

# CORVAN ANTICS

VOLUME 16

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JAN & FEB 1988



RAMPSIDE/LOADSIDE



GREENBRIER SPORTSWAGON



CORVAN



including chemotes Motos Division

# **CORVAN**

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

Membership: Holding steady at 300!

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

The Greenbriers of Delbert and Beverly Wulf of Chelan, Washington. Their accompanying article is on page 5 of this issue. The Wulf's wanted to share their experiences and let everyone know that they found FC's to be reliable and safe road vehicles. (But then WE knew that!) They also would like to hear from other members and will answer all letters. Write to them at: Route 1, Box A-144, Chelan, WA 98816.

# 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) is \$4.50

CORVAN ANTICS Technical Index - Complete listing of technical material published between 1972 and 1984.  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  bound - \$1.50 ppd.





# Forward Controlling With The President



We have made our winter trek to sunny Arizona. We had planned during the summer to tow our 1987 Chevrolet Van. However, after having it weighed it wasn't hard to decide to tow a Corvair - the van weighed a shocking 5,140 pounds. The 1967 Monza two door coupe had some leaks around the windshield lower frame where all the best rustproofing couldn't get under a rubber sealer block near the rear outside corner of the air duct inlet. This I didn't want to take the time to repair. Then we decided to get the blue 1964 Greenbrier out of storage, overhaul the engine, and put on a coat of paint. But, Bluebrier had unbelievably deteriorated. Hidden rust, once started, just kept on working while stored in a good dry place.

Having run out of time we pulled the red '65 Greenbrier out of storage. It also had more rust than when we put it away but wasn't that bad. We completely removed the whole front suspension and crossmember and hauled all the parts off to the "metal laundry" at Central Indiana Redistrip. They did a beautiful job of derusting it all and giving it a phosphate coating to help paint adhesion for \$119.00.

This type phosphate coating does not induce hydrogen embrittlement since it is not an acid process. Acid base phosphate conversion coating such as Ospho or other phosphoric acid base materials do cause hydrogen embrittlement. It should not be used on spindles, axles, springs, highly stressed fasteners or any highly stressed parts unless the embrittlement is removed by subjecting the part to a temperature of 300 degrees for two to three hours.

With new ball joints, paint, new bushings and some rustproofing it all went back together with a final application of "Rust Check".

Next we cleaned the fuel tank and sealed it with aircraft fuel tank slushing compound. Just before it was ready to be installed I discovered a loose flake of rust that I had missed in those water catching spherical depressions in the top part of the lower tank section. This turned out to be a leak that the slushing compound could not seal. After checking a total of four tanks, one with no apparent leaks was found. However this one had heavy rust inside and when I removed the vent hose the vent tube solder joint broke loose. After consulting the Redistrip owner again we had the tank derusted and phosphate coated. The vent tube was lost at the stripper so a new one was fabricated. The Redistrip owner assured me that after derusting that any fuel tank can readily be welded, soldered or brazed with no danger, and also that the phosphate coating actually enhances welding, soldering and brazing. I doubted the later assurance but decided to see how it worked. Silver soldering the vent tube was the easiest and best silver braze operation that I have ever done, and I have done many. The whole operation cost \$35 for derusting, \$6 for phosphate coating, \$4 for sealing and about \$2 for cold galvanizing paint and Texaco Rustproofing. Now I know how to repair all those other rusty tanks.

We got it all together and headed southwest the day after Christmas. We encountered rain until we were about ready to enter Texas. Then the sun came out and the weather was sunny all the way to Mesa, Arizona.

In Mt. Pleasant, Texas I saw a KOA and decided to stop approximately 100 miles short of our goal for the day. It was a stroke of good luck that we decided to stop for when we stopped Caroline exclaimed, "Oh my, look at all the oil on the back of the Greenbrier!" Examination revealed that the twenty-three year old oil cooler hose had ruptured.

The next morning, at 27 degrees and a wind chill temerature of zero, I started to take the oil cooler lines out of the transmission. One fitting was in so tight that it broke off. If it had been a return line it could have been plugged with a plastic plug but this was the pressure fitting. Now something else had to be repaired.

