



CORVAN ANTICS

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RAMP/LOADSIDE



GREENBRIER SPORTSWAGON



CORVAN

Illustrating Chevrolet Motor Division



Rampside

CORVAN ANTICS

The official Bi-monthly publication of CORVANATICS,
a chartered chapter of CORSA. Established Sept. 1972.

Membership - 300 out there somewhere...

Stories, articles, photos or anything of interest to CORVANATICS members may be submitted to the Editor. Deadline is the FIRST of each ODD numbered month.

Membership in CORVANATICS is open to any CORSA member with an interest in Forward Control Corvairs. Annual dues are \$6 (US) and should be sent to Caroline Silvey.

Changes of address should be sent to Caroline Silvey as soon as possible.

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On The Cover

Another photo from "1964 Chevrolet Trucks - Corvair 95 Models", the take-home sales brochure given out to prospective truck buyers in the '60's. More on page 39 of this issue. "I'll take one!"

In This Issue

Converting your stock rear seat to a fold-down bed/sleeper, "Is It Hot Yet?", FLAT FRANK seized!, Presidential Prose and Member Comments.

Club Boutique

CORVANATICS MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE THROUGH CAROLINE SILVEY:

Window decals - \$1.00 each. Jacket patches - \$2.15 each. Club stationary and envelopes - \$.05 each. Back issues of CORVAN ANTICS - over 60 issues all volumes up to and including vol.2 #3 are 60¢ each. (nine issues). Vol.2 #4 through current issue are \$1.00 each. Complete set is only \$50.

FC Paint Mfg. Codes, Paint Combinations, prices and options (21pp.) \$4.50.

CORVAN ANTICS Technical Index - Complete listing of Technical material published between 1972 and 1984. 8½ x 11 bound - \$1.50 ppd.

Forward Controlling With The President



I am sitting in our motel room looking out at the beautiful Vermont scenery and writing this for the newsletter. The annual Fall V.I.C.E. meeting (just eating, talking about Corvairs and touring the scenery and sights) gets underway this evening when we all go out to eat. There will be people here from as far away as Texas and many will be CORVANATICS members.

We did not drive a Corvair here this year or last year. Instead we drove our 1987 Chevrolet custom van. After calculating the gas mileage I started to wonder how an FC would be if it had all the modern improvements from the '87 incorporated into it. Probably the most significant improvement would be in engine control. With Electron Control Module (ECM) control of timing, fuel mixture, transmission shift points and probably other things I am not aware of an FC could get much better mileage, perform generally better and no doubt have the engine life considerably extended.

Consider fuel mileage. For over 700 miles of this trip we averaged 20.9 MPG. That's very good for a 5400 pound vehicle with two passengers, many Corvair parts and luggage, with an estimated gross weight of 6000 pounds. This 20.9 MPG is still better than the 20 MPG we got on the 1965 Greenbrier on the same trip. Comparing my van fuel mileage with earlier similar vans without throttle body fuel injection and ECM control it appears that fuel mileage has been improved by 26%. This would make our Greenbriers run at 25.2 MPG (all other things being equal). That is very good mileage for an FC with Powerglide.

In addition how about engine performance and life? How much longer would a Corvair engine last if on those long hills with heavy loads and high outside air temperatures the mixture and timing could be automatically controlled for maximum power without that parts-destroying detonation?

Also consider the addition of a four speed automatic transmission with lockup type torque convertor. Of course some of you already have four speed transmissions but I am the lazy, shiftless type driver.

Well, it's fun to dream about what could be. Many have tried to add some of these improvements with limited success. I'm sure they must dream also of what could be a better FC.

Hopefully, by the time you read this, a CORVANATICS Membership Roster will have been found in your mailbox. If you change your address or phone number or find an error let us know and a correction will be published in the newsletter. Also new members and notes can be added on the blank pages at the end.

