

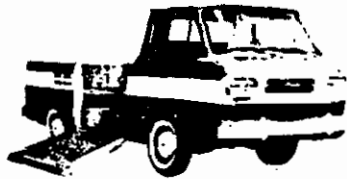


CORVAN ANTICS

VOLUME 18

NUMBER 6

NOV & DEC 1990



RAMP/LOADSIDE



GREENBRIER SPORTSWAGON



CORVAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHEVROLET MOTOR DIVISION



RICH, MURIEL, CAROLE & MARSH IN COLORADO... STORY ON PAGE 53.

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.

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SECT/TRES	Caroline Silvey	Box 68	McCordsville,	IN 46055
ASSISTANT				
SECT/TRES	Betty Gridley	Box 158	Franklin,	IN 46131
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EDITOR	Ken Krol	17433 N. 16th Lane	Phoenix,	AZ 85023
TECH ED.	Bob Kirkman	1820 Moffat Dr.	Leonard,	MI 48038

In This Issue

A presidential tour of Vermont via Greenbrier, cover story of Muriel and Rich Richeson by Marsh Hesler, 'Brier leads the parade, more GREAT Tech Stuff and "Why I'm Keeping My Greenbrier" by Ralph Gubser.

Club Boutique

CORVANATICS MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE THROUGH CAROLINE SILVEY

Window decals - \$1 each. Jacket patches - \$2.15 each. Club stationary & envelopes - 5¢ each. Back issues of CORVAN ANTICS: All volumes up to and including vol. 2 #3 are 60¢ each (9 issues). Vol. 2 #4 through current issue are \$1 each. Complete set up to and including Vol. 17 #1 for only \$75 (a bargain!)

FC Paint mfg. codes, paint combinations, prices and options (21pp.) \$4.50

REMEMBER THAT LITTLE-KNOWN GM Promotional song, sung to the tune of "The Battle of New Orleans? "...they ran through the 'Briers and they ran through the Rampsides and they ran through all eight-doors where a rabbit wouldn't go..."

Forward Controlling With The President



THE VERMONT TOUR

Wednesday, September 19, 1990, Joanne and I got up early and left Fraser, Michigan at 6:30 AM for the Cotrofeld's annual tour of Vermont. We stopped in Port Huron, Michigan for gas before entering Canada where their gas prices are about \$2.00 a gallon! We went across the "Blue Water Bridge" at 7:30 AM, stopping at Canadian Customs for the usual check. The officer asked what year my van was, and after telling him it was a '64 Greenbrier, he gave me the usual puzzled look. Many people say they have never seen one before!

Canada has a 100KPH (62 MPH) speed limit on their X-ways and everybody drives 65-70 MPH, so we sailed right through Ontario and were in New York by 10:45 AM.

New York is a wide state and the trip from Buffalo to Cambridge is 375 miles. Fortunately it is all X-way and they have decent oasis stops every 40-50 miles for gas-food-rest room. We finally arrived at the Vermont state line around 6:00 PM and pulled into Cotrofeld's shop about 6:30 PM. We exchanged greetings with the other Corvair enthusiasts and discovered the group was going to dinner twenty miles back the same road we just came in on! So we all piled into our 'Vairs and drove back to Cambridge, NY for a fabulous Italian dinner at Baratto's Italian Restaurant.

We checked in at the Captain's Quarters Motel near Manchester, VT and unloaded our suitcases for a four-night stay.

September 20th breakfast at the Avalanche Motel/Restaurant east of Manchester. After eating, the drivers' meeting followed and the CB radios were mounted and checked. We never know where Bill is going to take us and that makes every day a "Mystery Tour". Today we drove a long way up to the Shelburne Museum just a mile or so inland from Lake Champlain, south of Burlington. We spent the whole day at the museum and didn't see all of it. This is an outdoor museum similar to Greenfield Village in Dearborn, MI. They have everything from the 1733 Prentis house (moved from Hadley, Mass) to the modern McClure Visitor Center. The S.S. Ticonderoga, the last vertical beam sidewheel steamship, is on display, having been dragged two miles overland to it's final resting place.

