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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.

PRES SEZ

Hi to everyone,

Diane and I had a great summer in the UltraVan. We stopped off a few days at the UVMCC National Convention. At the General Meeting, it was discussed to become a Chapter of CORSA. It was never an option for the two clubs to merge. It was voted to send a referendum to all UVMCC members to vote yes or no to become a Corsa Chapter. There was an overwhelming affirmative vote. Both clubs will still operate as usual, with Group UltraVan holding their National Meeting at the Corsa International Convention, and UVMCC holding their National Meeting elsewhere. All are invited to both. Group UltraVan will continue publish WHALES ON WHEELS as long as we can have an Editor, and you continue paying dues.

While we are on the subject of dues, our Treasurer, Louie Griggs, says we need to up the dues to \$8.00 per year. So beginning January 1 2003 dues will be \$8.00.

We are looking for a volunteer for the May issue of WHALES ON WHEELS.. Jim Isbell, #257 has volunteered for the February issue.

Thank you, Jim.

Bob





## OUR SUMMER TRIP

Bob and I left home in the Ultra Van on July 6th, 2002, for Oregon, visiting friends as we went. The object was a rally in Salem of Ultra Van folks, followed by more visiting in Oregon before heading East, to Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. From Missouri we went back to Illinois, and then back to Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas Panhandles, New Mexico, Arizona and back to California on September 28th, 2002.

7,120 miles later here I sit writing about it all, or attempting to do so. I drove a lot of 2 lane back roads, how else to see the good ole USofA? Remember that old theme, See the USA in your Chevrolet? Dinah Shore, sang that one every week. Well you might say Bob and I do see the USA in OUR Chevrolet. We will continue to do so, as long as there are parts to be bought and a Corvair engine to rebuild I guess.

One of the highlights of the trip was the Grand Opening of the Corvair Museum in Ypsilanti, MI. A museum with Hudson and Studebakers, etc, well worth the trip, if you are in close proximity. So many Corvanatic friends were there, as well as just plain old Friends in the CORSA community. The Detroit Area Corvair Club was the host for the event, They did a bang up job. It's not very often we are able to be in the area of something like this, so it was a welcome opportunity for us.

WE saw lots of corn and soy bean, South Dakota was in the throes of a major drought, and was hard pressed to find enough to decorate the Corn Palace, one of our favorite places to visit along the I 90. From there it's a small trip North and then East to Pipestone, MN, this year it was Civil War days. Such a scene you have to see. Major battles re-fought, ladies dressed in the dress of the times, Union soldiers, and Confederate soldiers, cannon, muskets, and a bugle at 6 AM on Sunday to awaken me followed by cannon shot! What a call to Sunday!

Of course Bob slept on his "good" ear so missed it all. There were "snake oil" salesmen selling their wares to the unaware, politicians, speaking for and against the "cause" depending which side you were for, North or South. This happens every 2 years, and

a good time is had by all. It all happens across the road in a natural amphitheatre from the RV park. Every in August the pageant of Hiawatha is staged there. We haven't been there to see it, but hear it is well acted.

We spent Labor Day weekend Thursday to Tuesday, in an campground south of Ypsilanti, in the town of Jonesville, RV park is named: The Way Back-In Campground. Had a great time there. Bob and I did all the antique stores in the next town south, Allen, MI, self billed as the Antique capitol. They had what we wanted though, BOOKS. Then we drove through South Bend, IN, drove by Notre Dame U, spelling is suspect there, What a town to drive through, but I made it in one piece. Some days I drove very little and stayed awhile, some days I drove as much as 100 miles, When you can take 2 weeks to drive 400 miles, you know I drove slowly and stayed awhile. What a way to do it though.

We next spent 10 days in Hannibal, MO. The home of Samuel Clemens, AKA Mark Twain. Not to mention all his Characters, Tom, Huck, Becky, and Injun Joe. Actually it is a BIG tourist trap, but any one who has gotten this far in my narrative, has read where we went to the Corn Palace, in Mitchell, SD. Another tourist trap, but we fell in love with it many years ago.

