

WHALES ON WHEELS

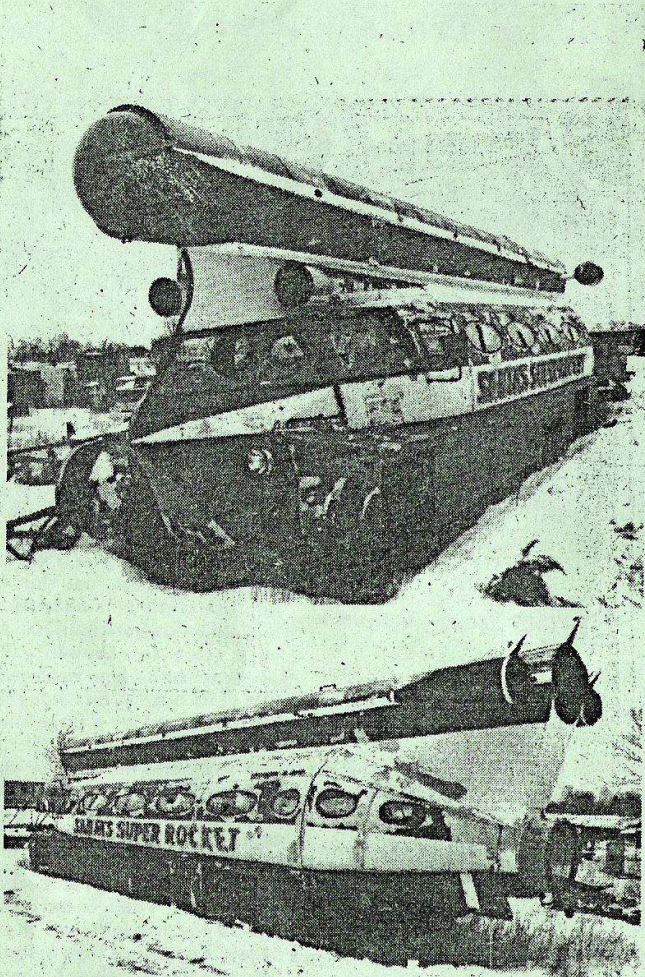
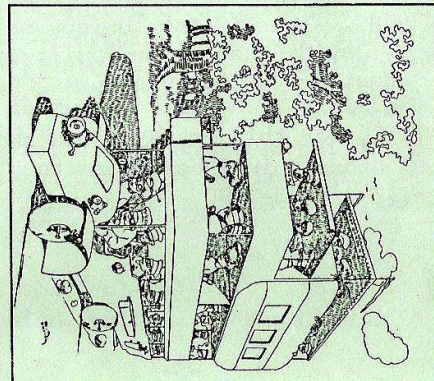
Vol 5 #1

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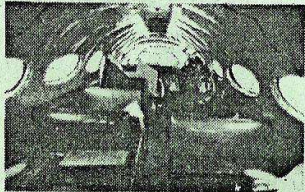
Early-day Winnebago was conceived about 1905 by an artist who had an uncanny imagination about the future. There are elements of Greyhound Scenicruser, motor homes, house trailers, campers and the old Fifth Avenue double-decker buses in this fanciful transporter. (From Auto Fun)

ULTRAVAN

TO:



Santa's Super Rocket.



Interior of the Super Rocket.

WHAT IS THIS THING? AN
ULTRA ROCKET SHIP??

Read Dennis Schimpf's
explanation (from Old
Cars Magazine) on the
inside back cover.

WHALES ON WHEELS IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF
GROUP ULTRA VAN, A CORSA CHAPTER.

