

The Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Corvanatics
The Forward Control Corvair People



Sportwagon
Greenbrier



Pickups
Rampside - Loadside



Van
Corvan

Vol. 26, No. 1

January-February, 1998

A Chartered Chapter of CORSA - Corvair Society of America



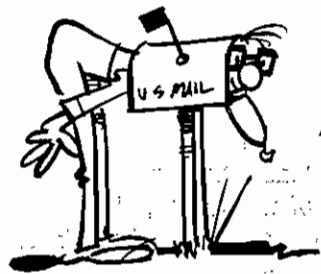
It's CHRISTMAS! So first let me offer my best wishes for your Christmas (not holiday) season. I hope as you read this you are still relling in the blessedness of Christmas. I feel very strongly that Christmas begins on December 25, not ends then. In our commercial world we have been so hyped up beginning already in September that when the glorious, blessed day finally arrives people are so sick of it that they are glad and relieved it's over. People even throw out their Christmas tree on the day after Christmas. What a tragedy! So . . . MERRY CHRIST-MAS!

I must admit that it has looked like anything but Christmas in Wisconsin. We have had precious little snow and the weather, for the most part, has been rather warm-in the 40's during most days. Today tho, as I write this, we are getting some of the welcome white stuff. (Oh, don't be such an old grouch!)

I hope the article and picture of Ben Stiles' first camping
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LET'S KEEP
ALL OF THOSE
GREAT
ARTICLES AND STORIES
COMING IN!!!

OUR CLUB
IS WHAT WE
MAKE IT!!!

Just hope you will start getting a variety of FC stories to publish. I'm "storied" (that's a word?) out, and have only some FC parts left. Nothing to contribute.

Articles in any publication (Communique, CorvanAntics, Old Cars Weekly, etc.) that detail "measure X inches, bend at X degrees, drill X diameter holes, hold w/ clamps while you nail, cut this, splice that and plug the other, etc" are generally useless to any reader. Must admit that I have resorted to same in the past! Just my opinion, and I am unanimous in that (to quote Mrs. Slocombe).

Bob Kirkman

Classified Classified Classified Classified Classified
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CLASSIFIED ADS
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FOR SALE- FC Driver's Door, in prime, no guts, never rusted. Numerous small dents, \$35. Greenbrier rear end left hand door, in prime, no guts, rusted corner cut and welded repair \$15. FC brake drums, freshly turned. \$4. Will not ship. Meet me somewhere near Detroit? Bob Kirkman, 248-628-2431.

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First Camping Trip with Ben's Refurbished Camper Top Van

Actually, I have been camping since I was six days old. This title refers to the first camping trip I took with my almost completed Travel Equipment Corporation Travel Top installed on my 1962 Greenbrier.

The destination was Knoebel's Groves Campground and Amusement Resort in Elysburg, PA. Lynn and I had to work on the top for almost two hours before we could leave. Latches and miscellaneous items were attended to on the actual top and then there was the job of packing the food, clothing and one hundred and one other items. We got everything ready to roll while looking at the over-cast skies. Would the weather hold out? Only time would tell.

After a quick lunch, we were off to the highway. I noticed no wind resistance from the top at highway speeds and only the slightest rumble over bridges where the wind was very high. The overall low profile of the top when folded down, about five inches, really makes it unnoticeable while traveling. We crested over some mountains in Northern Pennsylvania and the van did not argue much. After all, that is what second and third gear are for.

We arrived at Knoebel's after about two and a half hours of trouble-free travel. Our site was unoccupied so we pulled right in. The only problem we encountered, as far as site location was concerned, was a slight lean to the right and we were somewhat downhill, but the awning and curtains were set, so we kept the van that way. It took us about half an hour to set up camp.

There was a chill in the air, and the sky was still over-cast, so we decided to sit inside the van. We both wanted to sit inside the van to keep warm, but also for novelty. The top was up and the awning extended. The folding seat/bed was perfect for Lynn to sit on for sewing, and I got one of the folding chairs out from under the table and read a magazine. We were just happy to be away from it all and enjoyed the new and spacious feel of the van. Had

Continued on page 5.