The 1890 Shelburne railroad station was moved here and a 1915 ten-wheel steam locomotive with an 1890 "Grand Isle" furnished private railroad car is hooked to it. People rode in class back then. The car was beautiful with it's ornate wood carvings and vel-

vet upholstery. There are dozens of interesting buildings at the museum, all full of the history of the old days. There is an apothecary shop; print shop; blacksmith/wheelwright shop; jail; circus building; double lane covered bridge; general store; hat & fragrance shop; barns full of carriages; lighthouse; church; schoolhouse; shaker shed; smokehouse; stagecoach inn; stone cottage; weaving shed; gallery; book store; etc. We finally got tired of walking. So much to see.

We all met for dinner at the Edgewood Restaurant to talk over the day's activities.

Friday, September 21st, breakfast at the Avalanche again. Pete Koehler drove up from NY to join us for the day. Tim Colson's Rampsides and my Greenbrier were the only FC's on the tour. Others drove various Corvair cars and waterpumpers.

Our tour for the day took us to Waterbury where we visited Ben & Jerry's ice cream factory (the highlight of my trip). Since my CB handle is "Cookie Monster" I just had to have Ben & Jerry's Cookie Monster Sundae! MMMM.

After the ice cream factory we went down the road a few miles to the Cold Hollow Cider Mill to watch them squeeze apples for cider. Of course they have a gift shop (every business in Vermont has a gift shop or is a gift shop!) and we spent some time browsing.

Lunch was at R.S.V.P. (Richard's Special Vermont Pizza) and dinner back at the Avalanche. Pete Koehler left us to go back to his parents' house in Hopewell Jct., NY.

Saturday, September 22nd, Joanne and I had breakfast at the Park Bench Cafe in Manchester. The ladies decided to go shopping while the guys went on the tour. We ended up at the Lumberman's Festival in Tunbridge. Nobody knew ahead of time but the huge Mount Rushmore Flag (40 x 90 feet) was at this event. It was a spectacular and moving sight to see the flag raising ceremony complete with artillery firing and bands playing the Stars and Stripes, National Anthem and other patriotic music.

This flag is kept in a huge cherry wood box on the U.S.S. Constitution in Boston Harbor and is transported around the country on a big International flatbed truck. It is used to cover the face of George Washington at Mt. Rushmore during the unveiling ceremonies there. After the flag raising, we enjoyed watching the various wood chopping, log sawing and log loading contests.

Why I'm Keeping My Greenbrier

This story begins in the Fall of 1987. I had answered an ad in the CORSA Communique for a 1961 Deluxe 8-door Greenbrier. The seller was Jim Sullivan of Salem, Indiana and the Greenbrier proved to be just as he had described it: solid Arizona body, three upholstered seats, good-running 95HP FC engine and only a few very minor problems (faulty horn, bad accelerator pump, etc). What can I say, it was love at first sight. Jim offered to drop the price a bit and he included a pile of neat and useful parts in the deal.

The next weekend fellow Corvairist Don Filkins and I drove to Salem to retrieve my new black and white beauty. Don drove the 'Brier and I brought up the rear in my Dodge Omni. The trip home was largely routine, the only unscheduled stop being made to pull the leads off of the horns due to a sticking relay. Don said that my van seemed a bit more powerful than his 80HP 1962 Greenbrier and that flatland cruising at 65 MPH was no problem at all.

Over the next few months I fixed a few minor problems and generally got to know the 'Brier a little better. The only anxious moments occurred because of an ominous rumbling at the rear of the van. Turned out to be a bad wheel bearing. What a relief! I had thought the transaxle was about to blow up.

With a new baby and a new job in my life the Greenbrier was used very sparingly, driven mostly to Corvair club functions and for occasional weekend duties hauling landscaping timbers, bags of mulch and other suburban necessities. But even though I wasn't driving it a great deal I still enjoyed having it around just to tinker with. As an aside, during this period I even won a people's choice award for the best FC at the Corvair Club of Cincinnati's annual revival. True, there were only three FC's there, but still...