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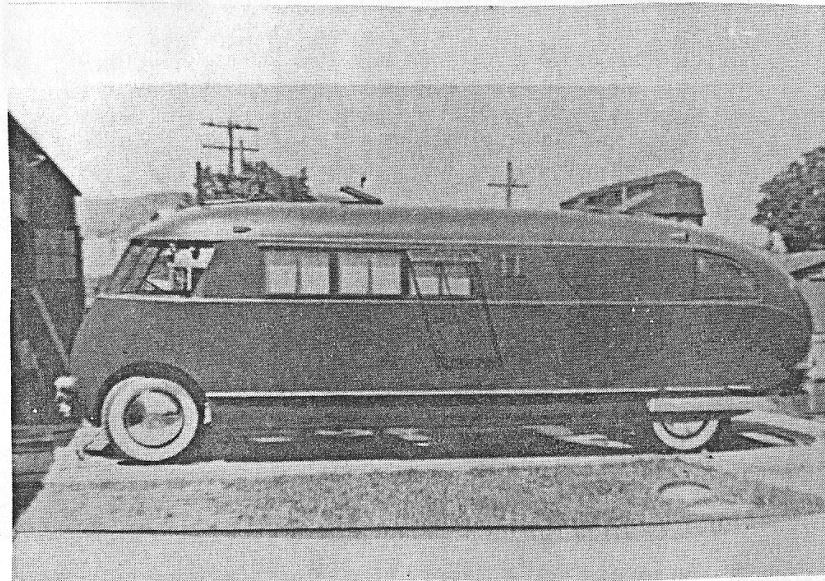
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GROUP ULTRA VAN IS A CHAPTER OF CORVAIR SOCIETY OF
AMERICA (CORSA). Dues are \$4.00 annually, Submit
all technical information to the President.

GROUP ULTRA VAN is dedicated to the preservation and
use of ULTRA VANS. This 22 foot unique motor home
was designed by David Peterson and built in Kansas
until 1970. About 360 units were built. For a full
story, read the April 1980 (Vol. 2, Number 8)
CORSA COMMUNIQUE, For this issue please send \$3.00
to CORSA, 2506 Gross Point Road, Evanston, Illinois
60201. Phone (312) 475-7300

BROOK STEVENS MOTORHOME



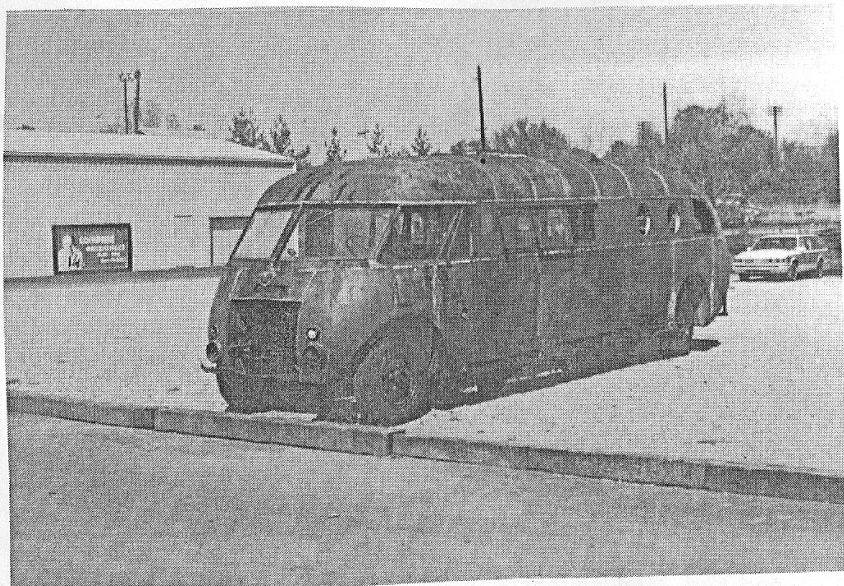
This motor home was designed by Brook Stevens for
Fibber McGee and Molly (of early radio fame).
The Johnson Wax Company paid the bill and the Linn
Trailer Company of Omeonta, New York, built the
unit in 1938-39. Price was about \$8,000 (that's
1939 dollars).

Our Harold Starbird of No. Syracuse, New York,
worked on the original unit. It had a Mercury
V-8 engine, weighed a lot and had a problem with
the brakes. The brake problem was it's demise.

