



# CORVAN ANTICS

VOLUME 13

NUMBER 5

SEPT & OCT 1985



RAMP/LOADSIDE



GREENBRIER SPORTSWAGON



CORVAN

Illustration Chevrolet Motor Division



**...out of a sow's ear**

# CORVAN ANTICS

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

Membership **305**

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 beautiful 1964 Rampside/Cree camper owned by the Irwin Family of Riverside, California. Cover photo and article elsewhere in this issue by Jack Irwin. Also in this issue is Tom Silvey's report on the 1985 CORSA National in Houston, a photo collage from the Convention and in Tech Topics a look at a very useful FC option that never made the option lists.

## Forward Controlling With The President



The main topic among Corvair enthusiasts at this time of the year is the CORSA National Convention. It seems I always get to report on this yearly event, but find it difficult to report on the whole Convention when, really, we go there to have a good time and attend only the activities that we enjoy.

Caroline and I spent a week leisurely driving down the Mississippi Valley visiting Civil War battle sites, antebellum mansions and other interesting places. On Saturday night, as planned, we met vice-president Ed Gridley, wife Betty and the Riddles in the New Orleans KOA-West.

We visited the French Quarter at night and revisited it in the daytime. After touring other New Orleans attractions and stuffing ourselves with

good food (shrimp, crayfish, steak) we headed toward Texas on Tuesday morning. A visit to the Tabasco Sauce factory on Avery Island, Louisiana warmed our noses and whetted our tastes for the "Hot Stuff".

We arrived in Houston right in the middle of the late afternoon rush hour traffic. The freeway was running full bumper to bumper and stopped completely at 75-100 yard intervals. While this bothered some people it didn't bother me at all since I've been accustomed to it for years.

I don't know when we first visited the hospitality room, since we went there so many times. However, there is no way that one could forget having been there, for without a doubt it was one of the two best convention hospitality rooms (remember 1982 in Syracuse, New York?) we've seen in 10 years of convention attendance. In addition, Texans, and especially the Corvair Houston club members, really know what true "Southern Hospitality" means.

We toured the NASA Space Center and took the Houston Harbor tour. They were enjoyable but slightly reminded me of my Army days in Texas - "hurry up and wait".

In addition to a well manned registration desk, Corvair Houston members had an information table offering good information on travel, maps, local watering holes, places to eat, shopping, tours, etc., and answers to almost any other tourist question.

Also doing a good business was the Corvair Houston "Mad Hatter", where one could buy almost any style of Texas straw hat to protect one's brain from being scorched by the Texas sun. My new hat got well used during the remainder of the trip.

The parts swap area wasn't too well stocked and prices just weren't conducive to carrying home anything that you really didn't need for your Corvair. However it was a good (but hot) place to meet people and talk about our favorite subject - Corvairs.

Our CORVANATICS Annual Meeting was well attended with 65-70 present. We didn't beat rear wheel bearings to death this year as in the past, and we tried not to analyze all the problems that one single person had on the way to the convention, as previously. We had a reasonably good technical question and answer session and Larry Claypool presented a tech tip on how to make FC control cables.

Plans to video tape the meeting were upset when I found I didn't bring my camera tripod. We took a lot of pictures with Caroline's new camera. Many are a bit too dark but perhaps Ken can print some of them. (At least I had film in the camera this year).

Only got to attend two technical sessions. The session on the Carter YH carburetor was excellent. The session on Amsoil was interesting and informative.

The Concours was good but had some disappointments. Only 32 cars were entered, two of which were FC's - one Rampside and the best looking Greenbrier I've ever seen. Bringing the total entries to 35 were Joe Burch's Corvair powered helicopter, Pete Koehler's Ultravan and Ed Thompson's Corvair bicycle. The Concours was inside, under fluorescent light, on carpet and with air conditioning (lucky for the judges). Except for some very good cars that turned out to be winners, it seemed that there were many good Corvairs displayed in the parking lot that looked better than the show cars. Please note that my comments are not intended as criticism of



## SOW EARS, et al.

My Grandfather used to say, as he surveyed my collection of cars, I would bring home that I could make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Here is the saga of "SOW EARS", our 1964 Rampside.

Most Corvair owners know the feeling. The phone rings and the caller says "Do you want to buy another Corvair?" The standard answer is "No", but better tell me about it and there you go again. In this case a customer of an insurance adjuster has this Rampside, enough said, I am familiar with the customer, a local Chevy dealer that had purchased the Rampside in November of 1963 for his shop truck. It was used until January of 1972 and then parked behind the shop, where it stayed until I purchased it in May 1982. It had a good body, correct engine and 4-speed. I trailered it to my shop and we decided we had to hear it run. We hooked up a drill to the oil pump and let it run for about 20 minutes. We also hooked up a five gallon can of gas, installed a battery, primed the carbs, hit the switch and it started right up. Other than dried out accelerator pumps it ran fine. We rebuilt the carbs, installed Viton "O"-rings, repacked the rear axle bearings, changed the oil, a quick tune and I had an excellent Rampside.