I have been concentrating my Corvair efforts lately on my 1962 Monza Station Wagon. It should make a good vehicle to tow behind the motor home. It is hard to find any other vehicle that has two full-width bench seats with cloth covering, four doors, two trunks (one in front and one ov-

er the engine) that only costs several hundred dollars instead of several thousand.

In working on this wagon I discovered something that is definitely applicable to the FC. This wagon only has 35,000 miles on it but when I disassembled the rear wheel bearings to regrease them I found that after being moved only once in twenty years these bearings were corroded beyond use because the grease had all settled to the bottom leaving the top rollers and bearing races to rust severely. From this I conclude that for vehicles stored for long periods of time it's best to store them on blocks and turn the wheels a few revolutions occasionally to redistribute the lubricant over the parts as recommended by Larry Claypool in one of his tech tips for storing vehicles for long periods. A little wheel turning by hand would have saved me over \$260 for new bearings. FC bearings are more expensive and scarce - so - preserve what you already have.

In addition to the above situation I disassembled ten other used bearings hoping to find two regreasable ones but only found one. Of the nine bad bearings, six were unusable due to corrosion resulting from a lack of lubricant. The others had badly spalled races and rollers. All new bearings that I install get cleaned and regreased with AmOil synthetic grease (1 to 1½ oz only). Overgreasing is only slightly better than not regreasing since the bearings will over heat on long runs and also ruin your brake shoes when the excess gets thrown out.

Tom Silvey

From The Editor's

Glovebox



Well, obviously this issue is late, too. All I can say is if I don't get anything to print then I can't get out the newsletter. It's up to you.

By the time you read this the 1988 CORVANATICS DRIVE-IN will be history, and countless dozens of our members will have had a great weekend. Hopefully we will have full coverage and photos in the next issue, right Pete?

I recently had the pleasure of helping one of our members, James Davis of Haughton, LA, locate and purchase a clean rust-free 1965 Greenbrier Deluxe from a local owner. As a matter of fact, the 'Brier advertized in CA a few months ago. Jim and his wife drove out from Louisiana to purchase it and drove it home, hopefully with no problems. In exchange for the help he has promised an article on his experience. We'll all be looking forward to reading all about it!

Converting Your Rear Seat To Fold-Down

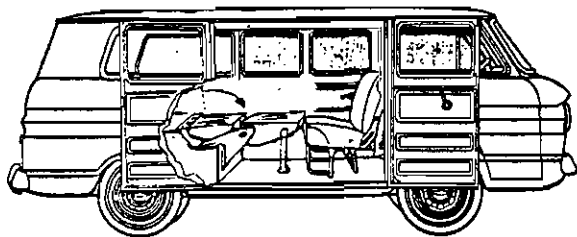
There I was. Sitting in the back of my 1964 Corvan. In the carport. Staring. The carpeted false floor that had served my camping and traveling needs so well for the last five or so years lay disassembled in pieces on the ground next to the carport.

My mind went over all the Corvan and Greenbrier campers I'd seen over the years, and all their methods of creating a convertible rear seat/bed. They all seemed to center on a wood base, movable upholstered foam pads and usually a table that became part of the bed. I measured and planned, visualized and tried out way after way in my mind. All would be a lot of work to build and expensive. Plus, all of these that I had actually sat on weren't very comfortable as seats. A comfortable rear seat was the reason I had decided to redo the back camper area of the Corvan in the first place.

The carpeted false floor gave a nearly flat rear floor area. It rested on the first "step" of the engine area, on the left wall "step" and on two 2 x 4 wood frames. To make the bed a four inch foam pad, normally resting over the engine, was pulled forward, creating a long, level, comfortable "bed". Simple and effective, but to actually sit in the back you had to sit "Indian Style" - not comfortable for any length of time.

