would have offset the hole for the sender to allow room to insert the pan bolt without removing the sensor.

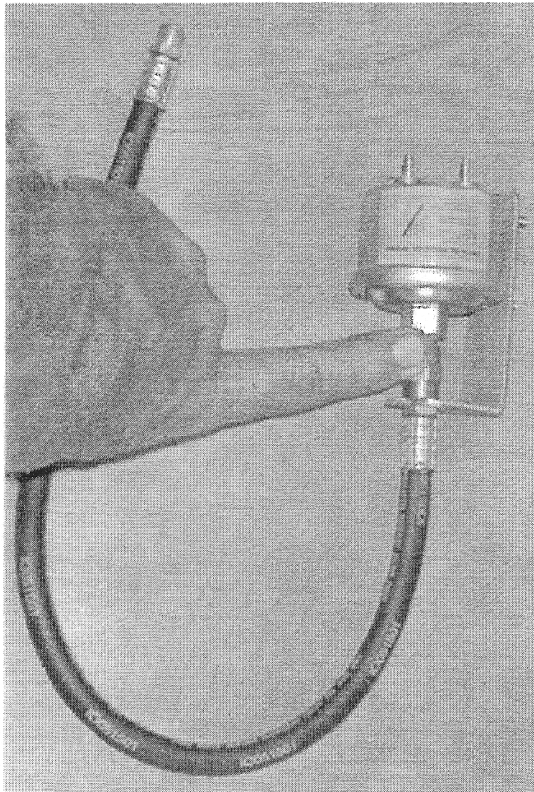
Now, you are ready to replace the pan and enjoy the benefits of cooler oil AND the ability to know when it does get hot in spite of all your work.

While we are on the subject of oil gauges, you might as well be thinking about an oil pressure gauge, a head temp gauge, and a Voltmeter. All are gauges that UltraVan left off by accident. You need them if you want to head off trouble before it heads you off.

My solution was to add another panel below the stock "Corvair" dashboard. Picture #2 is of my finished dash. After I had the aluminum cut I realized that there was still room for more goodies so I added a cruise control on the left, and four red lights on the bottom and two sound alerts, one of which is visible on the end the other is just a small hole just above the lights.



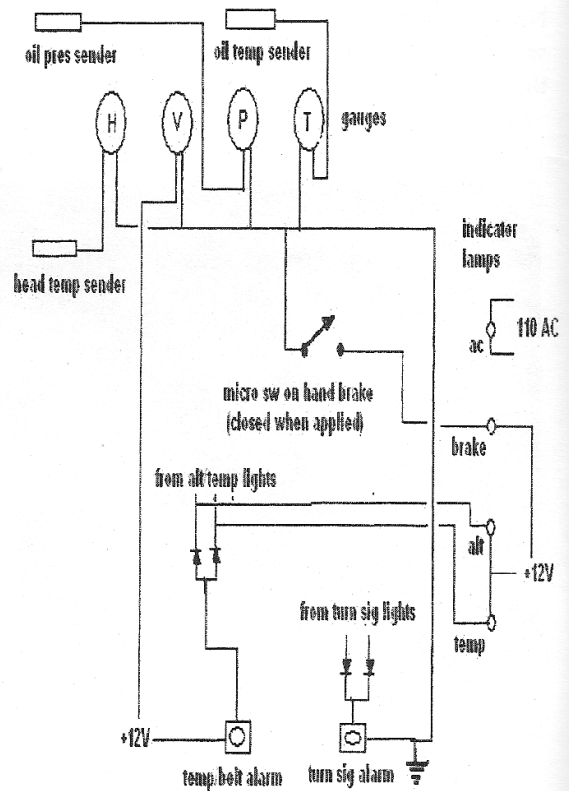
Adding an oil pressure sender is a bit more problematic than just deciding where to put the sender. We already know where to put the sender, as there is an oil pressure switch already on the engine. That hole is where you want to mount the pressure sender...BUT.....the sender is too big to fit where the old switch was. Several solutions have been offered in the past, most involving a piece of pipe that sticks up with a "T" on it. This solution with two senders on the "T" presents a lot of stress on the pipe as the engine vibrates which can cause failure of the pipe and loss of oil pressure. I decided on a safer, IMHO, method. My pressure sender was a combined switch and sender with both outputs available so I didn't need a "T". I purchased an 18" long grease gun extension hose which coincidentally has the same fittings as the oil pressure sender and is male/male. Then I mounted the sender on a bracket so that it could be mounted on the back wall of the engine compartment.



