

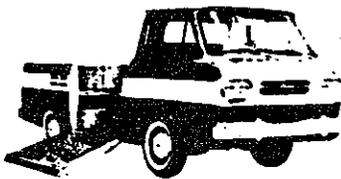


# CORVAN ANTICS

VOLUME 15

NUMBER 2

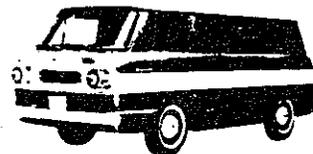
MARCH & APRIL 1987



RAMPSIDE/LOADSIDE



GREENBRIER SPORTSWAGON



CORVAN

ILLUSTRATION BY CHEVROLET MOTOR DIVISION



# CORVAN ANTICS

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

Membership **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

A scene from the life of the Forward Control Corvair, taken from the front cover of "1964 Chevrolet Trucks - Corvair 95 Models". I hope to reprint several other items from this take-home sales brochure in the months to come.

## In This Issue

Part one of Bill Amey's story of his family's life with 'Brier, the Greenbrier they purchased brand new and which finally became a prize-winning show car in recent years. Bob Marlow's latest literary work explains "Why a Corvair Truck?", floor sweepings in Tech Topics, and Tom Silvey's last report from sunny (?) Arizona.

## 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 listings of Technical material published between 1972 and 1984. 8½ x 11 bound - \$1.50 ppd.

## Forward Controlling With The President



Rain-Rain-Rain- would you believe it's rained pretty hearty here in the Arizona Desert for three days? Must be a record. And when do Corvair fan belts decide to let go? During a rain naturally.

I hadn't been liking the way the Corvair was running so I had my ears tuned just listening for problems, when all of a sudden this horrible metallic grating sound jolted me. Instantly I shifted to neutral and coasted out of heavy traffic onto a side street while visions of a failed timing gear or other failed parts flashed before my eyes. The worst always comes to mind when you're 1700 miles from home. However, as I reached for the ignition switch I realized that the engine was turning over very smoothly. Then I dashed out to raise the deck lid and found the failed fan belt. At my signal Caroline shut the engine off. The idler pulley continued to turn for what seemed like an eternity as I dug out the tools and spare fan belts. The noise I heard was when the broken belt end hit the fan!

My highly prized super wrapped fan belt and another badly cracked old belt were stored just beneath the spare tire. I had saved the wrapped belt for just such an occasion. After trying to get the good belt over the pulleys I discovered that the belt was too short. I unbolted the alternator since that was quicker than trying to get the idler pulley much out of the proper position. Headed for a parts store and kept hearing this strange drumming sound which turned out to be the belt vibrating something terrible.

To my surprize the Big A auto parts store had a super strength Gates belt for a Corvair for \$9.42.

The point of this incident is just because a Corvair parts vendor sells you a fan belt do not blindly accept it as the right one - check it out for size.

A REMINDER: At the 1986 National Convention and at other times Larry Claypool has indicated that the GM front crankshaft seal, and those made by Chicago Rawhide Seal Co., should not be used since they seldom last more than 4000 miles. Well, I thought I would try it one more time so I took one from a fairly new Felpro seal kit (subject seal made by CR Co.) and installed it one my latest overhaul. It started to leak at about 4000 miles. So take the old pro's advice (Claypool's, that is) and use a National seal or some other brand beside GM or CR. Many other people have reported the same problem.

Don't forget that we have a National Convention coming up in less than five months. How about coming up with some suggestions for the annual meeting? What would you like to have discussed?

ARIZONA ROAD DUST: Did you know that the standard test for oil and air filters requires the use of Arizona road dust or a similar material which meets the same particle size distribu-

tion as Arizona road dust? Of course there have been other test media added to the standard tests and it's been a few years since I have looked at these standards, but I always remember the Arizona road dust - it always intrigued me.

A few weeks ago I was under a 1965 Greenbrier in Larry Aldrich's Corvair collection cutting off the front and rear wheel openings with an air chisel. The vibration from the air chisel caused a steady stream of Arizona road dust to pour out of all the body drains just like water. It seemed there was no end to the quantity of dust inside those panels.