So the false floor was out. I wanted a "real" rear seat, a pedestal table and eventually a counter unit with a sink, propane stove, ice-box and storage. I had a 3rd seat that matched the Corvan's front seat just lying around. Just for the heck of it I set it into position (Remember, Corvans do not have the floor holes for rear seats!). The seat fit perfectly, of course. I visualized sitting on it, eating dinner at the pedestal table in the well-lighted, rich wood-paneled interior while the cold rain poured down in the woods on the other side of the well-insulated walls. Looking out the window I saw a family struggling to put up their leaky nylon tent in the pouring rain. OK, back to the real world!

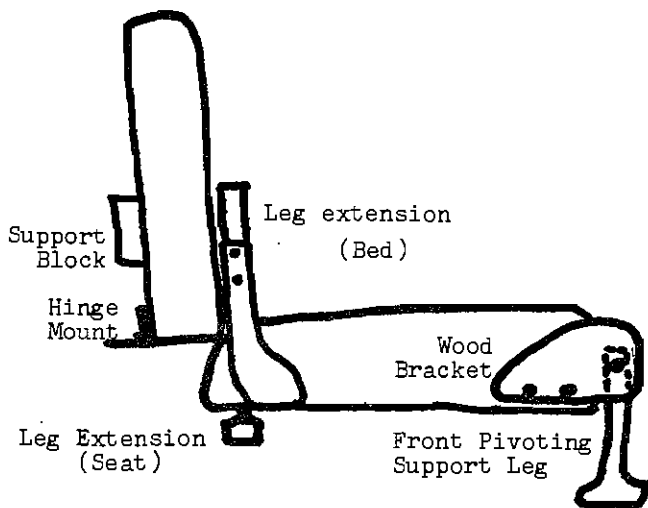
That rear seat was so comfortable. I thought to myself: there had to be some way to work it into the plan. Too bad GM never designed a fold-down rear seat for the FC - or did they? They did! I nearly ran into the house, scrambled for the notebook containing all my CORVAN ANTICS back issues, thumbed through until I found the Sept/Oct 1985 issue and there it was: Bob Kirkman's write-up of GM's one and only prototype fold-down rear seat!



GM'S ONE AND ONLY PROTOTYPE FOLD-DOWN SEAT

My seat is based on essentially the same idea. However GM designed a special seat to use - I had to modify a stock rear seat.

First step was to disassemble the seat - separate back from cushion and remove the tubular legs. Next I mounted the seat back to the edge of the engine area floor with two heavy door hinges and $\frac{1}{4}$ -20 slot head counter sink machine screws and nuts. Half of each hinge mounts to the very forwardmost edge of the engine lid area floor and the other half to the tubular metal frame of the seat. You will have to temporarily take loose the seat covering material to drill holes and attach the screws and nuts. Mount the hinge securely to the seat frame first, re-install the covering (you will need hog rings and hog ring pliers). Then lay the back into position, mark and drill holes, and mount hinges to the floor with $\frac{1}{4}$ -20 machine screws, nuts and lock washers. You'll need a helper (or VERY long arms) to tighten the nuts underneath. Get the biggest, heaviest hinges you can find - they have to support a lot of weight. When you're finished the seat back should fold down flat and level with the engine lid floor.



There are now three basic things you will need to do to the cushion. 1. Make up a pivoting front lower support leg. 2. Make "legs" to hold up the forward end after it's folded down. 3. Make up two support blocks to hold up the rearward bottom of the cushion (seating position), about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, mounted to either floor or seat frame.

The pivoting support GM used was a heavy metal piece that mounted to the engine area step and extended forward to the front side of the seat frame. Since I have no metal working facilities I made my bracket from a piece of hardwood and part of the old seat support legs. For the seat to clear, pivot and align properly the pivot point must be about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch forward of the seat frame front edge. I bolted my Poplar "bracket" to the seat side frame lower tube with two $\frac{1}{4}$ -20 machine screws, nuts and washers to keep the head from tearing into the wood. My diagram (I'm a writer, not an artist!!!) will have to be only a guide. There are many ways to build this pivoting support. The actual measurements will also vary from installation to installation and are arrived at by very careful trial and error. When I was done the very bottom of the seat frame was 10 inches above the floor, and the pivot point was $11\frac{3}{8}$ inch above floor level. If you stick with these measurements the finished height of the folded seat should match the engine floor.