We also paid our homage to Fibber Magee, and his wife Molly, AKA Jim and Marian Jordan from Peoria, IL. Now some may be too young to know who they were, but in the glorious days of radio, they had a radio show I never missed as a child and I don't think Bob did either. There I go showing my age once again. Oh well, I am as old as I feel and I don't feel that old!



## OUR SUMMER TRIP

From Hannibal, we headed North about 60 miles , then headed West for the final time this summer. This was definitely a summer of red highways, till we got to Tucumcari, NM and had to take the I40 home to California. We are home now, Hope you all had as good a time reading this as we did doing it, there is lots more, but in the essence of not boring you ,

I can greatly condensed our summer on the road. Suffice it to say, we had a great time, and are looking forward to doing it again next year, on our way to Carlisle, PA, and then the Ultra van Convention in September, in Pipestone, MN. will be a convention to look forward to!

Diane and Bob Galli

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*WHILE WE ARE SPEAKING ABOUT PIPESTONE,  
COME JOIN US*

# ULTRAVAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

## 2003

### PIPESTONE, MINNESOTA SEPTEMBER 8-13, 2003

*Come join us in this beautiful, historic town in the SouthWest corner of Minnesota.*

*We will be staying in a very nice campground across the street from the National Monument. We have a nice large meeting room for our morning coffee, craft and tech sessions, or just visiting. We can have talks around the campfire, and many other things are in the planning stage.*

*So bring your UltraVan, Travoy, Americruser, Airstream, or whatever RV or car you are driving these days.*

*Information packets will be ready soon after January 1*

*Contact: Bob Galli*

*5000 Cascabel Rd.*

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# GREAT WESTERN FAN BELT TOSS

the Galli's

Diane and I left for "THE TOSS" on Monday, November 4th. We drove Diane's '65 4dr, went by way of Laughlin, Nevada, liked it so well, we stayed a couple days. Diane got in a couple days of Bingo, and a little Video Poker. Highlight of this was a dealt straight flush for a good payoff. I got in some sightseeing and people watching. Went on to Jim and Marlene Craig's home in Joshua Tree on Thursday to visit with them and their guests Walt Davison, Dan and Betty Reinhardt, Nobia Suckow, Christy Barden, and Steve and Ruth Goodman. Marlene put on a great dinner that evening. We left for "THE TOSS" Friday AM, arriving at the park about noon. Jim had his old step-van loaded with parts For Sale, Marlene driving #604. Jim got all his parts layed out, I went shopping for bargains, and visiting. Diane bought some raffle tickets, and started visiting with many old friends.

Ultra folks in attendance included Forrest Gist, Steve Farrell, Lew and Shelley Young, Richard and Gayle Finch, Howard and Marsha Boso, Christy Barden, Walt Davison, Jim and Marlene Craig, Lon and Linda Wall, of course, representing Corvair Underground, for a total of three from, Oregon, and California, and one from, Alabama, New Mexico, and Arizona.

There were many fine cars on display, lots of parts by the new and used vendors, and a very nice fully restored '63 Spyder Coupe that was being raffled. After the ballots were counted, Jim and Marlene took first in UltraVan class.

Saturday evening, we had a very nice banquet. Our table had the honor of sitting with the famous "Mr. Corvair", Charlie Dye of Phoenix. Yes indeed, he does exist. He kept us in stitches. After the dinner, several very nice items were given out via the door tickets, \$100.00 dollar bills, etc. The very last item was the raffle car, and was won by none other than Jim Craig. We were all very happy for him.

Sunday at 10:00 AM, they had the presentation of the title and the keys to Jim, and he got to drive it around the park a couple times. They took it home that afternoon, but were coming back on Monday to participate the the Veterans Day Parade in Palm Springs.

We left around noon, traveled as far as Barstow, spent the night, then on home to arrive before noon Monday. Another "Toss" has come and gone.