Fortunately I always carry an electric drill motor and drills in the motorhome. The KOA owner offered to take me to a hardware store where I bought an eighth-inch pipe tap. With some very careful drilling and tapping I could plug both transmission ports with pipe plugs and be on our way. However, one agonizing question remained. Had the transmission been damaged?

It took two and one-half quarts of transmission oil to bring the oil level up to normal. I knew the front pump worked since I had used the oil pressure from that pump to blow the drill chips out of the port. Now was the time for a tell all road test. Dashing down the road for what seemed like an eternity the transmission shifted into high range thus indicating that the rear pump also worked. Now, after two weeks of running around locally the trusty Powerglide is still operating satisfactorily.

This local driving revealed another problem. A loud clicking noise that had a frequency about twice that of wheel rotation became audible. This problem turned out to be the left "U"-joint bearing outer races slipping in the differential output shaft yoke. A good used yoke and a new U-joint were bought from friend Howard Boso (Corvair enthusiast, former Chevrolet dealer mechanic, garage owner and operator, Ultravan enthusiast and one of the finest people that I have ever met).

Even with all the problems that we have encountered with the Greenbrier we are enjoying driving it. Many people have said, "Why do you bother to pull a car that old?" The many miles we have traveled either towing or driving a Corvair have really been relatively free of trouble. I like to compare the Corvair troubles with those we have had with our almost new (3,000 miles) Chevrolet Motor Home. On our first long trip southwest the weights on the driveshaft fell off and terribly imbalanced the driveshaft. We found the U-joint yoke welded to the driveshaft four degrees out of proper alignment. The shop where we had it balanced told us that four degrees wasn't

### SEE THE USA

Dave Palmer said it in his "Turn at the Wheel" in the September 1987 Communique, and that was exactly what I had in mind when I started restoring our Greenbrier in January of 1987. It did not run - we found it under an Oak tree.

I rebuilt a 110 for it, converted it from a 4-speed to an automatic, gave it a new paint job inside and out, transplanted some bucket seats from a 2005X and other items like carpeting, weatherstripping and a double bed mattress in the rear. It's pretty crowded, but it works and is very comfortable.

On July 7th, with 39 miles on HRBRIER, Diane and I started our eastward journey. We stayed a couple days in "The Biggest Little City In The World" pulling the handles on the slots. We saw the place where the boys set all the land speed records. We passed by "the Temple". We passed through the herds of antelope in Wyoming. We had "Free Ice Water At Wall's Drug" in South Dakota. We saw the Four Fella's on the mountain outside of Rapid City. We went north to Deadwood and saw the place where ol' Wild Bill held his Aces and Eights. Saw the gold mine that gave the Hearst family their start. Watched the Blue Jays beat the Twins at Homer Dome. Drove by fields of succotash in Wisconsin. HRBRIER saw one of her sisters dart down an alley in Madison. Saw lots more of her sisters at a place called Arlington Heights. We went there to see "Our Kinda Car". It was great except the boys from Texas brought their weather with them.

On to Coopertown where "The Babe", "The Iron Horse" and others are enshrined and James Fennimore is entombed. Drove through the covered bridges of Vermont and New Hampshire and toured the granite quarries. Ate lobster at "Bah Habah", strolled the decks of the "Constitution", saw the "Big Green Monster" at Fenway. Went through the textile outlets and Battleship Cove at Fall River. Saw the four-masted schooners at Mystic Seaport.

Headed south to Virginia and saw the first Monza at Wade Lanning's, passed through the tobacco fields in North Carolina, got a preview of Ashville for next year. Got our Bar-B-Q stolen in Tennessee. I guess the boys thought it was my toolbox.

We stopped by to see Dollie but she wasn't home. We stood where Hank stood at Ryman. We'll save dining on the General Jackson for next year.

Down in Texas we saw the Capitol, the empty office buildings, and the place where Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie and others faught and died. North to Lubbock, Clovis and Albuquerque. It will have to be a cold day before I go back to Texas and that humidity again. On to Gallup, Flagstaff, then North to Ely, and west to Reno again and on to the Mini in San Jose. From the Mini to the Aquarium in Monterey and home to Atascadero, CA on August 23rd - 48 days on the road in HRBRIER. 9900 miles later. It was great!

