

Whales on Wheels

Number 3

2023



UVMCC was incorporated in October 1967 for all who are interested in Ultra Vans
CORSA Chapter #008



2023 Ultra Van National Rally June 13-16 Country Roads Motorhome & RV Park, Wisconsin Dells, WI



INSIDE:

"2023 National Rally Coverage"
 "2023 CORSA Convention Coverage"

[Pages 1-5](#)

"News From The Prez"
 "Annual Meeting Minutes"
 "New Members"

[Page 6-7](#)

"Short Reports"

[Pages 8-10](#)

"Plight of the Phoenix"

[Pages 11](#)

"2023 Western Regional Rally"

[Pages 12-13](#)

"More Rally Photos"
 "Miscellaneous"
 "Contact Info"
 "Merchandise"

[Pages 14-15](#)

"About UVMCC"
 "Misc."

[Pages 16](#)

Coaches in attendance



#339



#228



#389



#400



#424



#486





The Group



Gloria Beck picking a door prize



Christy Barden planning a route home

Dave Beck reading the Ultra Van Code of Ethics



Meals, door prizes, and socializing

See all of the Rally pictures on the website, <https://ultravan.org/2023-ultra-van-national-rally-photo-gallery/>

Longest Drive to Rally
Ultra Van
 1968 miles
Christy Barden





Ultra Vans In Dairylead National Rally
 June 15-17 2023
 Wisconsin Dells

Awards

Hand-made stained glass Ultra Van presented to awardees

Hard Luck Award

Carl & Fran Jones
 Dave & Gloria Beck
 Allan & Judy Jones




Ultra Vans In Dairylead National Rally
 June 15-17 2023
 Wisconsin Dells

Oldest Rally Participant
Christy Barden




Ultra Vans In Dairylead National Rally
 June 15-17 2023
 Wisconsin Dells



More photos on [page 14](#)

President Appreciation Award

Pat Jennings




Ultra Vans In Dairylead National Rally
 June 15-17 2023
 Wisconsin Dells



Ultra Van presence at the CORSA Convention



#228 entered in the Concours d'elegance



Ultra Van club table



Christy presenting at the Ultra Van meeting



If anyone has additional Rally or Convention photos, please forward them to me for the website.



News From the Prez

Hi everyone!

Summer is here, and I'm sure you are thawed out by now. 😊

The National Rally was a great success with great-looking coaches and many smiling faces. Marisa and I flew in and quickly learned that Wisconsin is a very beautiful state with tons of fun spots. We had to make it a short trip, but had a ULTRA time meeting new friends, and seeing in person people we have been talking on the phone with for years.

I must throw out a huge WELL DONE to the Rally hosts Dave and Judy Fox, plus Molly Bacon and Chris Brown!

Congratulations to Molly Bacon for being awarded the Ernest Newhouse award. This is OUR clubs highest honor and is truly well deserved! Molly is the machine behind the scenes that makes much of what we all take for granted happen. I for one, and many others, recognize and appreciate her devotion to the club! WELL DONE AND THANK YOU MOLLY!

I have been playing with relocating the Lithium-ion batteries to the generator compartment on #409 and cleaning up the cabling to make it neat and reliable. So far, the solar panels, batteries, and inverter have really performed better than expected. We can even run our rooftop AC.

I will soon be sending out the official dollar cost per windshield set and will need commitments from each party wishing to join our group purchase. Also, we are going to need a good set of windshields to be the reference model for the forms. If you have a good set and are willing to loan them to the club, it would be highly appreciated.

Marisa and I are hoping to see a bunch of you October 1st through 6th at the Western Rally in Moss Landing on the central coast of California. There are spaces still available so let us know if you can make it (see more info on [page 12](#)).

Enjoy your summer. Pat Jennings

Ultra Van Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

President Pat Jennings called the meeting to order at 1:16pm CDT on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. There were 23 members present with two members being on the conference line.

Pat welcomed everyone and mentioned the need for more nominations for the elections. We did have a successful election with 38 votes. All positions were unopposed.

The results were:

- Vice President—Joe Scalet
- Secretary—Molly Bacon
- Treasurer—Molly Bacon
- Newsletter Editor—Molly Bacon
- Western Director—Chuck Hanson
- Ernest Newhouse Award—Molly Bacon

Pat talked some about his endeavors to find the club a source of windshields. He has some quotes and will have more discussion with the Board of Directors. There were some questions and comments which will be included in future discussion.