About a week later we decided to run the Corvair south 185 miles to Tombstone, Arizona. We headed south out of Mesa hoping to run on the secondary roads until we could pick up State Route 89 south to Tucson. The map indicated that some of these roads were unpaved. Oh boy, were they unpaved!

We have never seen such a perfect washboard surface anywhere in the country. Now I know why the Arizona road dust was picked for standard oil and air filter tests. I have never seen such a penetrating dust - miles of it. If there is an opening anywhere that a molecule of air can get through Arizona road dust will go through it. When everything is vibrating due to the washboard road surface door seals, window seals and metal joints all become unseated and that famous Arizona road dust gets in. Those engineers that wrote the standard filter tests years ago must have driven on those same roads. I wonder how much of that junk is in my engine? Better change oil and filters soon.

If you need good rust-free body parts for your FC there is no better place to find them than in the dry Phoenix Valley. I bought some from Larry Aldrich last year and again this year. I'm hauling some home along with a rust free air-conditioned 1967 four-door. Larry has a lot of mechanical parts too: differentials, transmissions, front and rear suspensions, rear wheel bearings, engines, etc. Give him a try with your needs at (602)947-9353. Please don't expect to buy these parts for a song, after all he has spent his time and money procuring them, disassembling them, and if you don't know what it costs to package and ship these items you should get an idea from your packaging specialist listed in the yellow pages, and consult UPS for shipping charges. Many times the packaging and shipping costs more than the used parts.

Tom Silvey



cough, cough, cough!

# 'BRIER by BILL AMEY

The announcer's voice rang out, loud and clear, "First place in Street Stock Class, Forward Control division, with a score of 93.1 percent, and promoted to Senior Car, is the turquoise and white Greenbrier owned by Bill Amey!" I had finally made it - SENIOR CAR! It had taken eight long years of grease, sweat and tears, but now my wife Ele and I could relax and enjoy the shows more in the years to come.

We took delivery of our Baby-Van on July 17, 1962 at Aero Chevrolet in Alexandria, Virginia. It was to be our family's only car for the next several years, so the 'Brier was to become a real workhorse. Later our children learned to drive standard cars in the school driving programs, then they had to relearn driving in the 'Brier in order to pass their state drivers' tests.

We had chosen the 'Brier after checking out the Ford Econoline van and the VW Microbus. Both had very stiff riding qualities and very uncomfortable seats. The test drive in the Greenbrier was a revelation! The seats were wider and much more comfortable, and the ride, that soft ride, approached the comfort of a Cadillac! That was all that was needed to convince us - THIS was the car!

During the 1960's, with the 'Brier our only car, we had many experiences hauling Girl Scouts, Brownies, Majorettes and later, Young People's Fellowship members to and from meetings, cook-outs, field trips and the like. Let me tell you about some of them, not necessarily in chronological order.

One of the Young People's trips proved the stamina of the 'Brier, as we had fifteen teenagers aboard for a horseback riding trip. In the middle of the ride it began to rain, becoming steadily worse. Imagine, if you can, the conditions coming home, with fifteen tired soaked, smelly riders penned up inside the van, windows closed against the weather, and some still full of life. It took nearly a week of open-window running to get things back to nearly normal!

Another trip I will always remember was a trip to return Ele's mother to her Brooklyn, New York home after Christmas. We arrived in very dark and threatening weather to find a warning on the radio of heavy snow in the area. I was too tired to turn around and start back then, so I hoped the snow would hold off until morning. This was not to be, as the snow started that same evening and snowed so heavily all night that New York City was totally paralyzed the next morning. The Police would only allow essential traffic and emergency vehicles to move. Well, I had to get back to my Government job, so I called the police snow detail, explained that my rear-engined "truck" was very good in snow, that I had to return to my Government position, and would they please let me cross the Brooklyn Bridge, lower Manhattan, enter the Holland Tunnel, and thus be "out of their hair"? They said to go ahead and try it, but if I got stuck I'd be in real trouble. I described the van and

paint job and gave them the license number. The Police must have been alerted, as I was waved through several areas, entered the tunnel and within 15 or 20 miles was out of the snow area and on dry roads! I mentally thanked New York's Finest for that!