After you have your seat somersaulting you will need to provide legs to hold it up at the proper level once it's folded down into the bed position. GM provided a perfect starting point for this in the form of the angle brackets that formerly secured the seatback frame to the cushion frame. All you have to do is extend them about four inches. A piece of 2 x 2 wood about 9 or 10 inches long slips in perfectly and is held in securely with two $\frac{1}{4}$ inch lag bolts, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, threaded in through the factory holes. The actual length, again, will be a trial and error measurement. You will also have to cut the end to an angle to match the floor. I painted all the wood and metal pieces to match the upholstery. The legs will also securely hold up the backrest when the seat is up and only take up $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch at each end.

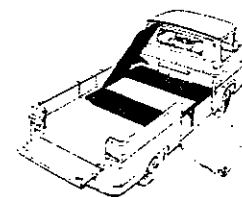
For the last item I just attached $2\frac{1}{2}$ long blocks of 2 x 2 wood to the small factory "leg". You could also bolt it directly to the floor.

When I was done I found the backrest fell too far rearward (too much of an angle). I nailed some wood together to a thickness of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch and about 4 x 8 inches and screwed it to each side wheelhouse, bolted from inside the wheel well into each wood block with $\frac{1}{4}$ inch lag bolts. The backrest frame now rests securely on these, lodging it at a perfect angle.

The GM seat had a metal back that became a floor when the seat was folded down. You could cut metal to the shape of the frame and weld, bolt or pop rivet it on. I just left mine open and made two cushioned wood panels. They are both $\frac{5}{8}$ inch plywood with one inch thick foam and carpet wrapped around them and stapled. The finished size is the same dimensions of the total engine floor area. When the seat is in the sitting position they are both stacked over the engine, providing a drastic drop in engine noise. When the seat is folded down one is pulled forward onto the two seats, making a comfortable bed over seven feet long and the width of the engine area.

While my version doesn't look as good as a factory seat it works very well! It takes about five seconds to convert from seat to bed, and both seat and bed are comfortable. The only disadvantage is that the proportions of the seat are slightly rearranged. The backrest normally overlaps the cushion. With this setup it will just touch it, making your tailbone come closer to the top, rear frame tube. I took the covering loose at the rear of the cushion and wrapped some thin foam around the tube to make sure it didn't "feel" through. I accomplished what I set out to do and I hope this article will help some of you.

Ken Krol,
your ed.



Extra-cast level floor adds versatility to the deep cargo well. The level floor offers tailgate-level loading ease plus a protected lower storage area. Sectionalized construction permits partial use for special purposes.

IS IT HOT YET?

Not yet! I have, over the years, seen many articles and much given on tech topics about Corvairs that just overheat and run too hot. Well, I will not cover all Corvairs because I don't have the experience to discuss all Corvairs, therefore I am just going to keep to the Forward Controls.

First, I know that some of you out there in F.C. U.S.A. are maybe getting tired of my articles, but you have a chance to write too, and if you don't write you don't get rid of these pesky articles. SO WRITE TO KEN KROL HE IS BEGGING FOR YOUR INPUT! (Did I do good, Ken?)

OK, so on with the article. Again, I am writing about my good, old '64 Greenbrier, 95 HP and a 4-speed. I have full gauges as I have said before and I live in Florida. It does get warm here in the Summer, averaging in the 90's, and from time to time even higher. We are about sea level around here. Now this is just to give you a general idea of the conditions here.

I have an aluminum oil pan on my Van, an Otto Parts pan. I have the temperature sender in the stock oil pressure sender boss. I don't know if it is the best place to measure the oil temperature, but it was convenient and I didn't want to drill holes and tap, nor did I want to use the boss on the oil pan due to the abuse it could get being down there.