There was a request for someone to host the 2024 National Rally. No takers at the current time. The 2024 COR-SA Convention will be held in Dayton, OH and the Rally can be located within a day's drive and either the week before or after the convention as a possibility. The other possibility is located anywhere, but constrained to not being before August 15th nor later than October 10th. Notification of dates and location must be published 9 months in advance.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:48 pm CDT.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

California

Mark Chaney

Maine

Andrew Baca #380

Wisconsin

Stacy and Scott Seversin

WELCOME BACK SINCE 2004

Illinois

Doug Daniels #287

UVMCC currently has 114 members





Short Reports

Bits of information from our members



Chris Brown and Molly Bacon #328

Turkel has been absolutely full of gremlins since before this time last year. They again prevented his appearance at the National Rally. Chris worked furiously until 4 days after his original 'no-go' drop-dead date until he said for sure, no-go. It was just one thing after another. We still made our appearance at the Rally though not staying at the campground. It was great to see old and new friends plus some coaches we had never seen except in pictures. We sure did have a great time. After the Rally, we moved on to the CORSA Convention where we had an Ultra Van table set up in the indoor vendor area. Since returning home, Chris has had some positive progress and success with Turkel. We hope to make it the Detroit Area Corvair Club's annual Homecoming event mid-July. Oh, in the last edition there was picture of Chris' custom instrument cluster as he was building it. Here are before and after pictures once installed in the coach. The vacuum gauge now has LED lighting.



Jay & Peggy Reed #514

Since the rally I have resolved several issues and have made significant progress in the last few weeks. Registering in Illinois is figured out. I found a licensed Rebuilder who I will work with, and the first step is getting it road worthy and getting a State Inspection in Mendota about 30 miles from my house to sign off. Then I sign the CA title (that says SALVAGED) over to the Rebuilder who signs it off as REBUILT and gets the new title from Illinois and then re-assigns it back to me.



The tires rubbing in the front are fixed, all new exterior locks done, the bathroom remodel complete, electrical plug upgraded to receive outside 110 power, and new seats received but swivel bases being modified to lower seats. There is more, but good for now.



John Sargavy

ed—In case you've missed it in the past, John is an avid Ultra Van member, but his only project is an early Corvair. We can't leave him out just because he doesn't have an Ultra Van.

A final note on the '64 Monza preservation... After installing rebuilt carburetor, generator and voltage regulator she's runnin' like a top! She's my everyday driver now. I took my wife out to the local golf club for breakfast. John in Liverpool, UK



Jon Dilks and Leah Yancowski #327 & #549

Continuing progress on #549, AKA Lily (formerly "the red one" - but nowadays she has only a few stray specks of color left). Sanding off the paint had been on our "To Do List" for long enough. In the process, we uncovered plenty of scars from poorly executed repairs in years past: lots of Bondo and fiberglass just thrown on and barely smoothed down. Someone must



(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

have been in a hurry. We also exposed a little mystery: on the driver's side, just above the windshield, sanding revealed a message from long ago. Although it barely shows in the photo, it reads:

Piggyback Voyager
Caravans de Mexico
300 N Piedras El Paso Texas



It's impossible to discern the street number, but regardless there's no Piggyback Voyager company still in existence in El Paso, on the 300 block of North Piedras or anywhere else. But what was this, and when was Lily part of the operation? In the bio that Owen compiled, she has a gap of unknown ownership between 1984 in Iowa and 1988 in East Texas. Could our Lily have been living on the border during that time before reappearing 750 miles away on the other side of the state? It wouldn't be surprising if Piggyback Voyagers neglected to register her with the club.

But what was this business? On the Ultra Owners Facebook group, Brendan sent us down a bit of a rabbit hole with the stories like that of the ill-fated Airstream caravan through Mexico and Central America in the early 1950s, but it seems by the mid 1980s people were renting RVs like Lily in Texas and shipping them across the border by piggyback (on train or truck), then adventuring around Mexico before shipping them back north. A very strange arrangement! Perhaps a bit too strange, and that's why the company isn't around anymore. Do you suppose having an Ultra in the inventory was a big hit with the clientele, or was she more of an oddity?