I soon found that an evening poking around on the 'Brier was a great source of stress reduction. If I took something apart and couldn't finish the job that night it was no big deal - I wasn't planning on driving it to work the next day anyway. It was during these unhurried evening repair sessions that I realized why I liked the old bus so much: it was so honest and straightforward. No mysterious electronic black boxes to burn up like the one in my wife's Oldsmobile did (\$350). Just points, condenser and a rotor. No snake pit of hoses and belts to replace periodically. No radiator, antifreeze, water pump or leaky heater core to worry about. No power door locks, power windows or power seats. No need for power steering or power brakes. Dashboard controls with genuine God-fearing knobs instead of dozens of itty-bitty pushbuttons. No screaming sirens to hound me because I left the keys in the ignition when I got out to open the garage door. Unassuming and undemanding, the FC has proven to be a valuable friend, ready after even a few weeks

of inactivity to spring to life at the twist of a key.

The most recent test of its affections came during the last two weeks of July. We moved to a new house and, of course, the faithful old "Sport Wagon" was pressed into service, happily transporting everything from literally tens of dozens of boxes to queen-size beds to a complete spare van engine/Powerglide transaxle assembly. Of course being able to load cargo from both sides (eight doors, remember) was a real blessing.

In conditions from 65 MPH Interstate cruising to 95 degree stop-and-go traffic the Greenbrier performed flawlessly during the moving process, never missed a beat. I attribute this trouble-free performance to the extensive maintenance I performed before we began our move: I checked the oil and tires and put some gas in the tank.

Speaking of performance, I previously had not been happy with the Greenbrier's hill climbing abilities. I reasoned that the "mileage unknown" 95HP engine and 3.55 differential gearing were inadequate to sustain uphill speeds as I expected it to. So rather than swap engines or transaxles I elected to artificially lower the gear ratio with a set of used 195/60 x 14 tires and some six inch Camaro wheels that I bought cheaply in the name of experimentation. I'm guessing the effective gear ratio is now in the range of 4.10:1 or so. Does it accelerate faster now? I'm not sure. Does it climb hills better? Seems so. Does the engine seem too "busy" on the Interstate at 65 MPH? Doesn't seem to mind at all. The weird part is that it seems to pull just the same whether it's totally empty or loaded to the headliner with heavy cargo. Strange.

Of course with the tiny tires the speedometer is not terribly accurate anymore. I just keep up with the traffic flow and don't worry about it. Besides it's kind of fun to blast down the highway at an indicated 80-85 MPH even though I know I'm really not going that fast. Still just a kid at heart, I guess.

Anyway, as the title of this story would indicate, I'm keeping my Greenbrier for a while. I like being able to park it anywhere and not worry about the paint job being damaged like I would with a new \$18,000 mini van. I like the monthly payments (\$0.00) and the insurance premiums (\$150 per year), too.

For the combination of fun and utility I get from it, buying the old bus was the best investment I ever made. It will be interesting to see how many Lumina APVs and Aerostars are still in regular service in 2020. I'll be willing to wager that this Greenbrier will be around even then. So happy 30th Birthday, 'Brier! May we both live to see many more. Ralph Gubser Cincinnati, OH

CA Members Muriel & Rich (Or Marsh's 'Vairs Move To The Mountains)

Hello Hey there Señor Ken,

You were not home on Sunday afternoon as I left Phoenix or I could have thanked you personally for the fine job on July/Aug CORVANTICS. We and the Klingon Warship thank you for the nice pictures. Well Done! As a former editor I have a small inkling of the trials and tribs you go through.

Good Grief Charlie Brown, you must think I don't know how to spell CORVAN ANTICS up in the fourth line! Still, CORVANTICS has a nice ring to it.