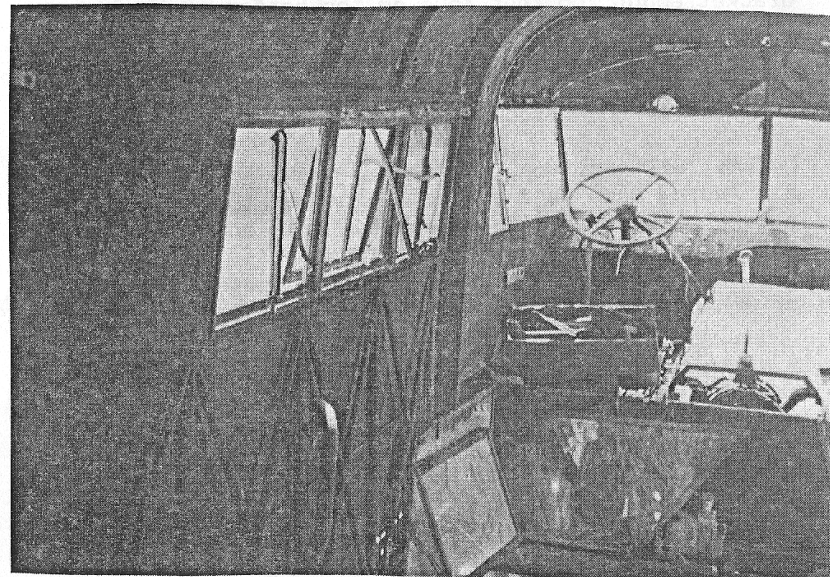
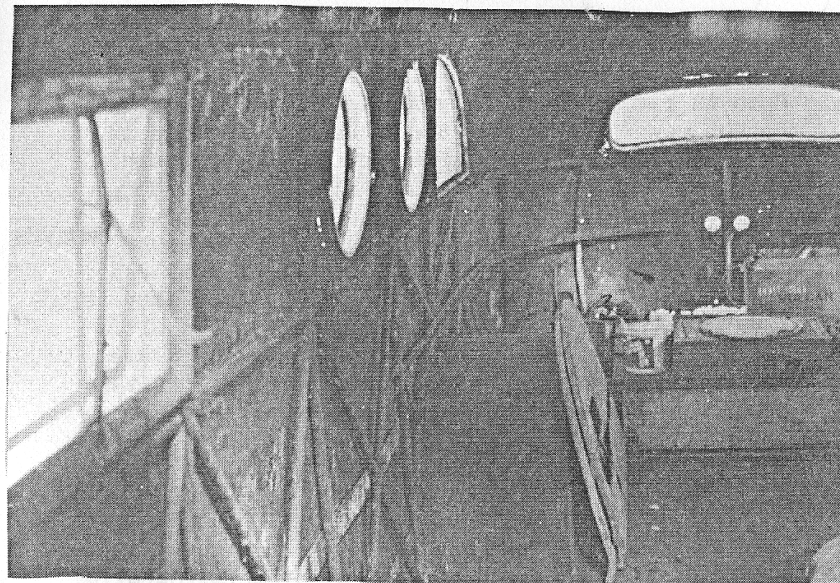
The Linn Trailer Company also built another unit
just like the Fibber McGee and Molly unit. This
one had 2 added port holes on the side and was a
bit longer.

Howard Walther, Ultra #424, from Kittering, Ohio,
told Starbird that he saw the Linn unit in an

Oldsmobile dealer in Cincinnati. Last September Starbird stopped to see the unit and the owner of the Oldsmobile dealership. He related to Harold that a woman from Europe bought some property in Florida and this Linn unit was in storage in one of the buildings. She found the name of the body shop man who worked for the Olds dealer in an old Cars Magazine. She sent him a letter and he gave it to his boss. He wound up buying the Linn unit and had it shipped to his Olds dealership on a low boy from Florida. When he saw it, he had no idea what the front originally looked like. The grill was missing along with the radiator. Starbird had 3 photos of the unit when it was made in 1939. A front view, side view and rear view. The Olds dealer was elated to see the photos and wanted to restore the unit to original and use it for an office. Harold took some photos of the Linn unit as it looked on the Olds dealers lot.



The Linn unit as it looks today on the Oldsmobile Dealers Lot.