Greetings from Ben's Bus

Greetings from Ben's Bus. I trust that your adventures and travels with your FCs are as exciting as ever. I really want to get the passenger side dog leg rewelded so that I can get new weatherstripping on those front doors. They really leak the cold air. I believe that this was built in at Chevrolet. If you think about it, the cold, fresh air pouring in through the worn weatherstrip counteracts the heat fumes created by the fresh air heater. This in turn ensures that the driver will not pass out from those same fumes. Mine are better with the new engine than with the last, but they still stink. Believe it or not, some of us rust belt Corvanatics do drive these things in the Winter. Besides the 1962 700 I have been trying to get on the road, the Greenbrier is my only means of transportation. I have driven it throughout the last four winters here and will continue to do so this year. Why not! They give you one heck of a view of the road from the driver's seat as well as running exceptionally well through the snow.

Nothing major has happened with Ben's Bus. Since my last article about the installation of the Travel Top, I have been student teaching at a local high school. That has put quite a toll on the time I spend tinkering with the van, but I still find some time for little things, such as writing in to the newsletter and small projects with the van. A tech article appears in this issue about such tinkering as far as adjusting and aligning the intermediate side doors on my van so that a human can actually close the door single-handedly.

Lynn and I had a good time at the Central Pennsylvania Corvair Club's "Corvair Days". We got there on time, but parking was very limited. We ended up being put right along the safety lines for the autocross and other fun moving events. I opened the driver-side curtains and we had our own shaded, front-row seats to those events. It really turned out to be a great place to park. The camper top was a big hit there also as most people had never seen one before, and the most previous owner of my van as well as the van the top had come off of was also there. He was happy to see the accessory back in working condition, after literally years of sitting in a field. As Lynn and I sat under the outstretched awning eating our lunch from a period 1960s' cooler, Corvair friends came by and it was fun to just sit back, relax and enjoy the whole atmosphere. I hope you take our FC to local chapter meets and events as their presence at these events is vital to our club's existence and growth.

Recently, on a trip home from the high school I thought the brakes felt a little spongy. As I was waiting behind a stopped school bus, I proceeded to push the brake pedal over and over. Within three or four pumps, I had no brakes!! I got to a local McDonald's using the emergency brake for vital stopping power. After filling the master cylinder I had brakes again, but I knew that something had to be done quickly. After a trip to Gettysburg and The Corvair Ranch I had a rebuilt master cylinder as well as a new brake line, which had rusted through. Now I have brakes again, and my students had fun hearing about Mr. Stiles' journey home from school in his ancient van (which

We've Made it With Old Cars Weekly!

I hope all of our members receive the Old Cars Weekly calendar, as for 1998 it will feature a Corvair Greenbrier--mine! Look for the month of September. This red 1965 Greenbrier is the one I call "Last One", since it was the last one to be ordered out of the factory. In the background of the photo is my 8-car garage, "Corvair Court" (nameplate not visible in the photo).

The process of submitting a photo for the Old Cars calendar is fairly simple from the photographer's standpoint. In one or two issues a year ago, the Weekly published a request for photos of subscriber's cars. The photos (transparencies only) had to be of a single, stock vehicle with pleasing, non-distracting background. No people, pets, window stickers, etc. could be in the picture.

Clearly the photo should be taken with this exact submission in mind, rather than just sending a quickly-taken snapshot. I chose a sunny day, carefully arranged the Greenbrier for best background, and shot one entire roll of film from various angles. Among all of those photos, there was only one that I felt was good enough, so I sent only one. It is often wise to send several selections to let the editors choose, as they may have something specific in mind. Here are the two best hints that I have from many years of photographing vehicles: use a polarizing filter to get rid of the windshield glare and emphasize the curves you like, and try photos from a higher elevation (a stepladder will do). In this case, none of the stepladder photos were to my liking.