Now as to the pictures: Carole and I returned from a month in Colorado on September 12th - meaning we left San Diego circa August 12th in our modern Klingon Warship. Read that Carole's Plymouth Voyager. Cold air and stereo, of course. After surviving Vegas we spent ten days with our good friends and former neighbors here in Lemon Grove the Richesons: Muriel & Rich. These forsook Lemon Grove three years ago for a ranch in southern Montrose, Colorado, where Rich can play with his nine Corvairs.



They travel all over creation in their Rampside camper (which they got from me, of course). Muriel drives around Montrose in her '66 yellow Monza (which she got from me) and husband Rich is restoring a '66 fake Corsa (which he - oh, you already guessed, huh?). They moved to the western slope of Colorado three years ago and got the nine Corvairs there ONE AT A TIME! Well they had a whole summer to do it. That meant nine trips of 1,000 miles each - ONE WAY! From San Diego to Montrose! Some had not run in ten years! Fresh gas and a new battery cured most of the problems. Rich drove "ole reliable" '61 Chevy pickup and wife got to try out each Corvair. They had not one major problem the entire nine trips. Perhaps that was because they were in separate vehicles! So when it came time to drive the Corsa convertible, Muriel asked Rich what was that strange "stick" with the numbers on it on the floor? Oh that - well

you'll catch on to it while we drive. And what is the extra brake pedal for, asked Muriel? You'll get the hang of that too as we drive, said Rich. And she did...

Marsh Hesler
Lemon Grove, CA

'Brier Leads The Parade!

Being as I pick up the newsletters from all over the country I read some of them. One in particular was from Modesto, CA. It had a letter about a parade they were in and the announcer gave the Corvair bad happenings; it was really terrible what he said. Having been in parades (picture of recent Memorial Day parade) the announcer just mentioned our club and area we are from. Our club has been in three local parades this year - took first place in all three. So I guess the "Heartbeat" is still going for the Corvair - and yours truly lead them off in a Greenbrier.

Bob Testa
Sepulveda, CA



BOB & OLGA TESTA'S BEAUTIFUL GREENBRIER LEADING THE MEMORIAL DAY PARADE!!!

FC Classifieds

FOR SALE: Greenbrier rear quarter window weatherstrips. Like new. \$100/pair. Rebuilt 4-speed trans and 3.89 axle. \$250 each. See July/Aug issue for details. NOS Hyatt rear axle bearings \$180. 100% inspected and all good used Hyatt bearings \$90. NOS Torrington needle rollers for 1961-65 4-speed countergear shaft. \$52/set of 92 pieces. New countergear shafts \$14. Bob Kirkman, 1820 Moffat Road, Leonard, MI 48367.

FOR SALE: Pair of Hella #500 6" diameter driving lights. Used three months and feature 100 watt bulbs. Would fit FC nicely. Cost \$90 - sell for \$50 plus shipping. Ken Wilhite, 9560 Maple Way, Indianapolis, IN 46268. (317)274-7729 (days).

CORVANATICS - THE HOME OF SIX-DOOR AND EIGHT-DOOR CORVAIRS!!!

Tech Topics



WHY, THAT LOOKS LIKE AN FC AXLE BEARING!

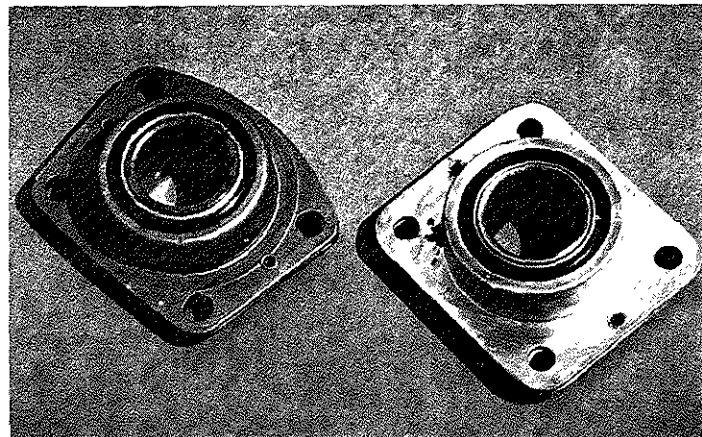
You old timers of FC lore have probably had enough rear axle bearing stories to make you drop out of the Club if one more comes along. But wait! I have found something new to write about. After that, some comments on a recent bearing story in the CORSA Communique.