As a general rule the oil temperature stays at about 190° to and from work. When we do a lot of driving or a trip out of town it does reach about 220° and on really hot days pushing it at about 70 MPH I have seen it hit about 240°. But this seems to be about the hottest I have seen it get. I don't know if this is detrimental or not but I have not had any adverse effects from it yet. The engine is still together and it runs great. I bank on increased technology of the newer oils today, because we all know that the new cars and trucks run hotter than they used to due to all the emission controls.

Well, what about the good, old stock pan? I did not run one on this van first. I have had the aluminum pan on since I built this engine. However, if memory serves me well, I believe that these temperatures are in line with what a stock pan would do. Perhaps checking the oil in different places would make a difference that could be measured, but I feel comfortable that there would not be too much difference in the temperatures that I would get where I'm reading it.

So why did I put the aluminum pan on? Well, it does look good! I did think it would help cool the oil a little better, but one of my thoughts was that it is aluminum, like the block! I thought that it would seal better and would be a little stronger than the steel pan.

Would I do it again? Yes. I have those "some-day" plans to install either a 110 HP or a 140 HP engine in the van as I get other projects out of the way. I do plan to use an aluminum pan and possibly valve covers.

(Con'd on page 39)

Membership Comments/ Questions

Dear Editor,

Thanks so much for putting my mind to rest with the March-April Tech Topics. For years I have been puzzled over the lack of a resistor by-pass wire on the '61 FC's.

How the hell can this thing start? was my usual inquiry, since I knew the circuit had to be there, but I sure couldn't find it. So, I have just been adding a length of wire to complete the circuit.

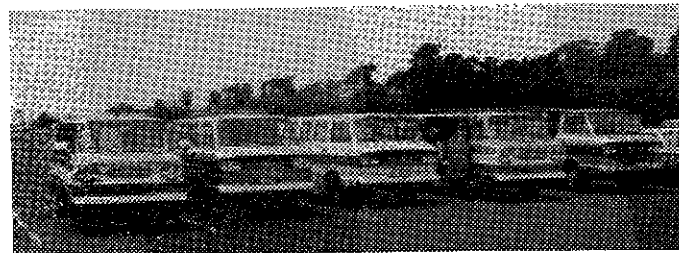
Now I find that I'm not crazy - the wire never was there and I've been solving the problem right all along. Whew!

Larry Claypool
The VAIR SHOP

FC'S ARE ON THE RISE AGAIN!

At our Annual Tri-Club Meet, San Buenaventura Beach Party, some new faces were seen. Normally the only FC on the scene would be Dave Palmer's Greenbrier. However, this year's FC's were Dave's newly painted and freshened 'Brier, brother Jeff's restored 'Brier, Dad Don's meat and potatoes Rampside, all freshened up, Chris Gibbon's newly found 'Brier and our new 'Brier.