FRONT END SWAY BAR AND SHOCKS

BY Christy Barden #228

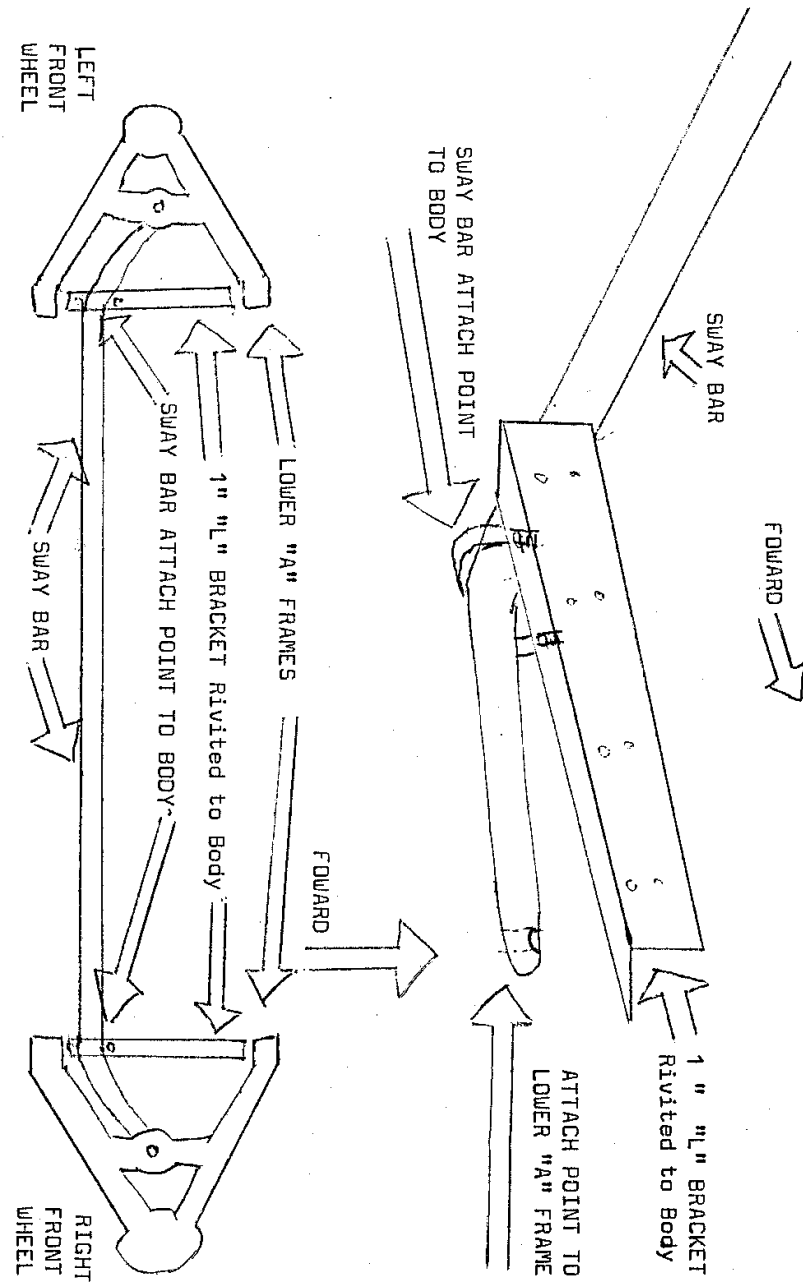
The stock sway bar on the Ultra's is not very effective. Here is a suggestion for mounting a sway bar a different way. The problem with the stock set up is it's too long of a distance from the body attach point to the "A" frame attach point.