Quite a few years ago at work, a friend had a bearing in his tool box to show me. The question was, "Is it a Greenbrier rear axle bearing?" I said it looked similar but the housing was wrong. Might as well throw it away. You still could buy bearings from Chevrolet.

In the Spring of 1990, that bearing came to mind and the fellow lived not so far away. We both had been retired from Chevrolet for several years. I paid a visit and asked if he remembered that bearing. Sure enough, he did, and went to a box and pulled it out. On inspection the real bearing part was absolute FC, but the housing was different. Was it an old prototype part or was it from the Canadair military project? The part was etched "Hyatt" and some identification numbers.

A call to Chevrolet Engineering (oops! It's C.P.C. Engineering now) gave me a contact to NDH (New Departure Hyatt), or whatever they are called now. This engineer tracked down the number and could not find much other than several were shipped to Chevrolet Engineering in 1959. This meant the part had to be a prototype, as that was too early for the military job.

I said the housing was different. The mounting holes were located on a rectangular pattern; 3 inches by 2½ inches. The FC part we know has the two upper holes spread farther than the bottom two.



LEFT: PRODUCTION RIGHT: EXPERIMENTAL

Since this had to be a prototype part, I began a "paper search" through the old design layouts. Bingo! I found this particular part number. That layout lead to a previous one, and another, and I ended up with one saying the design was "for VW rework only". Maybe you didn't know that early-on Chevrolet put FC suspensions and power-trains in the VW Kombi Bus. There were no Greenbrier bodies yet, and the hardware had to be "developed" and preliminary tests done somehow. Let's start with the VW design and work towards production.

VW Installation Layout L-52101 of indistinct date:

Right from the start, the axle shaft diameter was established and carried through to production. Bearing inner races, outer races and barrel rollers are typical of the bearing we all know. The bearing went onto the shaft and was retained by a thick ring pressed on afterwards. I say pressed on. Maybe it was a shrink ring. Big car rear axle technology, I believe. Seals and dirt shields are nowhere to be seen. A single stamped retainer held bearing and shaft to the brake backing plate and control arm. Mounting holes were on a 3 inch by 2½ inch grid. The bearing part number was not Hyatt, but a Chevrolet experimental part number O-169630, now untraceable. The bearing was without doubt made by Hyatt, however.

Next: Layout L-53010 of November 1958

Hyatt bearing #2CE6481 looked much like the production bearing in cross section. It too appears to have slipped onto the axle shaft and was retained by a thick pressed-on ring, or shrunk ring. Seals were now used, but appear they were exercised a bit when the bearing had to swivel. Dust shields had been added. A "liquid" sealer was used between the flanges of two housing sections.

Next: Layout L-53084 of March 1959

Hyatt bearing #2CE6635 has now evolved to be a pressed-on bearing, as we know today. A puller ring was added to aid in removal. A gasket was used between the housing flanges, and sealing now appeared about as we know it, allowing swivel action with little distress to the seal. The inner race was now wider than the housings, and the housings still had mounting holes on a 3 inch by 2½ inch grid.

Next:

Hyatt bearing #2CE6697 is the type my friend had. The housings are now sealed with an O-ring as we know it and the bearing appears like the final product except, the mounting holes are on the 3 inch by 2½ inch grid.

Next?

There is a missing link somewhere; a design layout for which I can't find a reference.

It should indicate why the mounting pattern was changed.

Production:

The production bearing drawings indicate a March 1960 date for design of a mounting pattern with upper holes spread.