About this time We started planning our vacation. Along with our son Jeff, his wife Sheryl and our Grand daughter Kerri who was two, we decided to go back home to Huntington, WV. A Greenbrier van would have been nice, but we didn't have one and our Pontiac was too small, so it was up to old Sow Ears. We still needed more room, sooooo... about that time I saw a "Cree" camper in Fresno about 200 miles away. As luck would have it Jeff had to be in Fresno the following week on business. Needless to say we bought the "Cree". The wives said "that's nice, but no way are we going to travel 6000 miles without an air conditioner, especially in September". No problem, we built an air conditioning unit, actually Jeff was just finishing the insulation the evening we left. Would you believe it rained two full weeks and we did not turn on the air until the last day on the return home? We drove 6700 miles, four adults and one child, got 19MPG and used two quarts of oil. No problems. We have since traveled to the Seattle Convention, several trips to Tahoe and many Corvair functions.

We now have 25,000 miles since installing the camper shell. The air conditioning drops the gas mileage to 17MPG.

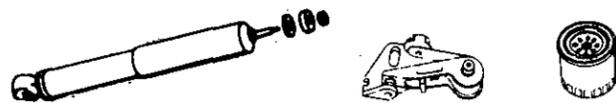
Our second 1964 Rampside we learned about at one of our Inland Empire Corvair meetings. One of our members had spotted a Rampside at a local cemetery three years earlier and had left his card. They had called him on the day of our meeting and said the truck leaked oil so bad no one would drive it, and would he be willing to purchase it? He told them to hold tight and someone would get back to them. In a couple of days Jeff owned our second Rampside. They were the original owners, having purchased the truck in 1964. The truck is very original. We repaired the oil leak on the spot by replacing the defective crank pulley and damaged oil filter.

Our third 1964 Rampside was advertised in Pasadena as a 1961 Corvair camper in storage. It turned out to be a 1964 custom cab with camper shell parked in an alley and owned by the proverbial little old lady from Pasadena, complete with white tennis shoes. We decided to tow this one to Jeff's house in South Pasadena. As we were leaving she stopped us and asked us if we wanted the ramp they had removed in 1972 that was still sitting in the garage. We were really lucky there.

We have just added a 1964 Van to our collection. Now if we can just get them all painted.

Jack Irwin

# Tech Topics



## STEERING BOOMERANG REBUILD

My second shot at a rebuilder of Boomerangs was not making progress. Parts and prints have now been sent to a third prospect. One of the items he has to consider is protection against liability claims. More to follow in subsequent issues of CORVAN ANTICS.