This was my second attempt at sending a photo, as they had done the same thing for their 1996 and 1997 calendars (the previous submission was a Crosley. Aha, you say, no wonder it wasn't selected). I don't know how many photos they received for 1998, but in 1995 they got 207 from which they selected the cars for both 1996 and 1997 calendars. That is the difficult part of the process--getting *your* car selected. I have no clue on how they choose, other than that they emphasize American makes, they look for a good variety (not all the same color, not all the same make, etc.), and a panel of their staff members selects the cars. The photos were sent to the attention of James Lenzke. The note I sent along with the photo indicated that they could clear up two misconceptions by publishing this vehicle. First, they could show that there were Greenbriers for the model year 1965 (how often have you read something which shows production as stopping with 1964??). And secondly, they could get it spelled right--with an "e" in brier(not an "a").

Other than the fame, the pay is not too high for this
Continued on page 5.

has already become a vehicle of distinction in the minds of these kids) without brakes.

Only a week of student teaching left before COLLEGE GRADUATION on December 21! Can you tell I am excited about this? Have a great Winter and keep those wheels turning on your favorite Corvair truck.

Ben Stiles

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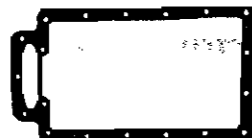
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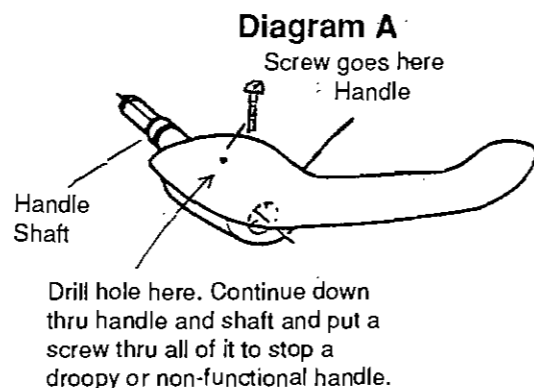


Side Door Adjustment, Striker Plates and Handles

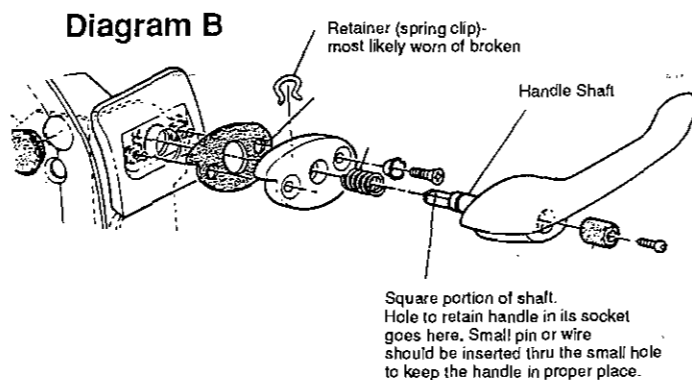
The most aggravating part of my van has always been the side cargo doors. When I first bought the van, the weatherstripping was almost non-existent on the side cargo doors and as such they RATTLED over every single tiny and not-so-tiny bump in the road. This drove me crazy for quite some time. New weatherstrip solved this problem, but the doors were still not properly adjusted. After almost four years, I have finally gotten the doors to where they work well. This required adjusting the striker plates, fixing the worn handle, and welding a plate onto the original cover assembly so that the door would close more solidly. The following describes the processes I went thru in order to achieve this.