**The proud Winner**



**Some of The Group**



## AIR CONDITIONING YOUR ULTRAVAN

After traveling through HOT !! parts of the USA the past two summers, I have decided to improve our Ultra Van air conditioning system. Our little trailer mounted 5,000 watt Homelite generator did in fact cool down the inside of the Ultra Van to a bearable 85 degrees on 105 degree days, but 50 degree air blowing on our bodies and in our faces seemed to be a better way to go than to have 85 degree air blowing on the back of our necks and shoulders (from the 110 volt roof air). So I sat down and ordered a complete set of limo-size air conditioning components from Vintage Air and from Southern Air. The parts came a couple of weeks ago and a couple of Saturdays ago, I mounted the evaporator, control panel and ducts under the coffee bar. It looks very good there and hardly shows. It took about 4 hours to install everything under the dash. Next, I installed the Sanden compressor and the Rusty Rose compressor bracket in the engine compartment. I had to move the ignition coil from the engine mounting position to the rear firewall, but the short coil wire still fits. The installation looks great and the compressor mounting part took about 2 hours. And then I fitted a large 18" x 24" condenser in the empty floor compartment between the front fender wells. It will lay at an angle with the front down and the rear up 6" higher. I designed a shroud out of aluminum and mounted a 24" electric fan on top of the condenser. The condenser will be vented to the front air dam via a fabricated aluminum duct that is 24" wide and 4" inches tall. A slot will be cut in the air dam to bring in air at highway speeds. The fan will only run at lower speeds and in town. The condenser hot air will exit under the Ultra Van via louvers pointed aft. This job will take 3 or 4 days. I routed the refrigerant hoses by first using old garden hoses to decide the routing and determine the actual lengths that I will need to buy, of the high-priced R-134 barrier hoses. I will need about 40 feet at about \$2.50 per foot locally. Running the barrier hoses will take about 2 hours and then the ends will need to be crimped by the local Car Quest A/C repair shop. The entire installation so far has cost less than \$700. for all new parts. I did not have to scrounge for anything but the crankshaft pulley. And that came from a 1966 smog pump Corvair.

The thing that I will enjoy the most is that I will be able to simply turn a dashboard switch and have cool air even for short trips to town. And our Siamese cat will like the fact that she can be cool while my wife is in the store shopping for groceries. The Homelite generator made so much noise that I usually shut it down if we were in shopping centers where it might annoy people. The goal that I had when I first thought about this project was to keep from altering the outside sheet metal and to not have any part of the A/C show from the outside. That goal has been fully met. The other good thing is that the a/c can run all day in a hot parking lot without overheating the Corvair engine because all the hot air off the condenser is fed out in the front of the Van and not into the engine compartment. I do not expect the dash a/c unit to cool the entire Ultra Van on the highway or even in town, so I will hang a clear plastic curtain just behind the driver's compartment to keep the hot air out of that part of the coach. And by the way, Ultra Vans are POORLY insulated! Counting the refrigerator openings, there must be over a dozen square feet of space where outside air can come and go at will, summer and winter! Gotta work on that problem next!!!!

Richard Finch, # 443

### Another Tech Tip:

The Dana Corporation has designed and tested a new electric power steering rack and pinion for Saturn and any other car company that wants to buy it. It is self contained except for the little computer box that tells it how fast the driver wants to turn. The first car to use it is the new Saturn SUV, but soon many cars may be installing it. It seems that Ultra Vans might be a good candidate for much improved steering if some owner has the time and mechanical ability to adapt one to an Ultra Van.

Richard Finch # 443



# Winter Western Regional Meet 2003

*Hosts: Howard & Marsha Boso  
1536 West Roundup Street  
Apache Junction, Arizona 85220  
Phone (480)288-2636  
Cell Phone (480)225-9862  
E-Mail [Hamboso@juno.com](mailto:Hamboso@juno.com)  
Dates February 11 - February 15, 2003*

*Come join us for fun in the sun. Enjoy good fellowship, fun & food. Plenty of parking, electricity & water available. No sewage dump(come with empty tanks). Local interests include Mall shopping, great restaurants, dinner theater & old western town. Welcome barbeque will be given on the first night(Feb. 11th at 6:00PM).*

*Directions: Exit Freeway I-10 going east on I-60. Exit I-60 at Ironwood exit and head north going past Southern, Broadway & Superstition Boulevard(Four way stop). Still heading north turn right on second street on east side. We are the second house on the north side of the street. Signs should be out*



## More Smorgasborg

by Walt...