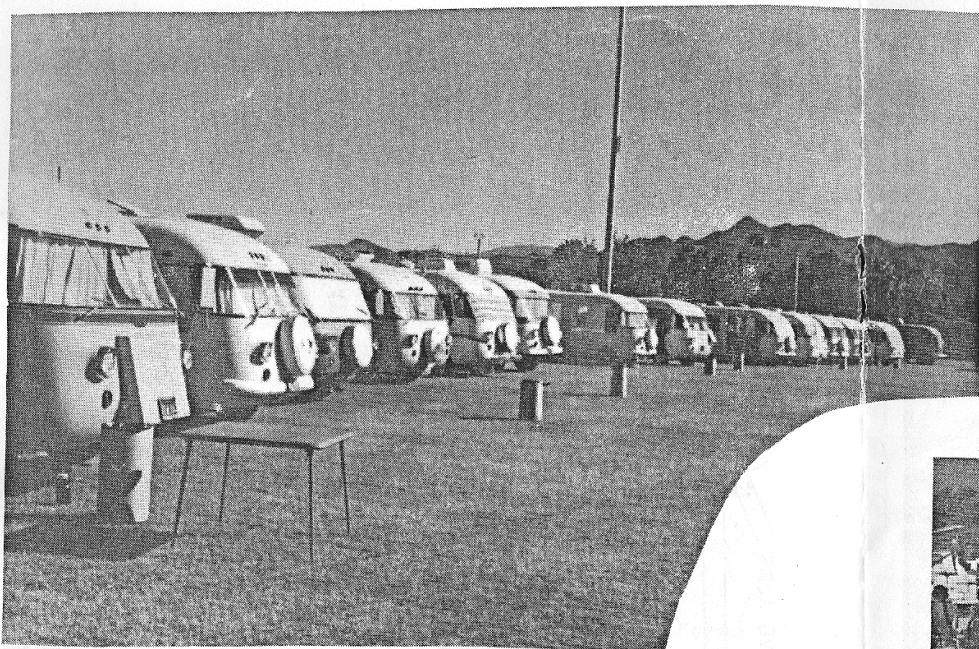
I used a sway bar from a 1961 Cadillac. I would guess any "A" body General Motors car of that era would have the same sway bar. Anyway, this sway bar fits exactly just as if it were made for the Ultra Van. There are "A" frame attach points for a sway bar on all the Ultra Vans, except for a few of the early ones. On these, you can make your own attach point by securing a bar between each side of the lower "A" frame, and drilling a hole in the middle to attach the end of the sway bar.

The 1961 Cadillac sway bar fits from one "A" frame attach point to the other. The problem is there is no place to attach the sway bar to the body. So we have to make attach points. I riveted a 1 inch "L" bracket about two feet long on the bottom of the body, between the lower "A" frame attach bolts, parallel with the wheels. This is the attach point for the sway bar to the body. I find it works much better than stock system.

Member, Bill Britton, who owns a machine shop near San Pedro, made up a bracket to use on the bottom attach point of the front shock. This adapter allowed me to use 3/4 ton Ford shocks in place of the Chevie II shocks. The ride is firmer but it doesn't sway or bounce near as much.

I don't have a drawing of the adapter bracket, but it wasn't that difficult. I'm sure any good machine shop could make up a bracket to do the job.

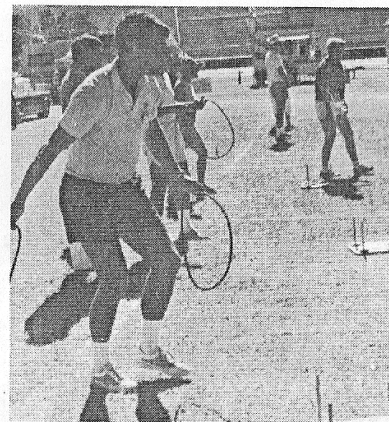




PALM SPRINGS BIG SUCCESS

The above photo was taken at the 8th annual Fan Belt Toss, November 1-3, 1985, in Palm Springs, California. 23 ULTRA VAN'S showed up to take part in the festivities. The Inland Empire Corvair Club put on the event. There were about 50 motor homes there. About 300 people enjoyed the weekend in the sun. About 20 vendors, selling Corvair related merchandise. 30 cars were entered in the "Car Show". Our own Al Polus won 1st place in class for his restored ULTRA #401. This is really getting to be a great sunbelt get together. Each year more and more ULTRA VANS show up.