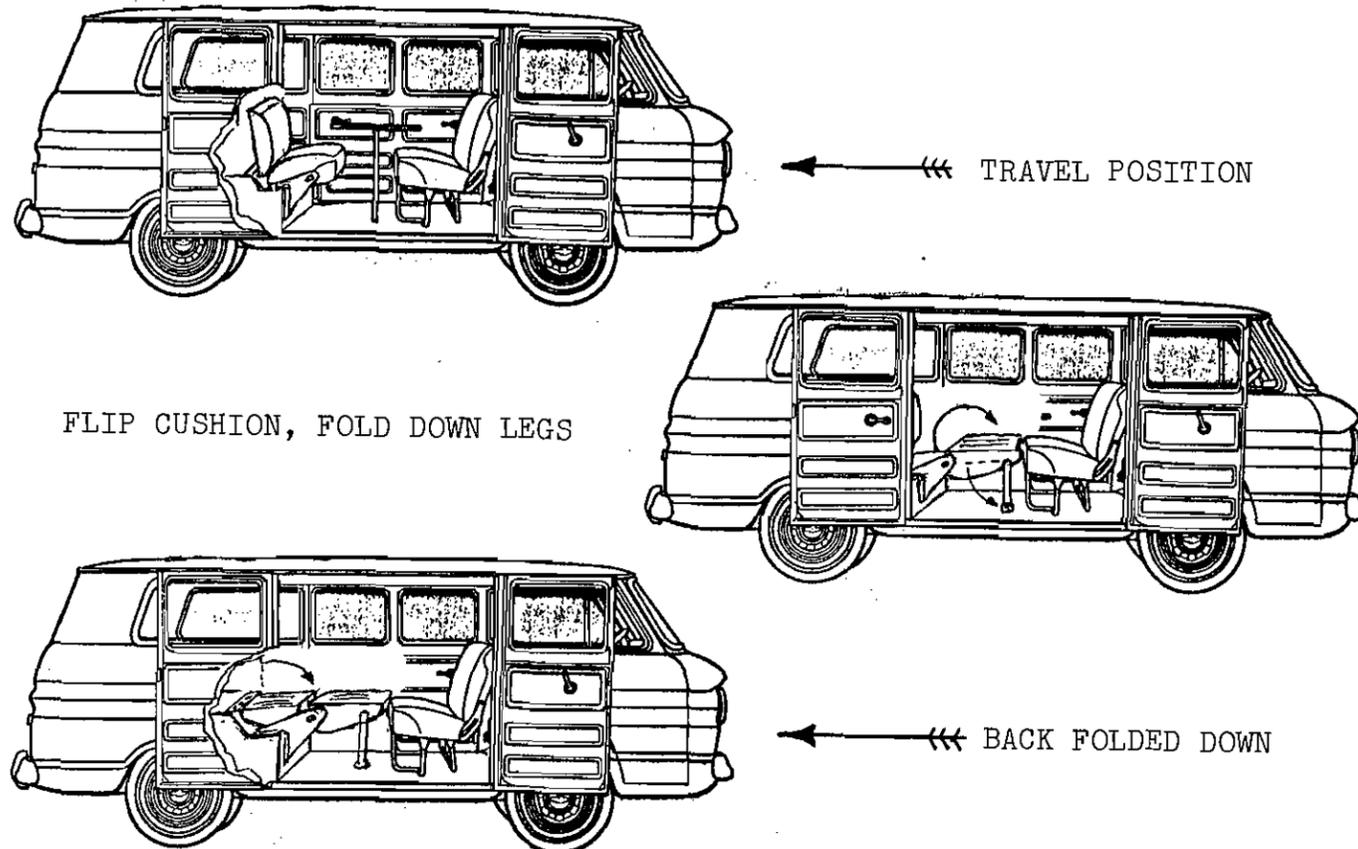
## REAR AXLE SHAFT BEARINGS

CORVANATICS members continue to become exposed to ball bearing "replacements" for axle shaft bearings. I suggest you all pull out the JAN/FEB 1985 issue and read it again. If any of our members are now running ball bearings, please get in contact with me so that I might learn how your experience is progressing.

## FOLDING THIRD SEAT

Chevrolet Engineering did design a folding third seat. One prototype seat was built for the FC Body staff engineer's vehicle (1961 model). The vehicle was modified in several other respects and so was torched and crushed rather than being sold as a used vehicle. The seat, however was saved and used in a private vehicle until 1969. It was stored for essentially ten years and then received a re-trim job and appeared in a "restored" 1964 Greenbrier for the 1979 Detroit Convention. That vehicle was sold in 1980 and then was sold again. Somewhere "out there" someone owns the only prototype folding seat ever made by Chevrolet.

I have searched for photographs, but find no good ones, so I will explain the concept.



When folded flat, the seat became a load floor that continued the engine compartment floor forward to the second seat, which had to be mounted backward. The bottom side of the cushion was a ribbed metal panel, just like the floor. Back of the seat back was also a ribbed metal panel. The cushion flopped forward ala somersault. The seat back flopped down to span the hole left by the cushion.

The metal floor was then flat and plenty long to accept a double air mattress and sleeping bag. A youngster could sleep on the second seat and another on the front seat. Sleeping accomodation quickly accomodated a family of four without a camper package. Construction for cushion and back (under the metal flooring) was plywood with solid "foam rubber" rather than springs and cotton padding.

The back was hinged to the load floor using screws that are already there (the ones that are almost impossible to remove). The back rested on "seat back bumpers" against the end of the engine air chambers along each wall. The back also latched (upright position) to the chambers. The cushion pivoted from the front edge from brackets that were attached to the floor step-up panel. Only 4 or 5 holes had to be drilled in the floor for each bracket, and all were easy access to drill and put nuts on the bolts.

You can refer to the sketches to clarify operation. I had the engineering drawing number kicking around for years, and now can't find it. The drawing would still exist on microfilm, but after 25 years it would take a stroke of luck to find anyone in Engineering with a list that gave that number. With no number, you can't locate the microfilm.

Robert Kirkman

PREZ - Con'd from page 35

the Corvair Houston club or the participants. This is the tenth consecutive convention for us and it seems that after the huge number of show cars at Philadelphia in 1976 each convention has experienced diminishing numbers of show car participants - let's hope the trend is reversed soon. You may have noticed that I never report on any driving events. It isn't that I don't like them, but it seems they are always scheduled at the same time as other events that we like a little better, or just before the CORVANATICS meeting.

The Convention ended with the awards banquet. Two FC's were entered in the concours, with Michael DiGennaro's 1962 Rampside winning first with 87.4 points and Richard Hull's beautifully modified 1964 Greenbrier was second with 79.6 points. Ribbons were awarded to those entered in the parking lot car display as follows: 1st - Richard Eastburn's 1963 Greenbrier, Guy Bobkoff's 1961 Greenbrier was 2nd, and Marvin Haven's 1961 Rampside was 3rd. For additional information see the CORSA Communique, Vol.7, #9. Also note that in that issue, as well as many other printed materials and sometimes in my writings that the FC Greenbrier is spelled wrong, it should be spelled "Greenbrier".

At the Convention, Guy and Pat Bobkoff did an excellent job of helping CORVANATICS when we needed anything and provided us with Chevrolet filmstrips on car and FC body repairs. They are on loan to us now and we will be making copies both on film and VHS video tape.

Tom Silvey

Gene Brick  
&  
his buddy "FC"



I'm not so sure  
I want my money  
insured by anyone  
who is over a  
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debt.

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