Picture #3 shows the bracket and hose assembly. The hole in the bracket is just large enough for the male hose end to fit through and a brass "barrel" with the correct thread is screwed on to hold the hose in place and convert it to a female fitting. Now the other end of the hose connects to the the thread in the engine, with a flexible link. The pressure sender is screwed into the female "barrel".

The Voltmeter is much more useful than an amp meter in judging the effectiveness of the alternator. The Oil temp and pressure gauges give empirical readings to the lights on the original dash. The head temp gauge is just added insurance.

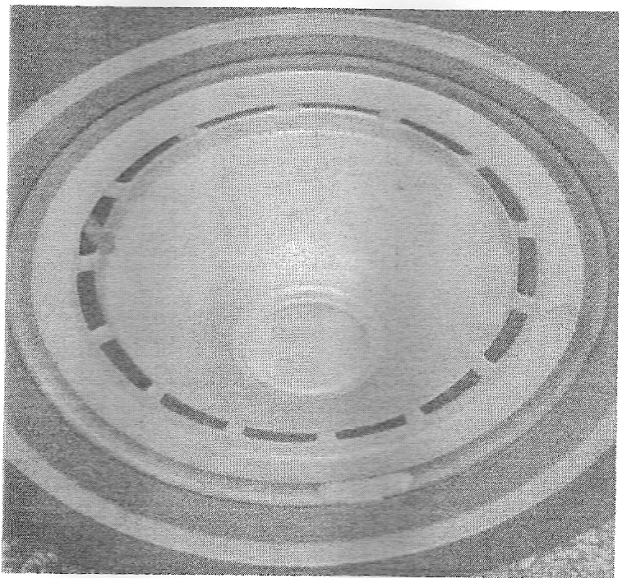
I connected two of the lights (LED's) to the same lights on the original dash that were used for temp



lights on the original dash that were used for temp and alt. These lights on the original dash were behind the rim of the steering wheel and were not easy to see. Both of these lights are also connected through diodes to a Sonalert device that gives out a shrill scream if I ever loose oil pressure or toss a fan belt. I find that during the day, lights are not that great an alerting method and you need sound, shrill sound.

The third light (incadesant) is connected to the AC wiring as a warning to me that I am still connected lest I drive off with the coach still connected to Texas Power and Light. And the fourth light (LED) is connected to the emergency brake handle to tell me if the emergency brake is still on.

At this point you are probably wondering what the second sound alert is connected to. Well, one of my pet peeves is people who run around with their blinkers on when they have no intention of turning.



While I have self canceling turn signals I find that the right turn does not always cancel and the green light does not always get my attention and the engine noise level in an Ultra prevents me from hearing the blinker relay. So I salvaged a 12 volt alarm from an old Ford Escort dash and the two turn signals are connected through a pair of diodes to the alert which is loud enough I can hear it over the engine.

The schematic of all this is picture #4. It is very important to understand the schematic, as some of these indicators require 12 volts applied and some require ground applied. There are two places where I used diodes as isolating devices to keep one alarm from triggering another and leaving you with no idea of which was causing the alarm.

Now with it all together I am thinking I need something more. But that's enough for now.

## WANTED

I am looking for 1 or more "original" Ultra hub caps as pictured to the left. These caps need to have 14 slots, and need not be rust free as I am going to have them chrome plated.

I am also in the need of a pair of headlight "eyebrows", I also expect to have them rechromed.