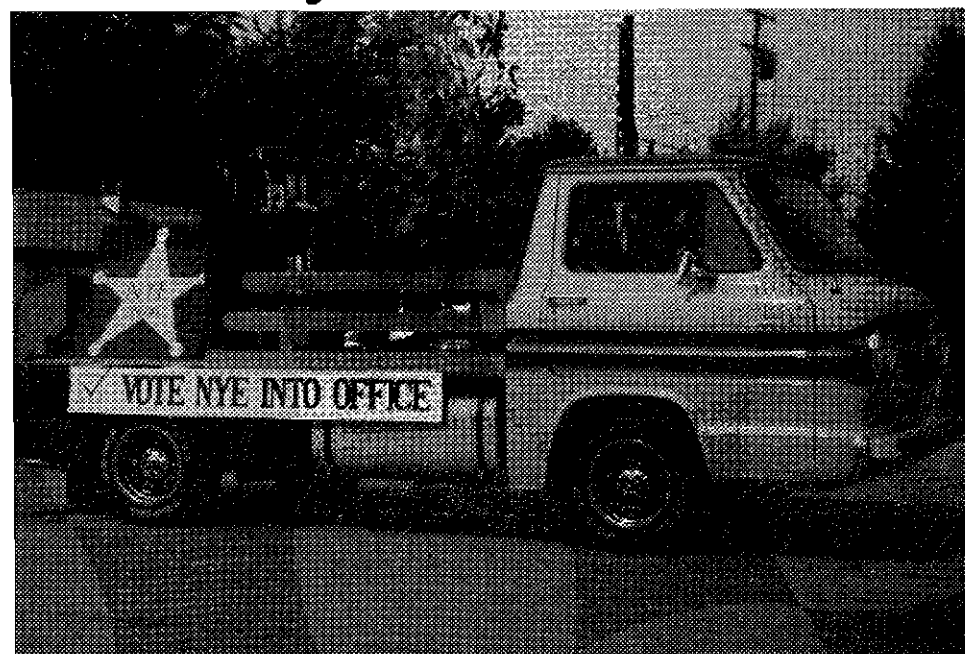
Most of these came from under Oak trees and backyards. Dave's, of course, was his daily



"Flat Frank" Seized By Sheriff Candidate

A new law was passed in short notice recently - WANTED: Local sheriff candidate for parades! And since the colors of "FLAT FRANK" matched this candidate's poster, and it is always good to cooperate with the law!, my vehicle was seized. The only word I had in the matter was "be careful not to scratch the paint!" The decorating crew was very cooperative, with my over seeing!

By: Bill Henrich
New Bavaria, Ohio



driver, Jeff's came from Skip Pirtle's back yard in Reno, Don's from his own backyard, Chris found her 'Brier under an Oak tree. (Just put in a new battery and fresh gas and drove it.) And ours also from under an Oak tree, but it needed a complete restoration.

Some of us have just recently found new comfort in our FC's, something that other FC people found out years ago. We will never be without ours now...

Others in our group with FC's - Augie with his Rampside, Jessie De Leon just got a 95 window van that will soon be on the road - a really nice one.

Bob Galli
Atascadero, CA

Editor:

Glad to be a member of CORVANATICS and I enjoy the newsletter very much. Those Tech Tips have already been really helpful...

Jeffrey Lee Johnson
Gainesville, FL

"Just a note of thanks to CORVAN ANTICS" (and a few words to its members)

First of all I would like to thank CORVAN-ATICS for the nice Roster of CORVANATICS members. I think it was a great idea to have something telling us where all the members of our special club are in case of an emergency or just to have someone to chat with about FC's. I would like to extend to the people of CORVANATICS my personal thanks for the Roster and also for all the work they put into the newsletter.

We are a special club. I know that just about everyone that drives an FC has at one time or another has had someone stop them and tell them, "Gee, I never knew there was such a thing as a Corvair truck". I could not begin to tell you how many times this has happened to me.

(Con'd on page 39)

FC Classified Ads

Wanted for 1961 Greenbrier: Ventshades #985025; Fender skirts, rear dome light ass'y; front dome light lense; stainless piece over front doors under driprail (unique to '61?); any literature or brochures dealing with 1961 FC's, copies OK. Also need brackets for jack and fastener for spare tire. Thanks. Ed Bittman, 4243 2nd AVE S. , St. Petersburg, FL 33711.

PARTS FOR SALE: 1961-65 FC air filters, \$11/pr; NAPA oil filters, \$3.10 each; early Delco blower bearing w/hub \$20, w/o hub \$10; dome light lense for FC, GM 2@\$2.80 each; inner tie rod ends for 1965 FC, NORS 2@\$12 each; L & S throw-out bearing short, \$12; 1960-62 trans stator shaft for PG NOS #3780998, \$18; 1960-69 PG reverse ring gear, NOS #6256552, \$10; 1961-69 PG high clutch drive plate ass'y, NOS #3883904 \$3; 1960-69 PG reverse clutch plate, NOS #6256553 \$3 each; 1960-63 NOS generator drive end frame, #1945332, \$10 each; one NOS left FC vent handle \$5. All parts plus shipping. Call or write Don Richmond, 3929 North "P" Street, Pensacola, FL 32505. (904)433-1245.