Then there was the time that one of my children, who had been told never, never to run with a red light showing on the dash board, arrived home with black smoke pouring from the rear of the van. Visions of seized bearings or scored cylinders came to mind. With the engine hatch wide open, and the rear doors open too, 'Brier was left to cool it! About an hour later an attempt to start was made and - GLORY BE! - it started right off and purred - none the worse for its trial-by-heat! Needless to say, we changed the oil and held our breaths for a few weeks, but it was apparently unharmed.

For several years, until my mother's death, we made annual trips to her home on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts with all our family and picking up Ele's mother in Brooklyn. We usually had at least one pet and all our luggage, yet in all those trips 'Brier held everything inside - nothing ever had to be put on the roof - yet we never felt crowded. With the front back seat facing the rear, the animal(s) found a safe and secure place to ride and the passengers were able to play games or converse easily. The design of the van was great!

One time, while visiting my mother's home, we took off on a short cut across some sand dunes. At the bottom of one dune we suddenly sank nearly hub-deep in loose sand. I got out to survey the situation and stepped knee-deep in poison ivy!! Well, I figured that by then the damage was done, so I used a piece of driftwood I found nearby to clear away the sand from the front and back of the rear wheels, got back into the 'Brier and rocked it forward and rearward once and pulled away from a place I thought I would have to be towed out of. Boy, that rear-engined marvel had proved itself, and then some!! Happily the poison ivy never showed up either!!

On our last trip to Nantucket in 1966 we had a little engine trouble. Imagine, if you can, running on the New Jersey Turnpike at night with only half the cylinders operating, with three adults and four children, plus luggage, most of it piled on the engine hatch! We could only make 35-40 MPH with the pedal "on the floor" seeking an open service station. After several agonizing hours we found one, with a restaurant, which was great as everyone was hungry, and I could unload the luggage to see if I could find out what was wrong. A quick look found no wires disconnected, but then I was not as well acquainted with the 'Brier as I would be many years later after the end of production. The service station man knew very little about Greenbriers, or about Corvairs for that matter, so wasn't much help. After plugging and unplugging ignition wires suddenly two of the dead cylinders woke up. This still wasn't perfect, but we had to be at the steamer pier by too few hours. So my family, having eaten breakfast, and I a cup of coffee, set out once again with the Greenbrier running much better. We made the steamer pier with a little time to spare,

but when I took the reservation form from my pocket, lo and behold, I had the breakfast bill from our emergency stop which I had not paid! Since I could do nothing about that then I purchased the boat tickets and we continued on our vacation. The 'Brier was repaired by the Chevrolet dealer on Nantucket and we stopped on the way home and paid the breakfast bill, much to the amazement of the restaurant operator. I forgot to mention that during all the mess with the malfunctioning engine our cat was unhappy with the animal carrier he was in and howled all the way. The kids called it the "Kitty Cat Concerto", sung to the tune of the then-popular "Lover's Concerto". He, the cat, is long since dead but we'll always remember that trip!

'Brier was involved in many moves of our children from place to place within Alexandria, with one of them moving five times in one year. One of the longest moves, and one of the most memorable, was moving an entire double bed set from Alexandria to Warren, Ohio over the Alleghenies. The set consisted of the double bed and mattress, box springs, vanity (with a huge mirror), a chest of drawers plus other small boxes, etc. Just getting that box spring in the wide-open side doors without damaging the paint was a feat of magic. With the set in the van we started on our way. Climbing the mountains was a real worrisome experience, as the red light for overheating kept coming on and we'd have to pull over to the side of the road and let the engine cool down. I kept saying to myself, "these long grades are killing me!" Meanwhile the big eighteen-wheelers roared by close enough to nearly take the paint off the driver's side of the van. Later I found out that the ventilator door on the right side, where the heat sensor is, had become stuck closed due to a dent from a stone that had bounced off the road surface.