First lets correct/add some stuff from last issue... credit for the photos of the death of 300 should be given to Craig/Galli. The half info on the muffler??? well it is the muffler for a 78/79 Ford Granada 6 cyl. I have now seen and heard one installed on the Galli G/briar. Looks good and stock quiet. Nice. Now finally on to new stuff. I left Alabama on Oct first and am writing this on the thirtieth at the Galli's in Atascadero. 5200 hundred miles at 18/20 mpg on 87 Octane and have used three pints of Mobil One 10/30 to date. No maintenance of any kind has been performed, That last statement was for the benefit of those who would say Ultras are not reliable. Do your maintenance at home and enjoy trouble free travel. It works for me. A note for tekky types...on leaving Denver on I-70 Westbound you come to a weigh station approximately twenty miles East of the Eisenhower tunnel . Course I had to get weighed ...twenty nine hundred and sixty pounds. I entered the tunnel at forty eight miles per hour in drive. Yes light weight works. How did I get to that weight???, well the attendees at Hannibal saw the beginnings of 366s new interior...or lack of same then.

Returning to Alabama to get a little further along in the conversion is what made the departure date 1 Oct. At some future date some photos will probably be seen in the Sounder. Most of the details appeared in last issue so that's enuff on that subject. After enjoying a few days of the good life here with the Gallis I'll head on down south...a stop at Oxnard to see Mel Dineson (X 200) then on to North Hollywood to check up on George Rakous (X 342). I like to keep tabs on Mel because he's almost exactly fifteen years older than I. Sort of like looking into my future. Boy I hope I can stay in the shape Mel is in. Anyhow from there down around the South end of the Salton Sea with a stop for a date shake at Mecca. Then up Box Canyon Rd , thru Joshua Tree NP and to the Ballews (MR CORVAIR) and the Craigs (MR ULTRA). Then to the Fan Belt Toss and start drifting east. Life is good in the Ultra world.

As always...All the best to all...

Walt Davison..#366.



## EVEN MORE SMORGASBORG....

for the same price

by WALT

Printed elsewhere (editors option) is a reprint of a road test of a 1965 Corvair. I will use the numbers generated by that test to show how you can make your Ultra REEEEly perform....like #366 does. Note curb test weight is almost for sure two people plus instruments. This weight is obviously nowhere near the max gross weight that Chevy approved. It is a weight that will give quite acceptable performance. Note weight distribution. 37.5/62.5, now 62.5 times 2940 gives us a rear weight of 1875+. From this we can reasonably assume that at 1875 or less, the so called REAR WHEEL BEARING PROBLEM will not exist. Referring to the part in the other Smorgasborg about #366 being weighed on I-70.... rear weight 1560. No misprint, fifteen hundred and sixty lbs. (ed. note... #504 at last weighin was 3420 lbs. on the rear. Check yours.) So you can see why I sort of ignore the dreaded "Ruckus in the Rear" syndrome.

Quite some time ago I had set a target of LM Corvair weight for #366. I used 2600 lbs. as a representative LM weight. I'm now below that, empty weight. So we set a new target, RIGHT? In 1967 Porche came out with a 911R.... weighing 1830 lbs. empty... with a two litre engine. Two litres is 122 Cubic Inches. So this factory prepped racer sat on the grid with 15 lbs. for every Cubic Inch of engine. (A little aside here....Jim Davis did a great article in the Sounder on engines/horsepower etc.). I prefer to do comparisons on weight versus displacement because the Ultra uses an engine that is (or at least should be ) very RPM limited).

Let's take a little side road here, , , OK? There are two ways to improve performance. Keep power constant/reduce weight, , , or increase power but leave weight constant, , , or some combination of those ideas. So lets see a couple examples. . . of course, I know the numbers for #366. . . call it 3000 lbs. on the road, with one person, vs. 165 Cubic Inches . . . gives us just over 18 lbs. per Cubic Inch.

Now lets go the other route, using Graham Dell's #292 as our "victim". I think Graham has something like 190 Cubic Inches. ( If you don't know Graham's set up, let me tell you it's truly "the cat's whiskers". State of the art fuel injection/spark control, etc. When it is dialed in, it is fantastic. But Graham would probably tell you, dialing it in isn't quite like dialing a telephone number. But believe me, when it is done, it will set a new benchmark for Corvair Coaches. My hats off to the Dell's). Anyhow, with his 190 Cubic Inches at 18 lbs., he can carry 3420 lbs. I'd even give him a little more, given he should have a much more efficient engine. Both examples suffer slightly from only having only a TWO SPEED TRANSMISSION. (But one of the best transmissions ever built, thank you). The point I am trying to make here is that from a cost/time/practical matter, it's easier, cheaper, quicker to go up in performance by weight reduction than by power increases. Ask any racer. . WEIGHT. . is. . the. . enemy.