Neither Diane nor I had ever ridden in a Greenbrier before, so it was a new experience for us. It is, without a doubt, the most comfortable vehicle we have ever ridden in. Nearly everything mechanical was replaced with new or rebuilt for less than the price of a so-so Rice Burner, and the many hours of labor were paid for by the

self-satisfaction of a job well-done.

Like Dave (or somebody) said: "SEE THE USA IN YOUR CHEVROLET" (Corvair, Naturally!)

P.S. Who said they wouldn't get 100 miles from home?

Bob Galli

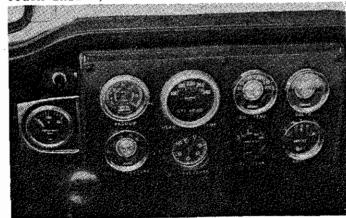
#### '64 BRIER SAVED

This is a continuation of a story that I started about a year ago. I had bought a 1964 Greenbrier out of a junkyard to rebuild as daily transportation.

To get things started, I'll go into some of the basics as to the general condition. The van had apparently been painted a short time before, inside and out. However, it had been painted with lacquer and had been left outside without any care and it was rather dull. So a new paint job was in order. In the meantime a new engine was needed and what it came with wasn't a van engine. Also, the differential looked like someone tried to take it apart and put it back together. The transmission was in good condition, a 4-speed. So I built a 95 HP engine and put a 3:27 differential in with the 4-speed.

The interior was in need of some care and after trying to find a door panel here and a seat cover there, and in good condition to use with what I had, I opted to recover and modify. I had all three seats recovered at an upholstery shop. The next step was the inside door panels. Recovering was out of the question. So I decided to make my own! That was fun (not in the best sense of the word). It may be a good tech topic for later, however. After building the panels, the overhead needed something, so a bit of carpeting did nicely and was great as an insulator.

As things came slowly together, the Greenbrier finally started to take shape. New carpet from front to back from Clark's added the finishing touch inside, almost.



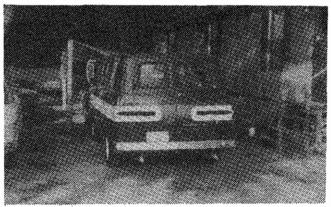
I built a guage panel that goes where the radio was. It houses two cylinder head temperature guages, oil pressure, oil temperature, amps, volts, fuel pressure, vacuum and differential/transmission temperature guages. I think I am covered over the idiot lights. Where's the radio? Overhead, where else? Yep, it's an AM/FM cassette, just like a Caddy too, seek/scan, clock and digital, and with a power antenna.

Mechanics of the van went farther than I would have thought, but well worth it in the long run. I rebuilt all the wiring, headlights to taillights. Even soldered new sockets in and put all the wiring in the wire loom stuff like the new cars. Made everything nice and neat. I did change the generator over to an alternator with an internal regulator. So with all the wiring done, it might look like it came that Way.

Brakes were rebuilt from master cylinder to wheel cylinder. Springs were replaced, new steel and rubber lines and even new wheel cylinders. And it does stop good! I have had the opportunity arise to try the brakes out. suddenly, as some of the driving spectators were not very careful about what lane of traffic they were trying to drive in (mine) and what lane they should have been in.

New shocks were in order, as the originals were slightly worn with 98,000+ miles to their life. I installed '84 Impala front shocks, gas filled on the rear and standard heavy duty on the front. I think the gas filled would have worked on the front as well, but such is life. live and learn.

Some nice white spoke custom wheels, (I had the white belt on the van painted the same shade of white) and some fat Riken radials for the road made for a good handling Forward Control. As a matter of fact, my wife made the comment that my Greenbrier handles better and



more like a car than tose new "mini-vans", and she has a job that allows her to drive a lot different types and kinds of cars and trucks.

So now with about 8,000 miles on my "new" Greenbrier and averaging 19-20 MPG in town, I must say that the work was well worth it. I don't think I could put money into a new car or truck and get what I have with my Greenbrier. Especially the looks. I don't think any of the new vans get the attention my Greenbrier gets. Corvairs may have their problems, but so do new cars, but not at the same expense as new cars. I like mine!

I think that one of the biggest thrills is when when we pull up in the parking lot at church on a Sunday morning and get all the amazed looks from others with their mini-vans, when they see all the space we have left inside the van before we unload our three boys!