Well, back to my "find". All that is needed to use the prototype bearing today is to remove the housing pieces, and put the whole bearing into a salvaged housing from a no-good bearing. Shim for proper running clearance is necessary of course. Now for the bad news. There may be only four prototype pieces in the world: my friend and I have two each now.

During this investigation I did speak with the engineer that actually designed the FC bearing. He moved way up through the ranks over the years, but I'm not going to tell you his name to save him from getting pestered with calls. I mentioned the Green ball bearing to him and he was quite familiar with this aftermarket bearing. The FC bearing has specific durability goals. The test B-10 life is 3000 hours. He said the aftermarket bearing would fail on that test in ten minutes! Yeah, I know. Someone in CORVANATICS will write to tell me how they have used a Green bearing for the last 200,000 miles, or something like that. Hey! Congratulations! But, sorry, I won't join you.

CORSA COMMUNIQUE, AUGUST 1990, PAGES 13-15

The author did a nice job. He has had a lot of experience working with used parts. I would comment on only a couple of areas (only one of importance to me).

1. The FC bearing press fit on the axle shaft according to Engineering drawings is .0033 at the most and .0019 at the least due to manufacturing tolerances. So what if it's not "almost .006". It's nothing we users can do anything about anyway. Picky-picky me!
2. Some years back I spoke with Hyatt engineers about the FC bearing "fully filled" with grease. They said "no sweat" as far as the bearing was concerned. You may be going down the road like 60 (or maybe 80+?), but it's not very high RPM at the axle. A "fully filled" bearing will tend to expel some grease onto the backside of the brake shoes, and some can contaminate the drum surface. That's not nice. Most of us that re-lube bearings may resort to a grease gun with a needle to poke into openings on a bearing still on the axle, with one housing removed. "Fully filled" is most likely to result.
3. The author mentioned that the Corvair barrel rollers could be used in an FC bearing as a set "in a pinch". Corvair barrel rollers look like the FC parts, but they are a slightly smaller diameter. That "slightly" business would really cause a bearing designer to be upset. It changes the geometry toward edge loading of the barrel roller when properly shimmed for end clearance. Maybe some of our members have done that swap, and used the bearing for years. How-

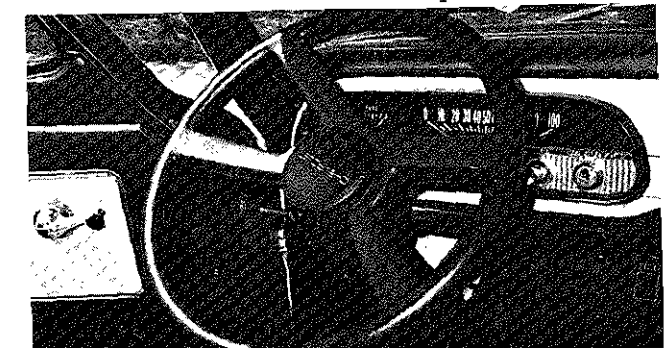
ever, sitting here at the desk, I wouldn't recommend it except as a "get home" device.

NOS FC axle bearings are still out there on shelves. I know someone with nine new ones, and he hasn't owned an FC for more than a decade. No, he doesn't know what he has; and no, he's not going to pass them on to anyone. Rats!

Aftermarket Wheel

Regarding your recent tech tip on steering wheels: I've had a 1989 P-30 Chevy Chassis steering wheel on my Greenbrier. My son works for a local motor home manufacturer and they install aftermarket wheels on the rigs - therefore the original wheels are thrown in the corner and swept out. In this case one got home and I tried it; it fits perfect with no fooling around with the turn signals. I have my horn (air electric) on a button on the dash. I didn't have the wheel straight so it appears upside down in the photo. My opinion of forward controls is "don't leave home without one". I've had this one since 1977 and it is, without a doubt, the handiest vehicle to have around. You can't get nine people in an Astro Van.

Bob Testa
Sepulveda, CA



(Prez - Con'd)

The girls went to the village of Weston and spent the day poking around in all the stores looking at antiques and buying some Christmas goodies.