That 911R was rated upwards of 200 HP at some RPM that is useless for Ultra purposes. My maximum RPM is 3700/3800 with a never exceed of 4000. So. . . for my #366 to be competitive with Mr 911R, I've got to get down to 15 times 165 (165 is my .020 over stock size) which gives me a new target weight of 2475. I'm at least very close now. Now remember, the 911R was done back in 1967. . . before all the "cost no object" trick stuff. . carbon fibre, titanium, etc. came on line. And, of course, I'm too cheap to go that route today. Do my numbers say I can race that Porsche . . . get real. . . but I'll bet I'd give him a scare for the first 50/75 feet. . . or at the very least, a surprise.

Well, while I'm in the raving mode, let me hit on one of the other parameters of performance. Stopping. (again, see Jim Davis, SOUNDER.). I have stock rear brakes with the wheel cylinder taken out to one inch. The fronts use a Chevelle finned drum. . . weighs



approximately one and one half pounds more than stock. Fortunately, I use Chev FC wheels on the front(14X5), and they weigh two pounds less than the stock Ultra wheel (14X6), so my unsprung weight is one half pound less per front wheel than stock. I have custom linings from Rochester (NY) Brake and Clutch. Talk to Phil. I set the requirement of one deceleration from 70 to 30. Fade/life/cost all were ignored. . . best one time speed reduction 70 to 30. I have great brakes. Light weight and a great choice of friction materials. I use silicone brake fluid which I'm sure has nothing to do with stopping power except it keeps the system always corrosion free

One last kicker. . . there is this phenomenon called POLAR MOMENT. this will probably not be a high appeal thing for most. Polar moment says if you want to make your vehicle track straight down the road, you load everything in the ends, leaving the middle empty = = HIGH POLAR= =.If you want to autocross (parking lot racing . . lots of quick turning) you load all your weight in the middle and keep the ends as light as possible. = = LOW POLAR= = . Combine high polar and corner balance (each front wheel weighs the same and each rear wheel weighs the same) and trust me, life is good . . no life is great.

As Always, All the Best,  
WALT DAVISON #366

(editor's note: Walt's reprint of the road test of the 1965 Corvair was supposed to go here, but got lost)

# EASTERN SPRING MEET 2003

*ADELAID SHORES RV PARK*

*AVON PARK, FLORIDA*

*March 18-22, 2003*

*for more information, contact the hosts*

*Doug and Nancy Pratt*

*RR #3, Box 31*

*Columbia Crossroads, PA. 16914*

*570-549-8136*

*dnpratt@juno.com*



## FURTHER ADVENTURES OF WALT DAVISON

November 14, 2002

Just got a call from Walt, he is home in Alabama. He was in attendance at the "Toss".

On his way home, he was rear-ended in the left rear corner at 65 MPH by someone going much faster. He was on I-10 just east of Tucson, AZ. This happened at 7:30 P.M.

There was severe damage in the area formerly occupied by the propane tank. He is convinced that if the propane tank was there, he would have had a fire that would probably have consumed the coach.

He was not injured at all, being seat belted in. He was able to regain control before the coach went off the road. The car did some

damage to the left side sheet metal including the front fiberglass corner. It did not do any damage to the running gear, front or rear. The car was a Kia SUV, went into the center divider, rolled at least twice.