# THE WULF TRAVELS

My wife and I became interested in Corvairs when we bought a 1963 Monza 4-door automatic for \$60. It was completely disassembles with the powertrain out. We really struggled until we bought some manuals and found out about Clark's Corvair Parts.

We have been full-time Corvair drivers ever since and are lifetime members of CORSA.

The next Corvair to come along was a 1963 Greenbrier which we restored and drove over 75,000 miles. At that time we lived in Iowa and attended the CORSA Conventions in Minneapolis, Detroit, Atlanta, Seattle, Denver and also three Hossier Auto Shows at Indianapolis. Indiana. On the trip to Denver we were gone 39 days pulling a Nimrod trailer and travelled 6500 miles from Iowa to Seattle to Mexico, Phoenix and then to Denver and home.

We went to Florida from Iowa in January four years in the Greenbrier with the trailer and two children. Want you to know it was always warm in the Greenbrier and there is no better place to rest than on the bed over the engine cover of a van travelling the Interstate.

In July 1984 we retired and made two trips to Chelan, Washington from Iowa in our newly restored 1961 yellow Greenbrier. It has now made 4½ trips from Washington to Iowa for 25,000 miles total.

My wife and I have restored the 1963 Monza. 1963 Greenbrier, 1965 Corsa, two 1965 Monzas and the 1961 Greenbrier we have now. I have just bought a 1965 Monza that we are in the process of restoring.

We have travelled over 100,000 miles in Corvairs across the United States from Iowa to Washington and also from Canada to Mexico without much trouble except the normal fanbelts and one electrical problem that we bypassed in the engine compartment.

In Atlanta with a 140 HP engine we dropped a valve seat, so we removed a rocker arm and drove home 950 miles on five cylinders. It ran good. We have had 30 Corvairs and enjoy them and use them for all transportation and trips.

I want to comment on the fear of driving Corvairs long distances and about overheating. We pulled the Nimrod trailer thousands of miles over mountain passes and across the desert without overheating. Corvairs will not overheat if you maintain the engine and keep it full of oil and the oil cooler clean.

Delbert and Beverly Wulf

#### MORE FC/TV

Another FC/TV "find". Remember the television series "Alice" starring Linda Lavin? What makes the Stage Manager of that show so special to CORVANATICS members? Answer: His name -DON CORVAN!

William "Dal" Dalrymple

# Tech Topics







FC DRIVETRAIN TENDERNESS

The FC drivetrain is subject to deterioration in several areas. All are gradual, but some don't make themselves known until one final revolution.

AXLE SHAFT BEARINGS have previously been discussed at length. If you are lucky enough to hear them rumble before they "go" you are fortunate. Walt Kostelnic of DACC had some rumble. He did the bearing regrease job and all is quiet now. Only time will tell how much damage was done and when it will decide a shot of grease was not permanent.

PINION SHAFT SPLINES have also been covered at length. This is a deterioration involving manual transmissions only, and the 3:89 ratio is the hardest hit. You never know about a problem until the last revolution until the splines wipe out.

CLUTCH problems could be more of a clutch cable problem. Sticky cables lead to a chattering clutch engagement, and shock to the whole drivetrain.

4-SPEED TRANSMISSION NEEDLE BEARINGS are a real threat to your driving enjoyment. The biggest problem is with the needle bearings and counter shaft on the 1st gear end (rearward end) of the counter gear (or cluster gear). First gear loads are high on the FC transmission. The needle bearings and shaft have proven to be inadequate. Rollers pit and the shaft spalls (the surface gets eroded or eaten away). Eventually the cluster gear bore can be ruined. Wear particles circulate in the oil and further deteriorate other parts. This wear-out is evident as growls in 1st gear and to some extent in second gear. Third gear and high are less noticed because they involve gear teath on the other end of the counter gear, putting less load on the bad rollers and shaft. Correction is a rebuild with new bearings and shaft. Torrington no longer markets needles for the counter gear nor for the mainshaft (another tender spot). The Corvair supply houses still have some at high dollar. GM still has some stock, but the counter gear needles seemingly have been mis-priced at \$1.00 each. Ninety-two pieces are needed. Wow! A transmission and axle repair shop might have some stock left. Of course you can always install the favored trans of Bob Marlow; a Powerglide!