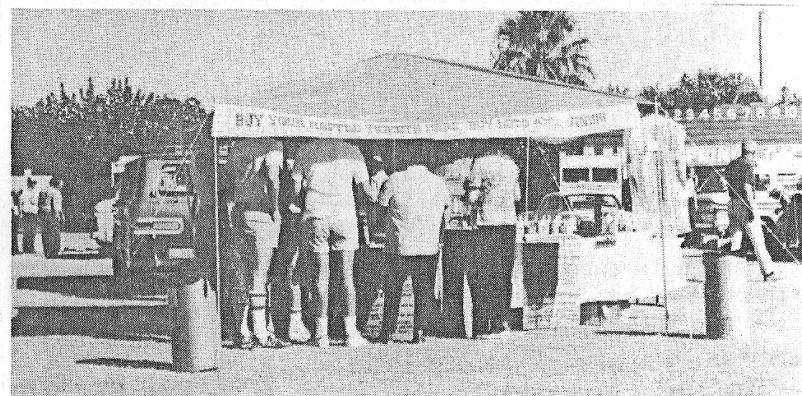
The next West get together will be in Phoenix. Why not plan to attend. The Mini convention will be held April 4-6 at the Fiesta Inn at Tempe, Arizona.



The fan-belt toss looks harder than it is.



Treasure hunting at the swap meet.



Folks lost their heads buying raffle tickets.

4 SPEED MANUAL TRANSMISSION

Louis C. Griggs, #334, tells us what he did to install his 4 speed in his Ultra Van.

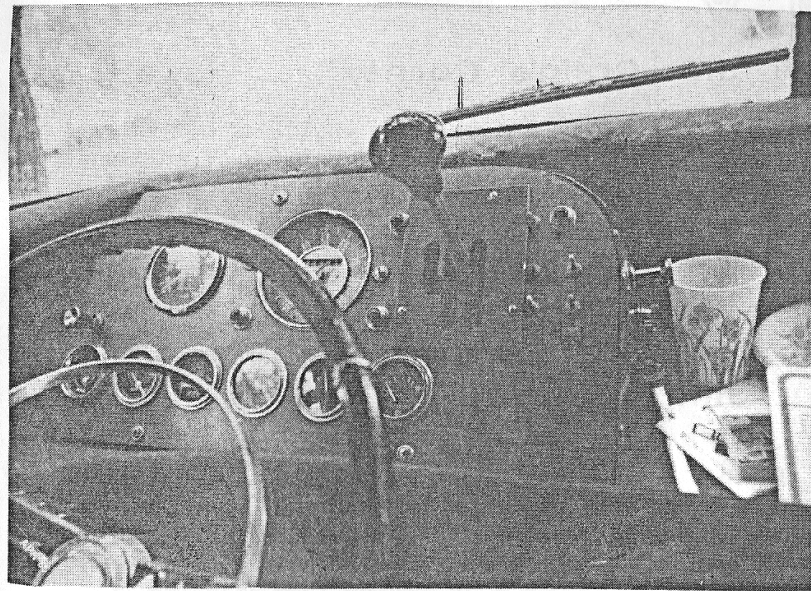
To install a manual transmission in a Corvair-powered Ultra Van, one needs the following:

1. Lots of patience
2. A manual transmission bell housing
3. Flywheel (I used a Dale's)
4. Pilot bearing (taps easily into crankshaft of automatic trans. engine)
5. Clutch disc
6. Clutch pressure plate- a good one.
7. Throwout lever and operating mechanism. I used a hydraulic copied from Arnold Steenburg's.
8. 4-speed tranny. I recommend the GM 3 or 4, with a 1st gear of 3.65 to 1. The Saginaw is heavier, but 3.20 to 1 in first gear. Doesn't start a coach very well.
9. Drive shaft to fit transmission used. There are at least 4 different ones available and they are not interchangeable. See Clark's catalog about differences.
10. A gear-shifting mechanism.
11. Modifications to front engine mount. The Saginaw takes a different one. (I have one surplus for Saginaw)
12. More patience.

Using the same engine without any changes, I got 3 mpg better fuel consumption with the manual trans.

Editors Note:

What Louis doesn't tell us is a most unique shifting mechanism not covered in his item #10.



The photo is his #334's dash. Note the standard positions 4 forward and one in reverse. The forward and aft shifting motion uses the existing shifting cable used in the powerglide automatic transmission. So up and down on the dash translates to forward and aft at the transmission shifting fork shaft. The side motion, left to right, he used piano wire in a shroud running along the side panel of the Ultra Van to the transmission, which translates into a left and right motion to the shifting fork shaft. I tried it, and it is firm and positive and best of all it doesn't protrude below the van as direct linkage would.