Another problem I encountered was the actual handle turning freely on the shaft which is supposed to turn and retract the door bolts, which latch into the striker plates to keep the doors closed. The easiest solution to this problem is to get a very sharp drill bit and drill and a 8/32 stainless steel screw and nylon lock nut. Once all of the materials have been gathered, drill a hole down through the handle, its internal flange, the actual shaft and out the other side. With this done, insert the screw thru and

secure the nut. Now the handle and shaft will be one and the handle will actually operate the door as it is supposed to. (See diagram A)



If your handle happens to pull all the way out of its socket, there is a very easy way to fix this also. Remove the interior door sill, which covers the window regulator. Inside is also the door handle assembly. I was once told that there is nothing to be done about my handle coming all the way out because it was simply pressed in, but close inspection of the assembly manual proved otherwise. There is a spring clip (retainer) that inserts into a groove in the handle shaft. Over the years, this clip had become weak and popped slightly out of position. There is about 1/4" of the square part of the shaft which extends beyond the main assembly. By drilling a small hole through this square part, re-inserting the handle, and placing a small pin or piece of wire through it as a retainer, the handle will once again be a permanent part of your van. (See diagram B).



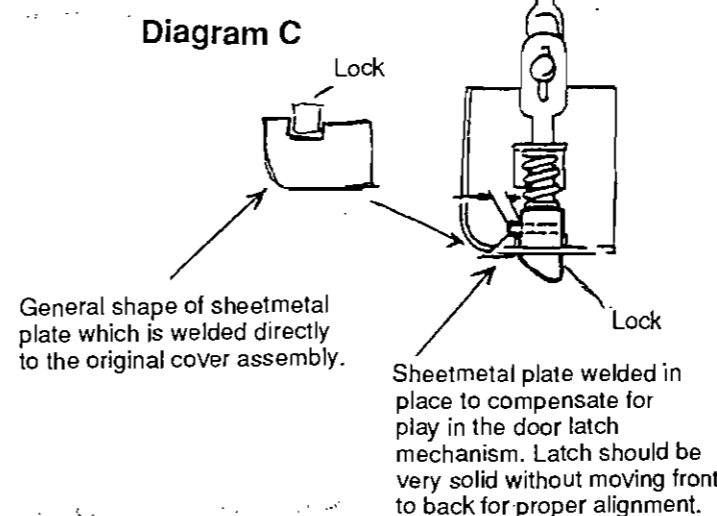
Most of you will notice a lot of play in your lock and rod assemblies. I fixed this problem by making a sheetmetal plate which removed the play created by the original plate being worn from the door being closed hundreds of times over thirty years (See diagram C). Once the plate was welded on, and the excess metal ground away, I also welded the assembly to the body where screws used to hold it. Mine was never tight with the screws, because of the constant use of the doors. Since the metal plate has been installed and should last for another thirty years, I decided that a more permanent installation would benefit me here.

The other problem which has plagued my side doors is the fact that after I had replaced the weatherstrip on the

Continued on page 5

Side Doors & Striker Adjustment

Continued from p. 4



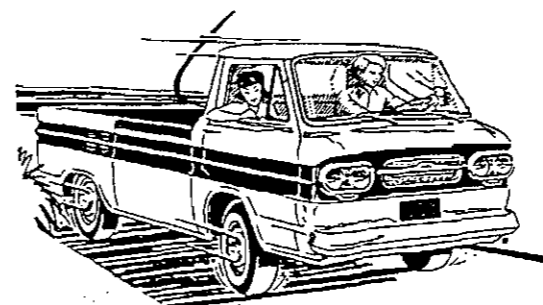
front door, I had to slam it very hard to get it shut. Recently I was able to loosen the screw and bolt securing the bottom striker plate. This occurred after a week of soaking in WD-40, hitting the respective hardware with a hammer to loosen the thirty years of rust which were very present, and using a #4 screwdriver with a vice grip attached to the shank. With this done I moved the striker toward the outer edge of the doorsill, thus closer to the door being closed. After slight adjustment of the rod assembly which controls the lock and rod assembly, I was back in business. Now the door can be closed using one hand positioned in the top corner.

The striker plates differed between early and late FC production. Some are cast metal, which I believe are early, while the later models had pressed metal plates. Mine has three pressed metal and one cast metal plates. I would recommend the pressed metal plates because the cast metal is softer and on my van had worn away substantially from use.