A number of issues ago we also covered installation of a Saginaw 4-speed. It's sized to do the job, but the FC didn't hang around in production long enough to see the Saginaw trans.

#### FC VENT WINDOW RUBBER

It's official now! The Lynn H. Steele Co. will reproduce the FC vent window rubber. Part number is C-38-CS and price is \$65 for a pair. This is the angled piece, complete. The straight section on the division post will be seperate. No part number or price at the time of this writing. They say the

straight piece will probably be an existing section, cut to length.

When you do the whole vent window job, you may want to order the long, chrome bead window run #Cl103R from Clark's.

The Rubber from Lynn H. Steele should be available in April at 1601 Hwy 150 East, Denver, NC 28037

EXHAUST VALVE ROTATORS

Every FC has exhaust valve rotators to keep the valves from burning. Right? Wrong!

When the 1961 FC first hit the road, out of the dealers, they did not have rotators. Bad news concerning burned valves was quickly being accumulated. I was on order to buy a "company car" - an engineering vehicle that had been driven at least 3500 miles, and was sold <u>used</u>, with me as the first titled owner. I had a friend at Chevrolet Flint Mfg. order the Greenbrier, as he really piled on the miles. About two days before he was to turn in the vehicle for sale (to me) he brought it into the Chevy Engineering Center with a burned valve. The garage pulled the engine and sent it to the motor room for repair. I told the valve engineer what had happened and he had the motor room rebuild the heads with rotators. They were being released for production, but were not yet in production. That made the heads (and engine) technically "experimental", and Chevrolet Engineering was not supposed to sell experimental parts. Besides that, the purchase paperwork went through and I paid for the vehicle while it was still in pieces in the garage. This also greatly disturbed the administrative chief at the Engineering Center. However, after lecturing me about a few things, the deal progressed and I was on the road with the first public use of an FC with exhaust valve rotators. Somewhere "out there" are early 1961 FC's without these nice Lazy Susans for the valves.

#### GOOD LOOKING SEAT BACKS

The back side of the front, second and third seat backs are always taking a beating. The covering gets poked and pressed by big knees, little feet and misc. cargo. The covering gets deformed around every framework wire and coil spring end. The backs get tired looking very easily. It's too late now, but you can make it look better when you decide to have the seats recovered. Cut a one-piece section of corrugated cardboard or 1/8 inch masonite to fit just inside the frame tubing. After the new cover is pulled over the back frame, slip the "panel" in under the cover and finish hog-ringing the cover along the bottom edge. This firm backing prevents the cover from being pressed against the wires, etc.

#### FC Classified Ad

1964 Corvan. 4-speed. 110 HP engine. Less than 10,000 miles since rebuild. White color. Excellent condition. Ev Callow. PO Box 52, Valley Forge, PA 19481 (215)933-1984.

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW

EVERYTHING ABOUT THE FC...

The license plate light housings on vans and wagons can or should have a glass lens in it. I have rarely seen a vehicle with them. The GM part number for this lens is 5949532 (Gr. 2.709). It is listed as the license lens for the 1960 cars and it looks like a large. clear, heavy sewing thimble. This part fits perfectly in the housing, making sense since any lit bulb can break if exposed to rain and would reduce the common problem of corroded sockets. Also, you'll find the socket base inside the plastic housing has a rubber gasket to seal against the lense base, holding it snugly in place. This is either a forgotten stock part, a freak match-up or engineers had it in mind but was forgotten or dropped during production. The fit is just too good to be an accident.

(Sounds like a question for the professor... any idea, Larry? How about you, Dave Newell? Bob Kirkman? ed.)

(article supplied by Resurrection Corvairs)

#### **BRIER SWAN SONG**

The Hopewell, VA show was the Swansong for my Senior Division 'Brier. We sold it to a local collector in July 1987. We bought it new July 17, 1962 and sold it after we owned it for twenty-five years (A long ago promise to myself!)

'Brier closed out its show career with a 2nd at Sommerville, SC and a 1st at Hope-well, NJ. Not a bad Swansong.

Our thanks to you for publishing my "'Brier" story. Many people mentioned it at the Hopewell show and that you cut it at a weak place. Thanks again.