Jim Isbell #257

P.O.Box 783

Ingleside TX. 78362-0783

(316) 776 7884

Millenniumfalcon@cableone.net

# WESTERN SUMMER RALLY

JULY 11-14, 2002

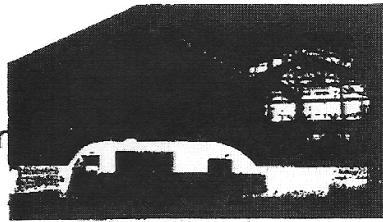
5145 Gaffin RD SE

Salem, Or. 97301

503-371-4290

E-mail [spyder62@aol.com](mailto:spyder62@aol.com)

Host: Rich & Trish Shepard



## Planned Activities:

**Thursday:** sign-in. In the afternoon for those that like a tour of Van' Aircraft ,one of the largest manufactures of kit aircraft Will need to know advance head count to set up tour.

**Friday:** Morning coffee and chat.

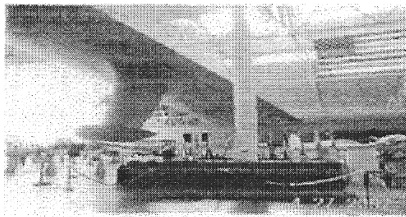
Casino Brunch in Grand Ronde.

Followed by a trip to the Spruce Goose in McMinnville evening dinner(byo)and club meeting

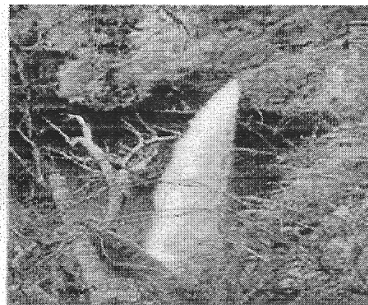
**Saturday:** Morning coffee and chat.

Tour to the Oregon Gardens followed by Silver Falls State park. Or for those that want a list of local Wineries that have tasting rooms will be provided Evening Pot Luck and BBG with the Beaver State Corvair club and Tech sessions.

**Sunday:** Morning Coffee and day is free.



Spruce Goose  
Please let us know if you plan on attending so we can arrange group rates.



North falls @ Silver Falls

Cost is \$10.00 per van and no event is over \$10 also most are 5-8 depending on group rate.

Silver Falls is \$3.00 per vehicle.

Directions: From I-5 take Exit 253 Hwy 22 east then take the Gaffin rd exit go under the hwy and take the next left. House is about a mile on left look for signs.