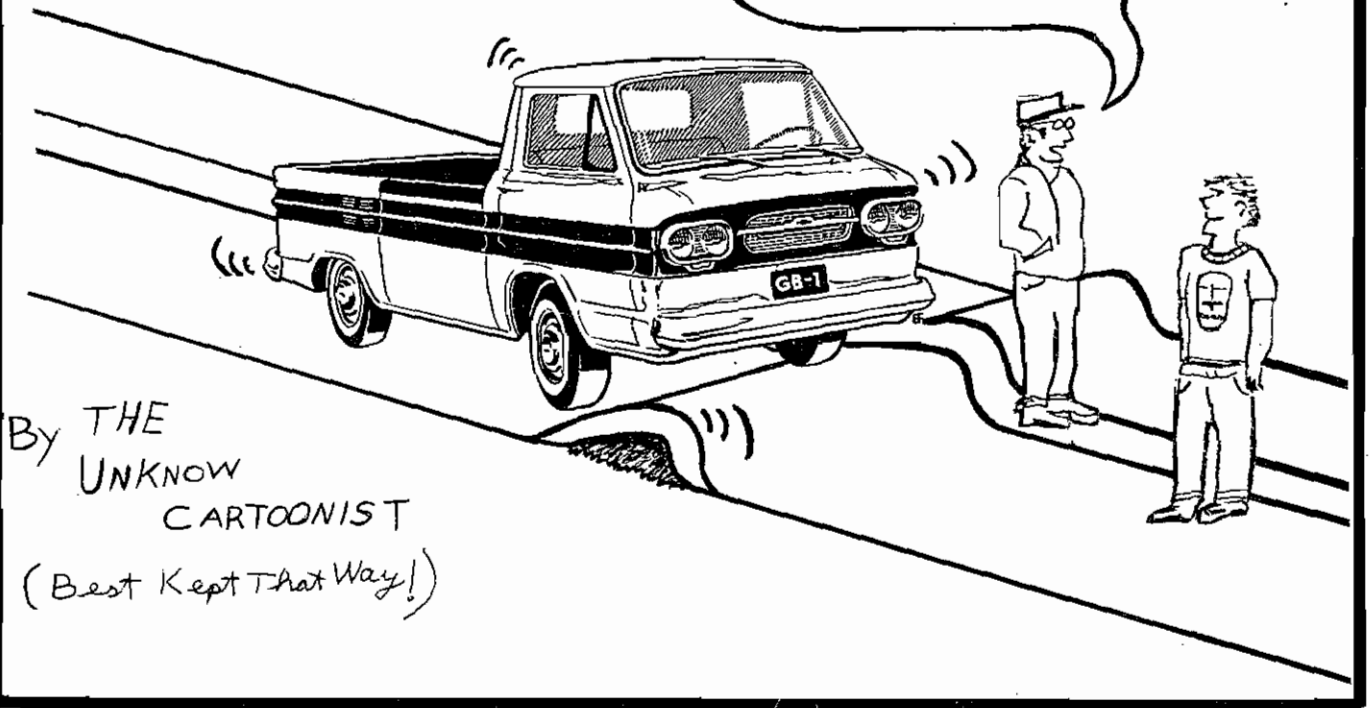
Saturday night was the banquet and we chowed down on homemade turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, carrots, etc. Some novelty awards were given out and all the V.I.C.E. (Vermont Independent Corvair Enthusiasts) officers were re-elected.

Sunday morning we got up early and drove home, leaving the beautiful state of Vermont behind and looking forward to next year's tour. Driving my 'Brier is what I enjoy most in this hobby. Dick Ferrey, the previous owner of the 'Brier, said he only drove it ten miles or so in three years. I've put 12,000 miles on it since June! I've now driven in Canada and 36 states in the last three years in a Greenbrier. I believe in "See The USA In Your Chevrolet".

Clark Hartzel

Gene Bruck
&
his buddy "FC"

"SO HOW'S THAT FOR FC
BRAKING POWER???"



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