Meanwhile, and on a continuing basis, 'Brier had been involved in volunteer duties for our church. We had special monthly services for our "shut-ins" in our parish hall. Wheel chairs could come in off the sidewalk directly since there were no steps or other barriers. 'Brier and I would go to the various people's homes and load them in, which was easy due to the drop-center design of the van. By pulling up against the curb the chairs could be rolled right into the van and, at the church, rolled right out and directly into the service. The church was also involved in collecting used clothing, toys and cooking utensils for the poor. This material would be collected at the church, and once a month or so 'Brier and I would load all the stuff, right to the roof, and take it to the collection depot. This usually involved removing the two center seats and loading and unloading, two or three trips each time. Even though it would be a show car in the future, it was both a truck and a great family car at the same time.

One strange thing happened during this time. Ele and I had taken a group of the senior citizens for a ride through Fort Hunt Park, one of the nearby parks along the Potomac River below our nation's capitol, and we kept noticing that many young people would wave at us, start toward the car, look surprised, then turn away. That evening we were telling our family about the experience and one of them, who took the car from time to time, said they were her friends and must have thought she

was driving. I guess they were surprised to see a group of old people when they expected her.

We became aware of a Corvair club in the Washington D.C. area in 1973 when my youngest daughter and I visited a show put on by Group Corvair and were delighted with the well-kept and restored Corvairs that were shown. By that time 'Briers were becoming scarce, so we joined the Group in case we might need some mechanical help or parts that were now hard to acquire. The club members urged us to do some restoration work on our van and winter it in some nearby shows. That idea appealed to us, but we didn't actually prepare and show the 'Brier until Group Corvair had their first Free State Corvair Affair in 1977.

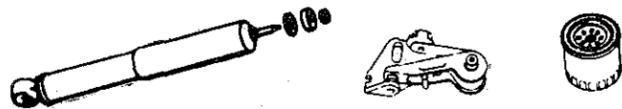
We entered the 'Brier with visions of trophies and ribbons dancing in our heads, but having no idea just how detailed a concours judged show was. Needless to say we were let down with a BANG! The judging sheets we received showed that we had a lot of work to do. We did score about 75% though, so it wasn't an impossible job.

Having tried to correct the worst errors shown on the judging sheets, and to gain experience and find other shortcomings, we entered other shows close to home. In talking to other Corvair people we found that the national Corvair organization, CORSA, held a yearly national show of Corvairs in cities nationwide. I planned right then to attend the next one in the Eastern zone if it was not too far, and further resolved that if we competed in any show we would drive the 'Brier to and from the show under its own power. No trailer-lilies for us, thank you!

That no-trailer-lily vow came to nought just once. Let me tell you about that experience. We had arrived in Indianapolis, the longest distance we had traveled to a convention so far, for the great show they hold every year in the infield of the famous Indy racecourse. My daughter had asked me several times about a whine she heard from the rear of the car. I couldn't hear it, nor could my wife, so we stopped to visit some friends. We were enroute across the city to our motel, after dark, when both red lights came on on the dash! We pulled over to the curb next to a large, totally dark building and I got out to see what the trouble was. A check of the fan belt found no trouble there, but the generator was blistering hot! Well, the directions had included a phone number for emergencies and I had noticed an auto shop of some sort across the street when we stopped. I went over to ask to use the phone and was met by a German Shepherd and a Doberman Pinscher. The man in the shop told me to wait a minute and he'd let me in. After unlocking several locks he let me in, asking what I wanted, and let me use the phone. Meanwhile the two dogs had been sniffing me, probably smelling my dog, and I reached down and patted them, remarking to the mechanic that they were beautiful animals. Since my wife and daughter were both dog lovers I called them over and we both had a good time with them. We were informed as we left that they were both trained attack dogs, which certainly surprised us.

(Continued next issue)

# Tech Topics



TECH TOPICS, FLOOR SWEEPINGS AND WHAT HAVE YOU

## TOWING WITHOUT A POWER TRAIN

In the NOV/DEC 1986 issue I answered Larry Hickerson by telling how I did it. Larry Claypool shot me a note saying the rear drum should be removed to eliminate shoe drag. Also said such a set-up was tough on rear wheel bearings.

The Miscellaneous section of CORSA's Tech Guide, page 2 discusses Towing Hubs. These are intended for use with a powertrain in place, but could be rigged otherwise, but would offer no advantage. Spacing the tire outboard, as these hubs do, probably kills it for use on the FC.