## Got Ultra Van Parts?

The following are available:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Fuel transfer valve, orig. (Early Ultra's) Used.   | \$18.  |
| 2. Aux. Generator 800 watt, Kawasaki model PM 800, 4 stroke. (Near new)   | \$125.                                       |
| 3. Front suspension "knuckle" (Spindle) New old stock. #3890126. R/H.   | \$70.  |
| 4. " " " " (Used) L/H.  | \$30.  |
| 5. Entrance door skins. (NOS) For doors w/ piano hinge. (Pre drilled.)  | \$40.  |
| 6. Alum. Gas tanks. Add on reserve. Fits between existing tanks.<br>1ea. size 6x6x47. \$50. 1ea. size 7x6x54. \$70.   |  |
| 7. Steering gear boxes, (NOS) With steel one piece shaft.   | \$59.95                                      |
| 8. Trailing arm assy's.<br>1pr. w/ steel pipe spring retainer & turnbuckles. (used)<br>1pr. w/ turnbuckles. (Used)  | \$60.<br>\$50.                               |
| 9. Instant hot water heater, (used) 2 ea. complete assy's. (Early Ultras)   | \$65. ea.                                    |
| 10. Springs, coil, fronts & rears, all sizes.   | \$20. ea.                                    |
| 11. Cabinet, medicine, for bathroom w/ mirror, chrome trim.   | \$25.  |
| 12. "A" arms, front suspension, (Alum) Early type. (Carry a spare)  | \$95. ea.                                    |
| 13. Air scoops, fits r/h rear eng. air intake door. (Orig. Ultra) Used. 3ea.  | \$20. ea.                                    |
| 14. Coleman furnace, 3ea. (Used) Lots of good parts. No sail doors.   | Inquire.                                     |
| 15. Alum front upper cast beam for spring support. 2ea. (Used). (Carry a spare)   | \$40. ea.                                    |
| 16. Alum. extruded "I" beams, fit and rear. (Used) (Carry a spare)  | \$40. ea.                                    |
| 17. Alum. extrusion, vertical "channel" for frt. "A" arm attach. (Used)   | \$20. ea.                                    |
| 18. Heater vent covers, external, for orig. wall heater. 2ea.   | \$15. ea.                                    |
| 19. Door, entrance. w/ piano hinge. missing half of window.   | \$85.  |
| 20. Core engines 110 & 140. Some complete w/ carbs, shrouds & etc.  | Inquire                                      |
| 21. Core Automatics.  | \$50.  |
| 22. Propane tanks, horiz. "ASME", 10gal. (Orig. Ultra.) 2ea.  | \$25. ea.                                    |
| 23. Headlight bucket w/ blub. NOS, (Orig. Ultra)  | \$35. ea.                                    |
| 24. Windows, rear side, NOS, w/ safety glass. 4ea.  | \$35. ea.                                    |
| 25. Channel nut strips. For attaching all orig. tanks. (Aircraft type. 1/4-28 size.)  | \$12. set of 4ea.                            |
| 26. Manual, Ryerson Ultra Van Service & Repair. (3 years in the making.)<br>(This is a "must have" for EVERY Ultra Van/Travelon owner.)   | \$65.  |
| 27. Windshields, Full size. (Highly recommended not to cut these.) Tinted.<br>Note: Due to low sales by the wholesaler and only a few of the left & right sides now available. Buy while they are available. My supplier advised me if there is no increase in demand for these, they will not reorder from the manufacturer. This is a "wake up call".<br>Price if you pick up in Joshua Tree, | \$625. ea. shipped to you.<br><br>\$495. ea. |
| 28. Many other items available. Inquire. 760 366 9104 or ultravan604@tcsn.net<br>Pack and shipping extra. Jim Craig #604  |  |

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Atascadero, CA 93422-2302

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 and articles to the President.

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Rally

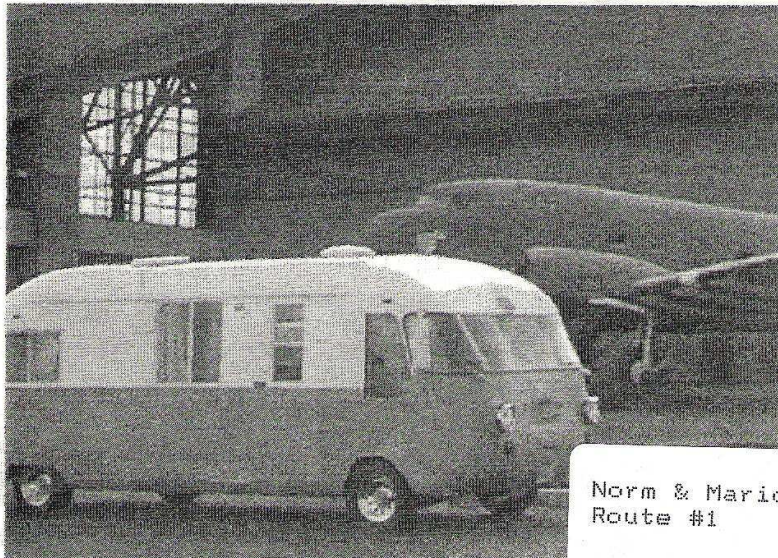
**Eastern Summer Rally**  
June 12-16, 2002  
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**Corsa National**  
Flagstaff, AZ  
June 25-29, 2002

**Western Summer Rally**  
Salem, Oregon  
July 11-14, 2002

**UVMCC National**  
Hannibal, MO.  
Sept. 9-13, 2002

# GROUP ULTRA VAN



Rich Shepard #333 at the Spruce Goose Museum with a C-47/DC3 in the background. This museum will be our tour while at the Western Summer Rally.

Norm & Marion HelmKay (S)  
Route #1

Carrying Place

ON KOKILO