If your doors are a bothersome part of your van as well, perhaps these ideas will help you on your way to easier-closing doors and a quieter van.

Ben Stiles
21 N. Kershaw St.
York PA 17402

Tech Editor's Note- The striker plates for all years of Greenbrier are the same. Any differences between years may have been due to retrofitting of incorrect parts. These striker plates also were used on 1955-60 full-size Chevy trucks.



Old Cars Weekly Calendar

Continued from page 3

whole procedure. The photographer-owner receives 5 free copies of the calendar. But, hey, wouldn't you pay them to put your Corvair in their calendar?

I plan to have this Greenbrier in the concours at St. Louis next summer so everyone can compare it with the calendar photo. There I've said it! Now I have to get to work on it.

On another note: the editor of "This Old Truck" magazine has notified me that an article with photos of my Rampside camper will be published in the March/April issue (mailed in February 1998). This magazine is a great color publication (bi-monthly) featuring all kinds of trucks. They have printed articles about Corvair trucks in the past. Subscriptions are \$20 yearly and can be started in time to receive the March/April issue by calling 1-800-767-5828. It might be wise to specify that you want to start your subscription with that issue if you call anytime close to February.

JeanAllan
50 N. Main, Southport IN 46227

Ben's Bus Camper First Trip

Continued from page 2

it been 100 degrees in the shade, we would probably still have sat inside the van on principle.

We were able to scrounge some firewood for that night's campfire. Little did we know that the fire would be the last



one for the trip. It rained off and on Wednesday, but we still rode the rides in the amusement park all day. That night we got everything set and got ready to settle in for the night. Shortly after eleven the rain came suddenly and continued throughout the night. I worried about leaks in the joints and seams of the camper top as it rained through the night, and was afraid to turn on a light to see the damage.

The morning did not bring any bright sunshine, but it did bring a temporary end to the rain. The condition of the top... NO LEAKS!! We did have extensive condensation inside the van, but I had that before the top was installed, so I was very relieved to see everything, for the most part, DRY.

Ben Stiles

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Words from
the Editor

from page 1

trip with his newly-rennovated Greenbrier camper were worth the wait. I truly wish I could see it "in the real".

I would like to comment a little on Bob Kirkman's letter. I would probably have to agree that we have been getting too few articles of a truly technical nature. Having been there, I also have to realize that it is not easy to take copious and technical notes on a project as we are working on it. We are anxious to get it done and running. And in many cases it is a process of trial and error or of working thru several things that don't work before we finally come upon that combination of tricks, cuts, welds, glue, paint, that completes or satisfies the project, etc. that is at hand. And often we are so focused on the project that documentation is the furthest thing from our mind. Add that to the fact that when the "thing" finally works we are so overjoyed that we just want to drive it . . . it is no wonder that people don't often take the time to submit a Tech Article on the project. I hope this is seen as a "reason" and not an "excuse" for why there are not more technical articles submitted, as I too wish we could have more. Submission of technical articles is a mindset more than anything else and definitely takes planning and determination on the part of the artisan.

So with that said, could I add my plea for more of you to take more care to be able to document your technical innovation or discovery for the benefit of the rest of us in Corvanatics.

That all leads me to disagree with Bob Kirkman in his view that all the measurements, procedures and processes are "generally useless". I believe that it is necessary in some cases to give those directions, so that if anyone wishes to duplicate that innovation for his vehicle we have the directions for doing so. I do believe tho that the directions must be accurate, "followable" and in the right sequence for them to be of any value to the do-it-yourselfer. Now get out there and be innovative and solve those problems that sometimes plague us all. Winter, when so many of us are prevented from actually working on our "treasures", is a good time to think, plan, devise and conjure up those ideas that "just might work" for use next summer when we can put the planning to work.