Past CORSA President Pete Koehler has a different type towing hub. Rear axle shafts are removed and the tow hub spindle and mounting plate bolt right to the four studs of the control arm. Tire stays inside the wheel well of the FC, just like it should. Seems almost perfect with these two exceptions.

Camber and toe-in or toe-out is whatever the control arm says it will be (unless you do some shimmying). Could scuff off rubber depending how far you have to tow with an exaggerated toe condition.

Vehicle weight and road forces to the suspension are exerted on the stud end of the control arm in a more aggressive manner. Check for arm cracks after the tow is completed.

I'm going to try Pete's system from Phoenix to Detroit if my FC purchase turns out to have an automatic transmission.

## ONE LAP OF AMERICA

That proposal in the MAY/JUNE 1986 issue has met with essentially zero response. Well, one reply from 300 or so members is almost zero. Looks like we file that one away. Way away. Too bad. Also I find the entry fee for 1987 is raised to \$1500. Could be more by 1989. That's a good reason for not entering.

## CLUTCH ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS

Three prompt offers of assistance were received following the NOV/DEC 1986 issue. Dan Wheeler had encountered something similar. Cause was not found, but a cure was made on his 1961 model by changing the linkage ratio back at the transmission crossmember. The cable was moved up a hole on the vertical link while the clutch fork pull rod stayed at the bottom hole. Gave more fork movement per amount of foot pedal movement. Larry Claypool mentioned shortening (or inverting) the clutch foot pedal level rubber bumper under the toe pan to give more overall cable travel. Mike Demeter and Larry Thomas encountered rust build-up of the cable at the very front end. Would not allow the cable to move back through the conduit (the outer art of the complete cable) as much as it

should; reduced the cable travel. Don Terwilliger reported adjustment problems after putting everything back together after a powertrain upgrade. He found (upon disassembly again!) that the clutch fork and the spring fingers were not riding in the clutch throwout bearing groove. The fork and fingers had straddled one flange of the bearing. So, we have two fixes for an unknown problem, and two real causes and obvious corrections. Meanwhile, back here in Michigan, it's still too cold for the gentleman with the original problem to tear into it again to see if any of this is a help to him.

## EARLY FC SHIFT LEVER BOOT

Ernest Waddell had an article in the October 1986 CORSA Communique telling of a Sparkomatic #PB300 Shift Boot and Plate that sold for \$10.29, and fit the early FC. He has supplied more info for us members without access to stores handling that brand. Sparkomatic Corp., Milford, Penn., 18337. An accompanying photo shows it to be a convoluted, bellows type rubber part, perhaps of the dip molded variety. Clark's gold catalog lists a non-original, not-molded part. I don't know if it would be the same part, or if it would be something sewn of sheet stock.

Bob Kirkman

## FC Classified Ads

1964 Greenbrier, 4-speed, 3:89, 140HP engine, 89,000 miles. Bought another van, must sell. \$600. David McClure. 672 George St., Morgantown, WV (304)599-3951 after 6:00.

\*\*\*\*\*

1961 rare condition Greenbrier deluxe. Florida import - NO RUST ANYWHERE. Nice silver with dark metallic Grey roof/belt. 140HP/PG all fresh. Custom 3:89 with dual exhaust w/ underbody mods. Mags with T/A radials excellent. Otto pan and covers, HD alternator, Spyder dash, AM/FM with multiple Speakers. Interior completely custom.

1965 Greenbrier, Orange/white. Full carpet in taste. Take-out panel between rear seat for bunk and luggage stowage, spare mount under front, real smoked glass, full luggage rack, alarm system. Looks super and runs great. \$10,000 invested sell for \$5000. See April 11 at NJACE Garage sale. D.W. Terwilliger, 218 E. Main, Walden, NY 12586. (914) 778-1023 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM EST.

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CORVAIR COVERS: Quality custom covers in Green Polycotton, Gold Technalon or Tan Flannel. Rampside and Loadside: \$92.95, \$102.95 or \$105.95 respectively. Greenbrier and Corvan: \$102.95, \$122.95 or \$128.95. \$6.00 shipping per cover. Write for other Corvaire prices. We also trade NOS FC parts. Byron Eaton, Chisholm Coach, Route 2, Box 190-E, Round Rock, TX 78664. (512)255-2285.