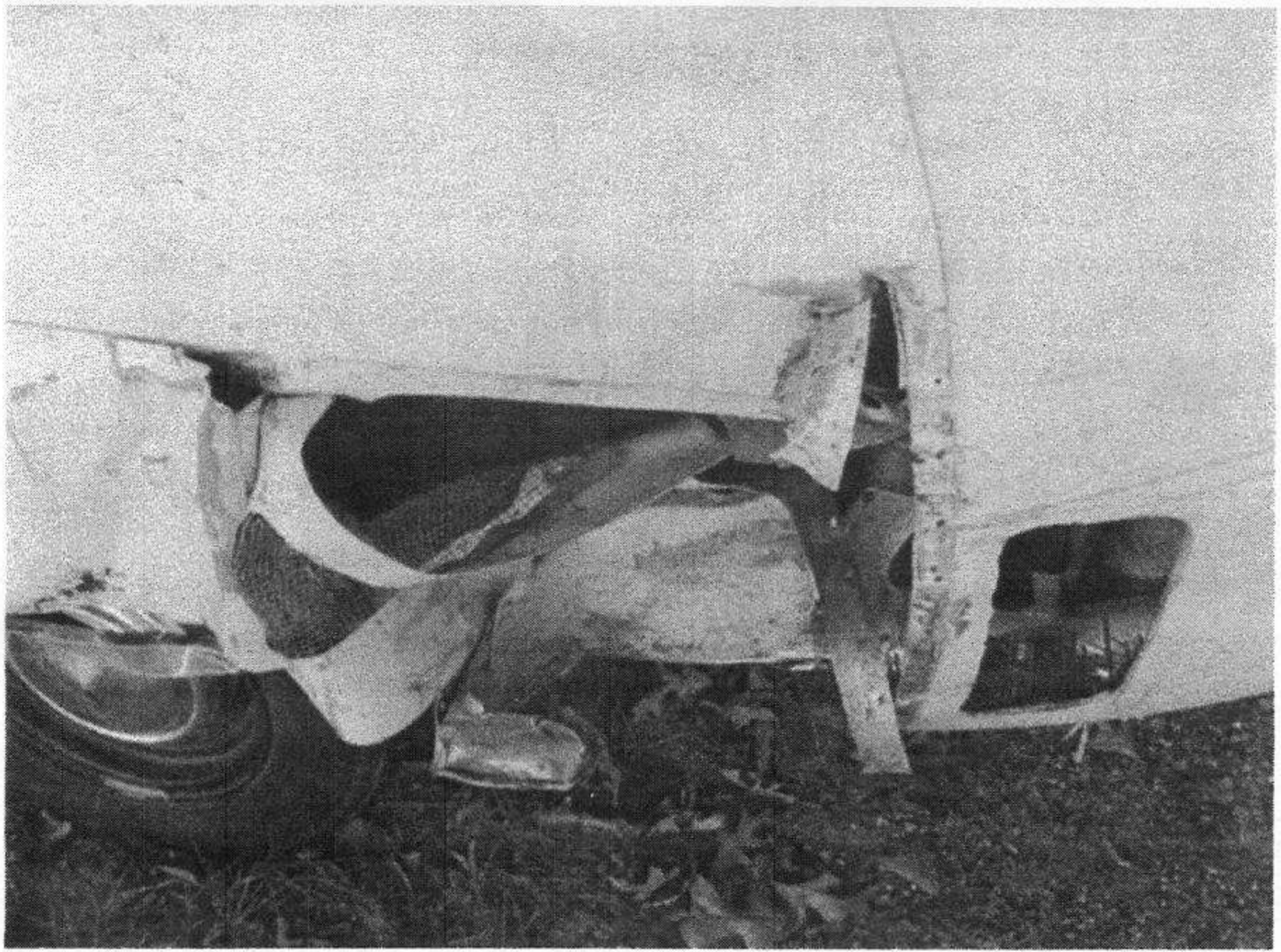
There were three occupants in the car, all three 18 years old. Two were transported to the hospital by ambulance, the third required the services of a helicopter.

With the help of the of a nearby truckstop, he pulled the sheet metal away from the wheels, filled out the necessary papers for the AZ HP, and went on his way. He thinks that he and Ray, at the airport, will be able to repair it. It will not be ready to make the trip to the Western Rally at the Boso's Western Meet, Feb. 11-15. He was very fortunate.