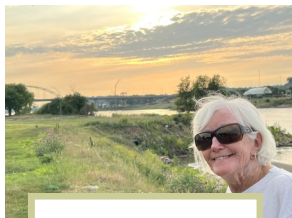
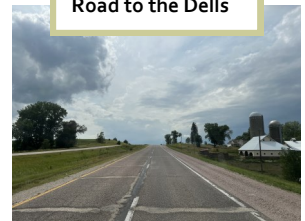
In any case, restoration work will go on through the summer and into the fall, but I thought this was an interesting side story.

Carl and Fran Jones #400

You are probably asking yourself, why would anyone in their right mind drive [5,039 miles](#) round trip to spend a week in an RV park (plus some other side trips) in the heat of the summer while suffering through very high humidity?

The answer is simple; to spend a week with a bunch of crazy Ultravanners from New Hampshire, Tennessee, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan, and California. What a great trip and even greater time with these folks. A memory to last a lifetime. The pictures you've seen of the Rally already, as well as the few with this little story will attest to that. You missed a very fun time. Make sure you don't miss the next one.

Road to the Dells



By the Mississippi



1972 Shasta



Theodore Roosevelt National Park



Mr. Corn at the Corn Palace

Joseph Hofmann #268

I am hoping to have 268 back on the road this summer. The rebuilt motor and transmission were put in last summer, but still many things needed to be worked out with lights, new braking system etc. It has mostly been

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 9)

sitting around since the 1970s. The owner before us dug it out of a back yard in Pacific Beach, a community in San Diego, CA. He was able to get it started and to move under its own power, but the motor was short-lived and was out of it when we purchased it. It now has working gauges, lights, turn signals etc. Now to convert it to a dual master cylinder before driving it to Monterey for car week in August.





Plight of the Phoenix

For those able to remember a 1965 movie called the *Flight of the Phoenix*, starring James Stewart and Ernest Borgnine among others, this story was inspired by that title. The original Phoenix was a mythological character, a bird that flew again from its predecessor's ashes.

In a way, it is appropriate to call an Ultra Van by a bird name, because of its inspiration being from an aviation engineer. I call my acquisition, the new to me 1967 Corvair Ultra Van VIN 271, the Phoenix, because it is resurrected, not from ashes, but is rescued from the wilds of the New Mexico desert, where it has sat for about thirty years. It belonged to the late Hal Pickering of Tularosa, NM. It was not entirely uninhabited all those years. Rodents found the coach to be a habitable shelter, and such "evidence" was (and to some degree, still is) present in every nook and cranny.

Interestingly, my late brother, Richard Finch, tried multiple times to purchase the Phoenix, but the owner, Hal Pickering, didn't wish to make a deal. With the death of Mr. Pickering, the family undertook the responsibility of liquidating the estate. I first heard about the coach early this year from a friend in the Oregon Ultra Van world, who called to say I should consider purchasing it. I didn't have ready cash, but I agreed to be a facilitator of anyone else who wished to acquire the coach. I contacted Jac, the grandson of Mr. Pickering, and arranged to visit the property which was only 3.5 miles from my home. My goal was to ensure the coach could be "rescued" by any willing buyer. I inspected it and found it was essentially intact, but of course needing new tires. I also started the process of evaluating how to have the coach hauled.

Knowing and having used a local area tow truck company, I thought of them and recommended them to potential buyers. That is where the less than pleasant experiences began. A bit of data first. In New Mexico the legal height limit of a vehicle is 14 feet. The wheelbase of the Ultra Van is different in the front and rear. To be safe, the flatbed truck would need to have a surface width of 8 feet. This particular coach has no air conditioner, so its total height is 8 feet. A flatbed is typically 4 feet above the highway. These items posed a challenge for more than one potential buyer. Each person who contacted the towing company nearby (on Highway 54) was met with the same answer, but in increasing irritability. When all potential buyers had ceased their intentions to purchase, I was feeling frustration with not seeing the motorhome find a home and I also contacted the towing company. I guess that was the last straw. Speaking sternly with me is perhaps an understatement. In frustration, the person at the towing company finally said, "Well Phil, why don't you just torch the old motorhome off?!? Set it afire!" I thanked her and politely hung up the call. Only later did I reflect on the original bird, the Phoenix, arising from the ashes. After my "astonishment" from that unnerving phone call to the towing company settled down, I realized the sobering fact that there was no buyer for the coach.