Bill & Ele Amey

\$4315.62

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

June 30, 1986 to June 30, 1987

Balance as of June 30, 1986 \$2762.88

Receipts:
Dues
Decals
Patches
Stationary
Newsletters
Paint index
Tech index
Misc. \$15

\$1552.74

CORVANATICS has 300 members

Disbursements:
Newsletters \$ 716.53
Stamps 566.88
PIP 76.48
Supplies 47.38
Nico DeJong \$ 114.08
\$ \$ 1521.35

Balance as of June 30, 1987 \$2794.27

Caroline Silvey Sect/tres CORVANATICS

# From The Editor's

## **Glovebox**



You may have noticed the great Gene Brier cartoon we had in the last issue. Well, I just received three more from member Don Richmond, Sr. of Pensacola, FL. Looks like we finally have another "staff" cartoonist. Thanks, Don!

As you will (or have) read in this issue, Tom and Caroline are now snow-birding in Arizona, and they very graciously offered to insert, fold, staple, address, stamp and mail out this issue for me. Thanks for the welcome break!!!

I just took my '64 Corvan on another long off-road trip, this one was 41 miles of bad dirt road (each way!) to a place called Sheep Crossing on the Verde River. This old FC never ceases to amaze me with its performance - sure makes a great Jeep. This Spring I'm planning on starting a serious camper conversion in preparation for a long camping trip this summer up into the High Sierras. Right now it's only carpeted and panelled. I'm planning on adding a counter unit with sink, water, icebox and stove and a rear seat that converts to a bed. If you have any ideas or plans for such a unit, please contact me ASAP.

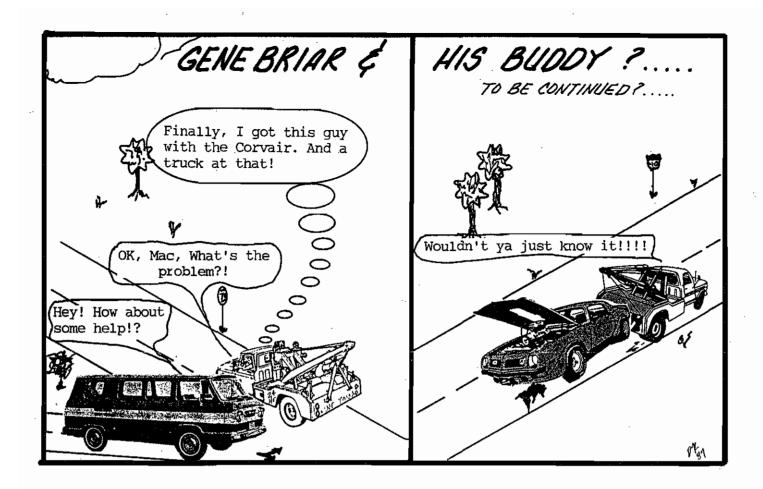
As always, we need to hear from you! We had some really good articles in this issue and the great ALL TECH issue last time, but as for the next issue, ZIP. Please sit down, take a few minutes and write up that story, article, anecdote - any old thing that you think we all might enjoy. You don't have to be an expert writer either, just jot down your ideas and we'll take it from there. By the way, Dave Palmer, will that article on your High Sierra trip be ready for the next issue???

(PREZ - con'd)

bad, they had found some off as much as twenty degrees. Apparently this is not the fault of Chevrolet. The blame goes to Winnebago when they lengthened the wheelbase. Then, soon after that incident, the left front air bag failed (this is common to Chevrolet). At 4,000 miles the sparkplugs fouled so badly that we could hardly make it over the Interstate over passes. The cruise control failed. The troubles go on and on but with Chevrolet and Winnebago both being at fault. However the point is that new vehicles aren't always any better than a good used one. So don't fault a Corvair just because it is old. Our failed oil cooler hose lasted twentythree years while the fuel hoses and fuel valve on our motorhome lasted about a year before failing.

Well, that is what has happened to us. How has your FC been treating you lately? Write and let Editor Ken know so he can let us all know. Also, how about checking those FC serial numbers for Ken's serial number hunt?

Tom Silvey



CORVAN ANTICS 17433 N. 16th LN Phoenix, AZ 85023

FIRST CLASS



**CORVANATICS** 

THE FORWARD CONTROL CORVAIR PEOPLE