The article from Jean Allan on the process for submission of pictures for publication on the Old Cars Weekly calendar, or any publication for that matter, brings up a question that has plagued me for some time. And I have to risk the chance of being called sexist here. Just what is

the gender of Jean Allan? I have seen that name come up frequently in Corvair circles for some time. I have craftily tried to read between the lines for any hints and, I'm sorry, but I have just come up emptyhanded. The name is spelled in the feminine; the leadership displayed in the Indianapolis area in planning events would perhaps indicate that the gender is feminine; the handwriting (and I realize that this is *really* going far out on the limb) appears to be feminine. But, this Corvair thing is pretty much a macho, man thing, with support from the ladies to be sure. The fact that Jean has an eight-car garage certainly supports male gender; so does that fact that the garages are apparently full; the fact that one of the apparently favorite vehicles is a camper would indicate that Jean is male. So, I give up. Who can help me? Will the real Jean Allan, dressed in dress or jeans step forward. I hope you readers realize that the above is somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but I don't get to a lot of the national Corvair events, and if I am confused by the animosity of Jean Allan . . . well you see what I mean, there must be others out there who are likewise confused. So how 'bout it, Jean? There, I've said it . . . that ought to spark some response!

David Hartmann, Editor




NEWSLETTER BACK ISSUES UPDATE

Sales of the Full Sets of Newsletters went well. They, of course, are all gone. Now it is time for a "Send me one of everything you've got left" sale. This set will contain a minimum of 50 issues, mostly during the Tom and Carolyn-Ken Kroll years. This is the era when most of the tech tips were published, and, of course, Tom's column "Forward Controlling with the President" appeared. This column was full of little tid-bits of information, and is very interesting reading.

The cost of this set is \$23.00 including shipping. It will contain a new Tech Index also. If you find any issues you want that are not in the set, you will be able to order them from me and I will reprint them from the masters. Single Copy prices are noted in the Tech Index.

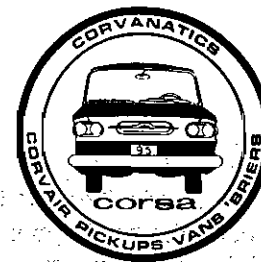
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We publish a newsletter bi-monthly called *CorvanAntics*, which is comprised of stories, technical information and other material of interest to Corvair 95 owners, including a free "For Sale" and "Wanted" section for members. Additionally, we have decals (for inside application) - \$1.00; Jacket Patches - \$2.15; and Club Stationery - 5¢ each.

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CORVANANTICS is the bi-monthly publication of Corvanatics, a Chartered Chapter of the Corvaire Society of America (CORSA). Established September, 1972, Corvanatics is dedicated to preserving and enjoying America's original and most innovative small vans and light trucks, the Chevrolet Corvaire 95 Series.

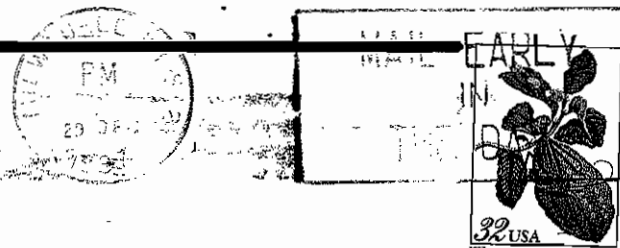
Membership in Corvanatics is open to any CORSA member with an interest in Forward Control Corvaire. Membership applications are available from the Secretary/Treasurer, Diane Galli, 5000 Cascabel Road, Atascadero, CA 93422-2302.

Dues are \$6.00 per year and must be sent to Diane Galli. Sending them to another address will only slow your renewal and possibly cause you to miss an issue. Club Window Stickers are \$1.00 each and Jacket Patches are \$2.15. Club Stationery is 5¢ each sheet, rosters are \$2.00. These are available from Diane Galli only, as are Membership Applications.

Stories, articles, photos or anything of interest to Corvanatics Members should be sent to the editor: David A. Hartmann, 1111 Evergreen Road, Plymouth, WI 53073-4110. Technical material should be sent to the Technical Editor.

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