IS IT HOT YET? (con'd)

As far as general overheating of Corvairs is concerned, I have faith in the engineers that designed them. Sure, technology of the after-years has brought us many improvements such as the Viton rubber products as just one example. But I have not had a well maintained Corvair over heat on me ... yet! There might be that day to come, but I have not had it happen under normal conditions. My wife did drive our '64 coupe a couple miles with no fanbelt, in the Summer, at highway speeds. But when she got home I quickly put on another fanbelt and cranked it up after it cooled a little. I had to wait because the thing was so hot it would not turn over. Goner for sure, huh. Well that engine is still running with seven years of driving and about 50,000 miles added to the odometer.

Well there are, I am sure, other stories out there about overheating and oil pans. But I would not just spend the money to have one look pretty on the engine. I just happened to get mine when I bought a bunch of "junk" from someone getting out of Corvairs.

I am a firm believer in Corvairs and their ability to last and, well maintained, I believe they will. Again, ALL WE HAVE AND DRIVE ARE CORVAIRS. EVERYDAY! I have less problems than most people I know with new cars. The key I believe is MAINTENANCE.

Write in to Ken about your stories and hot oil. I would like to read about it and I know that Ken would appreciate the material.

Donald M. Richmond, Sr.

Letters (con'd)

I have only had a driveable Greenbrier for 2½ to three years and I have been in CORVANATICS ever since the first week I bought it. I joined the Club within one week of getting my Greenbrier. I know that I have missed a lot of past articles that would have come out before I got into the Club, but surely there are some others

out there with interesting stories about FC. I would like to read about them also. I look forward to my CORVAN ANTICS newsletter as much as I do the Communique. Help Ken out some and make his job easier! I know what it is like to have to try and find material for a newsletter, I do one myself for the local Club I am in.

A question I wonder about is the number of members. 300? Are there only 300 people with FC's? I am trying to get three people in my local Club to join CORVANATICS now and two of them are going to. I just wonder if some sort of membership application would be appropriate? Some people may feel better filling out a piece of paper with a check than just sending it. Also, I know funds are limited in the Club, but what about a courtesy copy of the newsletter to people we know with FC's to try and get some new people? Like I said, I don't know if this has been tried before or not but...

Donald M. Richmond, Sr.
Pensacola, FL

Ken,

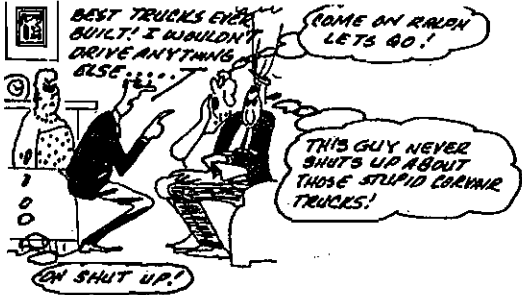
Thanks for your rapid reply to my letter and your suggestion for my interior heat problem. I have found that 98% of my heat had to do with the heater running all the time. Must be a broken cable. I'm planning on installing plenty of foam rubber on the roof along with a foam filled headliner and foam backing on all the carpet and engine cover carpet. So we'll see what happens.

I'm new to Corvairs and really new to 'Briers and would like to learn all about them. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Ed Bittman
St. Petersburg, FL

Rampside





GENE BRIAR & HIS BUDDY F.C.



in:
mr. dependable

CORVAN ANTICS
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FIRST CLASS



CORVANATICS
 THE FORWARD CONTROL CORVAIR PEOPLE