I approached Jac with a proposed deal. Feeling that I could possibly pay for the coach on payments, but not wanting to take out a loan, I proposed four monthly payments of five hundred dollars (\$500) each. That was several months ago. Having variable income and certainty of property tax installments due soon, I truly hoped my plan would work. Jac accepted my offer. It was a struggle.

Even more of a struggle was in getting the Ultra Van the mere 3.5 miles from its long-term home to my home. The years were not friendly to the tires on the coach. I removed the wheels, not noticing that someone had previously reamed out the holes in the chrome wheels to make them fit. Upon returning to the sand and cacti, I proceeded to attempt re-installing the wheels and new tires. I went back to Alamogordo, this time to a really helpful tire store, Big-O[®] and ordered some new wheels and tires. These fit. They are chromed steel, and they included baby moon wheel covers. With wheels and tires mounted, I set about dealing with the automatic transmission, which I didn't want to damage during towing.

Years ago, I helped my late brother, Richard, overhaul a GM Powerglide[®] transmission. I didn't want to do that again. Checking with a transmission repair person in nearby Alamogordo who also who fancied himself as a Corvair mechanic, I learned that it could be harmful to tow the motor home without the engine running. Another problem was apparent. I would have to fashion a suitable tow apparatus. Reading through Tech Tips[®] and other resources, I decided to [chance](#) the process of making a towing system and slow-tow the coach. Then, to my delight, as I walked over the property near the motor home, I found the towing system that had been built for specific use on the Ultra Van. It bolted up like a charm. Next, with new tires and wheels mounted, I asked a good neighbor down the street to accompany me in his newer Ford pick-up to tow the Phoenix home.

The Phoenix is now at my home, securely behind a locked gate, and in the process of being cleaned. I may change this portion of the story of the Plight of the Phoenix when I accomplish the following part, but for now I will describe plans (dreams). As many who read this, the old movie *My Girl* may bring to mind familiar images of the Ultra Van driven by actress Jamie Lee Curtis. It had a café booth installed, which is my goal as well. In addition to the café booth, I will design it to convert into a sleeper.

I have a clear title now. Short VINs pose challenges to MVD folks. I do wish that I could say the Phoenix is licensed and drivable, but my orchards, vineyards, gardens, chickens, ducks, part-time teaching, and firewood gathering have occupied much of my time these weeks and months.

Respectfully submitted July 7, 2023

Phil Finch



Ultra Van Western Regional Rally, Moss Landing Beach between Monterey and Santa Cruz, California

October 1st to October 6th, 2023



Please join US! More spaces available. Pay when you arrive.

Sunday – October 1

Welcome! Host provided dinner. It's gonna be good!

Monday – October 2

Late morning local excursion to shop for fresh Salinas produce at a large outdoor stand with fresh everything and more. Maybe to stock up for the week or additions for this evening's potluck. Afternoon, feel free to walk a very short distance for otter viewing on the way to the beach or even shorter walk to the quaint town. Lunch options are available very nearby. Potluck dinner -Yankee Swap AND soon to become a new favorite, LEFT, CENTER, RIGHT game that requires 3 single dollar bills.

Tuesday – October 3

Morning Ultra Van meetings, tech-talks. Early afternoon excursion to Martinelli's Apple Cider tour near Watsonville, OR wine tasting at Bargetto Winery, 24 minutes from Moss Landing. Dinner on your own.

Wednesday – October 4

11:00 a.m. departure. 1 ½ hours on the Elkhorn Slough on a 37-foot electric catamaran (\$40 senior rate) where we will see otters, seals, birds and much more. It is a slow, scenic, experience. Only ¼ mile from our campground. Optional, lunch available across the street, for some moderately priced seafood on the ocean. Dinner on your own.

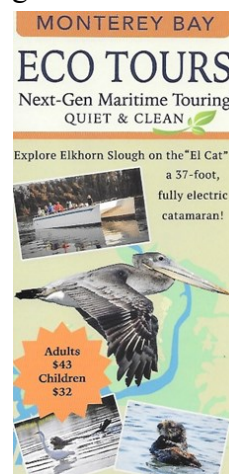
Thursday – October 5th

Relax and socialize. Our last night dinner is at a family run Mexican food restaurant a very short walk from the KOA.

Friday – October 6th

After check-out, let's drive the famous 17- mile drive, near Carmel, with our Ultra Vans! It is an \$11.25 charge. Some good photo ops and beautiful scenery too.