# Why A Corvaire Truck ?

Our faithful editor, Ken Krol [aw, shucks...ed.] has of late been requesting (begging, pleading, imploring) that more of us contribute to the newsletter, so I've taken the hint. And the topic I've chosen reflects a question I was asked recently: Why do I drive a Corvaire truck?

My father is to blame. In the fall of 1960, Chevrolet introduced the Greenbrier, and my father saw it as the ideal van for the family's business. He bought one, blue with a white stripe, 80HP, Powerglide. He was right, it was an ideal vehicle, easy to load and easy to drive, and it became the first of many Greenbriers used by the company. (In fact, the company has never been without at least one Corvaire truck ever since, including right now.)

As a nine-year-old kid in 1961, I thought the Greenbrier was, well, nifty. Most car-nut kids drooled over sports cars and race cars, but I liked the great big rear engined box. The die was cast. When I learned to drive in 1969, my practice vehicle was a '64 Greenbrier -- the same one I still own now, the same one my dad bought when it was a year old, the same one that was on a Communique cover a few years ago.

All through high school I drove that Greenbrier, while my friends drove high-powered Chevilles and Camaros. The first car I ever bought personally, with my own after-school part-time job money, was a '62 Corvaire wagon, but I still drove the Greenbrier. And started buying more of them. I've owned over fifty Corvaire now, at age 35, about half of them trucks.

In 1972 I "retired" the '64 Greenbrier from daily duty, and it's been a "hangar queen" ever since. It has always been licensed and insured, and it gets driven to shows and other outings, but I'm saving it. The '62 Greenbrier that I drive daily was purchased in 1982, and it's been to the Seattle, New Jersey and Grand Rapids Conventions, plus countless other places. I'm not saving it at all. I'm using it. It has 219,000 miles on it.

I like Corvaire trucks. That's really the only reason I can give for continuing to own and drive them. They're roomy, useful, sturdy, nimble and all that, but what really matters is that I like them.

Bob Kirkman recently opined in these pages that the performance of the Corvaire truck's heater probably doesn't matter much to many people anymore, since there are likely "very few in wintertime use". Well, the heater in my '62 works just fine and I drive it all winter long. I should tell you how to make your FC heater work well, and how to keep salt from destroying the truck. But those are future articles.

Bob Marlow

## From The Editor's Glovebox

As you can see, we've had several good articles come in, but of course we always need more. This issue we have part one of Bill Amey's colorful article entitled "Brier". I think we've all got an article like this buried way back in the memory banks. Mine is all about my '63 Monza and, even though the story is far from ending, it's gradually flowing out onto paper. Look for it in the Communique one of these years... Another of our more colorful writers Bob Marlow also has a great story in this issue. Now all we need is yours! We also need cover photos. A 5 x 7 print is best to fit the cover space. Anything that features an FC or FC's in an attractive background would be great.

Since nobody responded to the FC Challenge a few issues back, I, as editor of the world's only publication devoted exclusively to the Forward Control Corvaire, hereby declare the Henrich family to hold the world's record for FC ownership. Congratulations and, as they say, your check is in the mail!

Don't forget to include the CA Annual Meeting in your Convention plans for Chicago this summer. We will publish the meeting time and place as soon as we find out. Please let us know ASAP Chicagoland!

As the first annual meeting I've been able to attend since the one at Seattle in 1983, I am personally hoping that this year's meeting turns out to be excellent - and I'm sure going to do all I can to help make sure it is. I hope each of you will do so, too. As the largest chapter of CORSA we should have an excellent turnout of our people. Be thinking of anything you would like covered. This will be a great forum for your ideas on where our chapter is headed in the future.

Ken Krol



Our exclusive "walkthrough" tour of a few eight-doors at the last Palm Springs Fanbelt Toss

Gene Miller  
&  
his buddy "FC"

**BEST  
OF**



HAPPINESS IS FINDING A CASE OF NEW REAR  
WHEEL BEARING FOR FCs ...AT A GARAGE SALE!

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