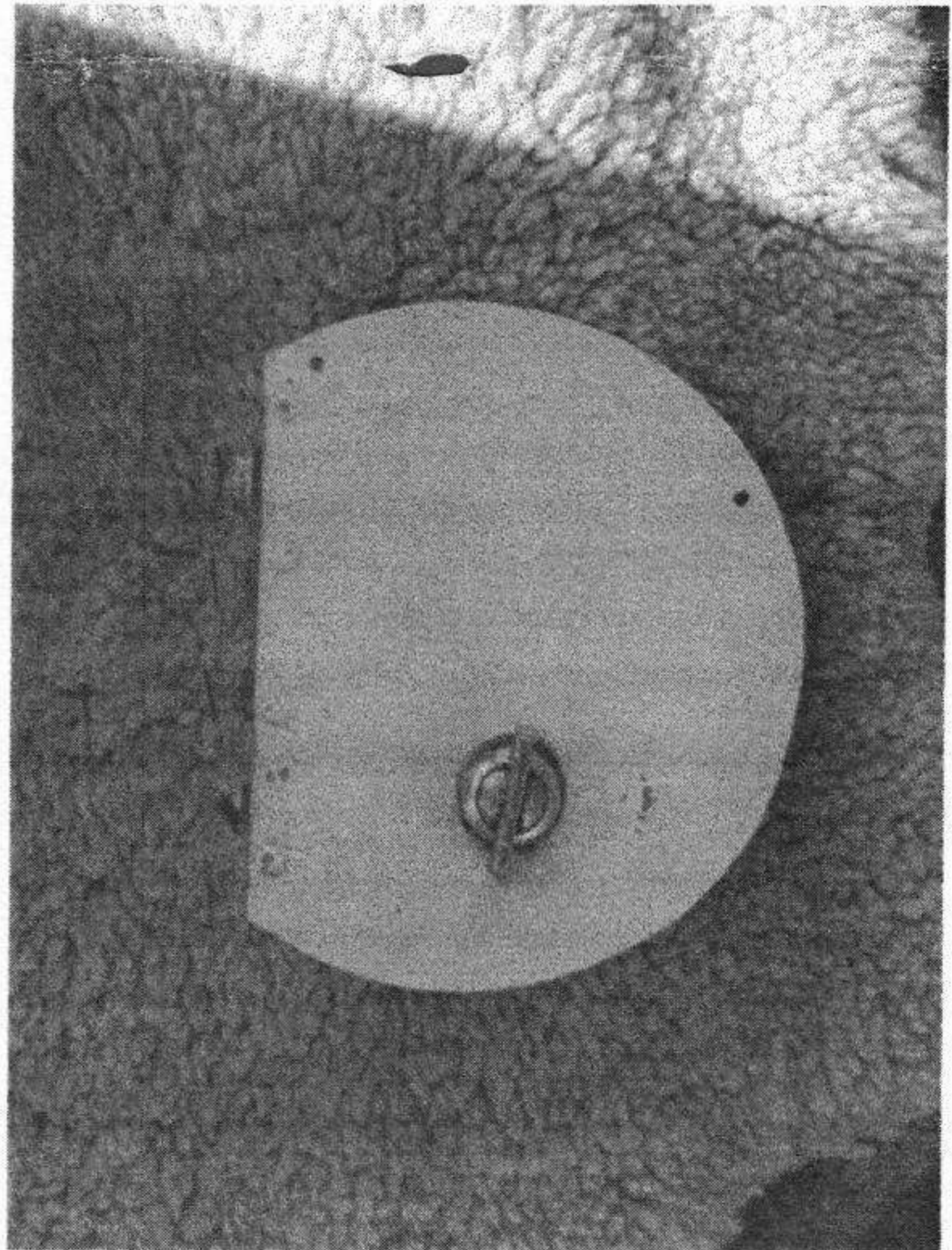
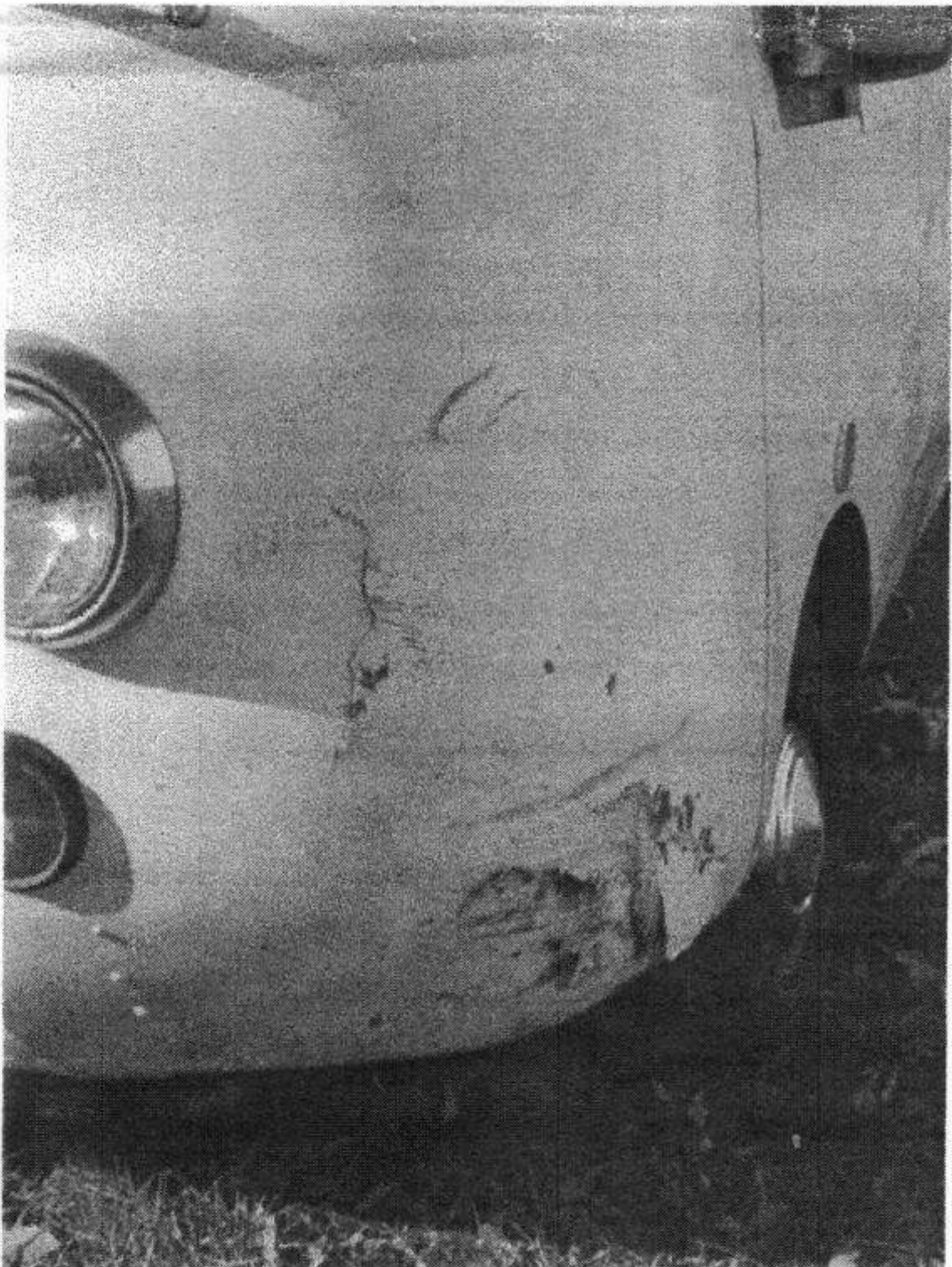


Photos by Scott Pilkington





**This is where the propane tank used to go**





# GROUP ULTRAVAN

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First Class



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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 \$8.00 annually, please remit to the Secretary/Treasurer. Submit all Technical information and articles to the President.

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We have a rotating Editor. If you would like to try your hand at publishing an issue or two, please contact the President.

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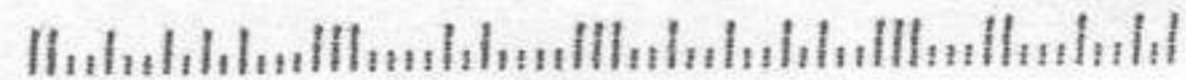
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# GROUP ULTRA VAN



Jim Craig's new toy,  
with Richard and  
Gayle Finch's #443  
at Great Western Fan  
Belt Toss in Palm  
Springs