For reservations please Email: chiantimar@yahoo.com



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(continued on page 13)



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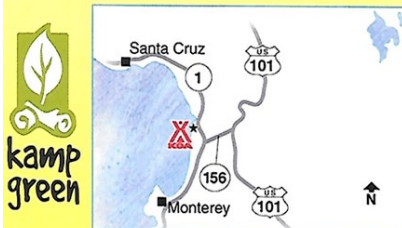
Walking Distance To

- Doggie Beach
- Restaurants
- Whale Watching
- Elkhorn Slough Safari
- Deep Sea Fishing
- Art Galleries
- Antique Shops



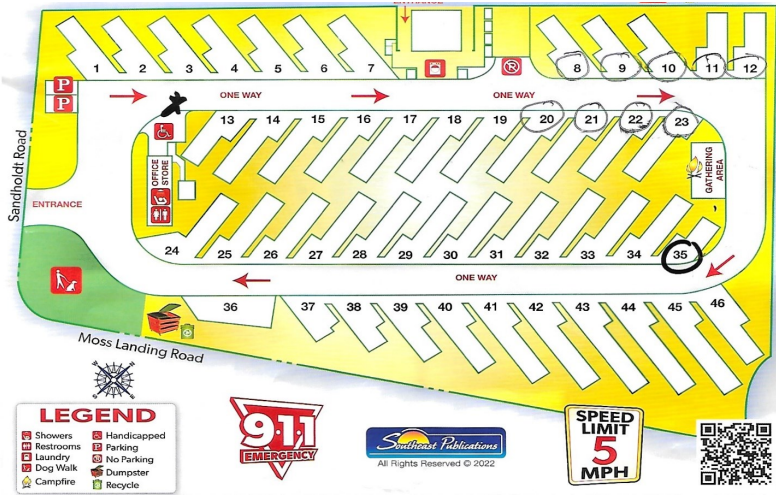
Local Attractions

- Monterey Bay Aquarium
- Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk
- Cannery Row
- Steinbeck Museum
- Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca
- Pebble Beach Golfing
- 17 Mile Drive
- Carmel And Carmel By The Sea
- Kayaking In the Elkhorn Slough And Monterey Bay
- Elkhorn Slough Nature Reserve For Bird Watching And Nature Walks



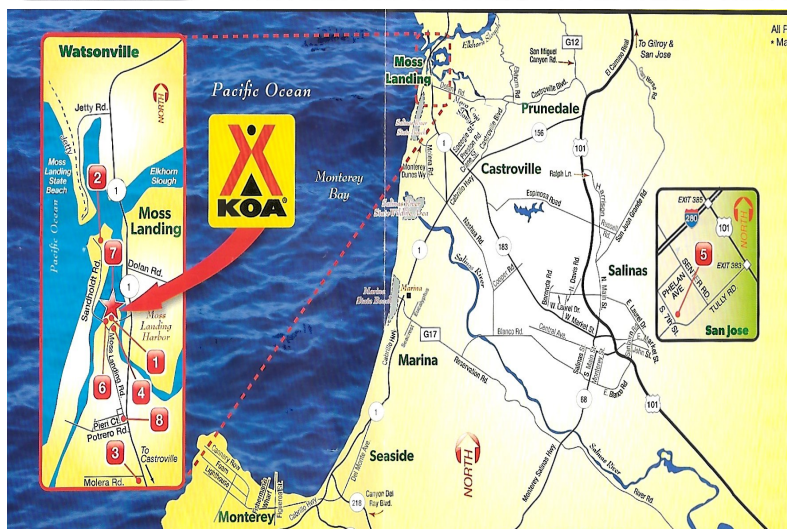
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- Recycle





Some more of the Rally hard luck and happenings.



Index of Tech Tips published after the 2015 Tech Tips document
 31 tech tips have been published since 2015. Work is being done to create a new updated comprehensive document. Until that time, you can use this index to supplement. The newsletter volume listed will be a link to that newsletter on the website.
 It is accessible here, <https://ultravan.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Tech-Tips-unpublished-index.pdf>