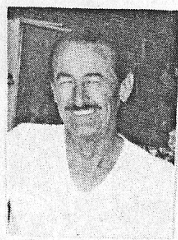


"Jim Craig's Corner"

Corvair

Spoken Here

Jim Craig #232



Is this really 1986? What happened to 1985? I don't know about you but '85 was a busy and great year for me. The great part was, I was able to retire from 36 years of aviation structural repair work with Uncle Sam, and like a lot of you I am enjoying it thoroughly.

So now lets get down to the nitty-gritty part of this "Corner". Not much this time but here it is.

George Rakous #342 reports: Intermittent power loss of the Corvair engine can sometimes be the result of dirty spark plug cable leads and grommets. The spark (high voltage) will follow, to ground, a path of least resistance. In this case accumulated dirt. Remove and clean.

Also he reports that Art Eller #364 mentioned in a recent conversation that the early Corvair manuals, 1960 & 61, gave listings of automatic transmission malifunctions with probable causes and remedies in adjoining columns.

Windshield Wiper Blade and Arm Replacement:

Most Ultras came with a bushing adapter that attached to the wiper motor arm. These quite often caused

loss of arm and blade while in use during a downpour, resulting in pulling to the side of the road to wait out the rain. Cause? Usually loss of retaining ring of the adapter because of corrosion and wear.

Remove those bushings and replace with Trico blade and wiper assy. Arm assy is part #AL-260 (NAPA #60-726) and this is adjustable from 11½" to 15½". Wiper blade is part #33-150 (NAPA). It is a Trico 15" (Trico P/N unknown).

Al Polus #401 & Jim Craig #232

Auto/Ultra Glass Resealant:

When replacing or installing a new window assy., or repairing a leaking window at the rubber moulding, try the following: "Tremco Auto Glass Resealant #4979," (liquid butyl) Tremco Auto glass resealant is a fast skinning liquid sealer for leak proofing windshields and other glass. It flows into surrounding

gaps and adheres to urethane, glass and metal surfaces. This is a good idea for the winter months. The interior suggests that the seats were meant for little people. As with the exterior, the interior was finished and complete.

The vehicle is built on a school bus chassis. Vandals have broken all the windows and it will be just a matter of time before it becomes unclaimable. I wonder if the elves could put it back together?

By Dennis Schrimpf



Joe Ellis
4721 So. 6th
Louisville, Ky 40214
502-368-5014

I'm trying to sell a 1968 Corvair powered- no A/C. Mech cosmetic work. I've had all of the major refinishing or offer and I will do



Craig Lamond's #307 "Break away" mirrors.

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Did He Trade in His Sleigh? Super Santa's Rocket

Who would believe such a thing existed, but there it was, "big as life and twice as ugly," as

the old saying goes.

Ken Buttolph and I were on our way to some show or other when I asked him if he'd mind stopping at this salvage yard in southern Wisconsin. Of course Kenny protested loudly and vehemently, but since I was driving, we stopped.

"What to our wondering eyes should appear but a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer." Well, it certainly wasn't a "tiny sleigh" that appeared to our wondering eyes. Instead, it was a giant six-wheeled apparition dubbed "Santa's Super Rocket."

Upon looking it over, it became apparent that this was not the work of amateurs. It looked professionally done and with some forethought. The owner of the salvage yard wasn't sure of its history, but thought it had been used by a large shopping center during the Christmas season. The interior suggests that the seats were meant for little people. As with the exterior, the interior was finished and complete.

The vehicle is built on a school bus chassis. Vandals have broken all the windows and it will be just a matter of time before it becomes unclaimable. I wonder if the elves could put it back together?

By Dennis Schrimpf

Classified

Joe Ellis
4721 So. 6th
Louisville, Ky 40214
502-368-5014

I'm trying to sell a 1967 Ultra Van #265. Corvair powered- no A/C. Mechanically fine, needs some cosmetic work. I've had it 14 years and have done all of the major refinements. I'd like \$5000. or offer and I will deliver for expenses.