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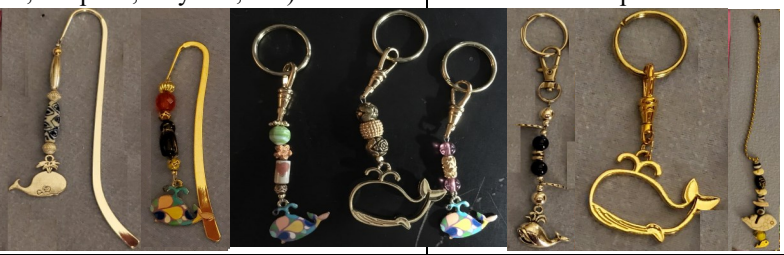
Molly Bacon, 989-246-8046, mollybacon@yahoo.com

Patty Mello, 541-926-2631, nanapatty1951@hotmail.com



Item	Price
Club badges	1st one <i>free</i> at a rally or \$2.00 for a replacement
Miniature Cloisonné Ultra pins	\$5.00
Cloisonné Ultra earring set (post & wire)	\$7.00
Cloisonné Ultra charm	\$3.50
Ultra Van Coasters—2 designs	\$1.00
"Corvaire Powered" bumper stickers	\$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00
VIN # plates (blank)	\$3.50
Ultra Van Magnets	\$1.00
Ultra Van Stickers (multiple styles)	\$1.00
3 ½" X 4 ½" Stitched patches w/ Ultra on US map & flag	\$3.00
Tech tips 1960-2015 PDF on CD	\$5.00
Club Roster (printed)	\$4.00
Window decals UVMCC with Ultra	\$1.00
100,000 Miles Club plaque	<i>Award</i>
Postcards and note cards	Various prices
Available while supply lasts: Tombstone Rally magnets	Big Sale \$.50
NOS Factory Ultra Van replacement parts	Various prices
Hand-made Specialty Whale items (keychains, bookmarks, fan pulls, lanyards, etc.)	Various prices

samples



UVMCC Membership

Go to the website membership page:
<https://ultravan.org/ultra-van-motor-coach-club/>

or

email the Treasurer at:
uvmcc_membership@yahoo.com

Join Today!

Founded in 1969, **CORSA** is group of automobile enthusiasts working to satisfy the common needs of individuals interested in the preservation, restoration, and operation of the Corvair.



CORSA's long range goal is to promote reproduction of parts and render technical assistance to increase your enjoyment of the Corvair, and to further the general public's appreciation of the car.

UVMCC encourages membership in CORSA.

Visit their website, www.corvair.org



Profit and Loss Ultra Fiscal Year 2022 Quarter 3 - Jan 1 – Mar 31

Income—\$600.00, Expenses—\$552.02

Whales on Wheels (WOW)



is the quarterly publication of the Ultra Van Motor Coach Club, Inc. (UVMCC), a chartered chapter (#008) of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA). Incorporated in 1967, UVMCC is dedicated to the preservation, enjoyment, and use of the Ultra Van, a 22 foot, unique motor home, which was designed by David

Peterson and built in Kansas until 1970. About 365 units were built.

UVMCC is open to anyone with an interest in Ultra Vans. Annual dues are \$5 for an emailed newsletter and \$15 for a mailed newsletter. Application and payment can either be make online with PayPal at <https://ultravan.org/ultra-van-motor-coach-club/> or make checks payable to Ultra Van Motor Coach Club and mail to the treasurer at:

UVMCC, 5425 Morrow Rd., Gladwin, MI 48624

Stories, articles, photos, memorabilia, or any other item for publication should be sent to the editor by the 15th of March, June, Sept, and Dec. Send newsletter submissions to WOW by email to the Editor, Molly Bacon, uvmcc_membership@yahoo.com

Digital submissions are preferred, but even hand written are acceptable. Mail to: UVMCC, 5425 Morrow Road, Gladwin, MI 48624

Authors are asked to submit at least a photograph of themselves for the article with any other relevant photos.

Technical material will be sent to the Technical Coordinator for review.

Website: <https://ultravan.org/>

Awards

Golden Quill Award - 2022, 2021, 2003, 1999, 1997, & 1995

CORSA Chapter Newsletter Award - 2019 - 3rd place & 2014 - 3rd place.

Available:

Ryerson Manual (Ultra Coach Owner's Manual)

The Ryerson is available in two forms, Printed and on a searchable CD.

Printed Manual \$60 plus shipping

Printed Manual and CD \$70 plus shipping.

CD \$17 postage paid to the contiguous U. S. Shipping is based on your choice of shipping options. Please send me your address and I will let you know what postage will be.

Eric Kirven, 3585 Cerritos Ave., Long Beach, CA 90807

Ultravan345@Yahoo.com