



VintageVoice

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FINISHING THE EXTREME DUNE BUGGY MAKEOVER, PAGE 10

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Director's FORUM

by howard query

Burtonwood@vwwca.com

It must be that time of the year. The holidays are over, our families have returned to their homes, and I'm finding myself stuck in one of those holiday doldrum moods. You'd think that the inspiration for a bi-monthly column would come to a person such as me rather easily, but it doesn't. While it's been somewhat of a stressful year for our family and friends, I am fortunate to say that it's been a

Past VVWCA directors

- 1976-1978** Eastern Region Pres. Bill Pickering
- 1976-1979** Western Region Pres. Bob Gilmore
- 1978-1991** Eastern Region Pres. Terry Shuler
- 1979-1982** Western Region Pres. Gary Longworth
- 1982-1984** Western Region Pres. Joe Crockett
- 1984-1986** Western Region Pres. Steve Herron
- 1986-1987** Western Region Pres. Mike Aceves
- 1987-1988** Western Region Pres. Steve Herron
- 1988-1993** Western Region Pres. Jon Peters
- 1991-1993** Jon Peters consolidated Pres.
- Nov. 1993-2002** Pres. Jim Siegfried
- 2002-2003** Pres. Mike Epstein
- 2003-2007** Pres. Peter Cook
- 2007-2010** Pres. Sherri Corrao
- Jan. 2010-Current** Pres. Howard Query

Thanks to Michael Epstein for assisting in compiling historical data

fairly uneventful year for the VVWCA. I'm pleased to say that revenues and expenses have been rather stable this year, which has not always been the case. In fact, this year we're shown growth in both membership and regalia orders.

The VVWCA was originally formed in 1976, born out of a vision by Bill Pickering and Bob Gilmore. Regardless of the obstacles we've had to succumb, the VVWCA has been an active forum of VW enthusiasts for the past 31 plus years. During those years, we've seen memberships grow and have weathered the storm during membership declines. Although we're a non-profit club of sorts, we've enjoyed those days when revenue intake was at its peak and have nervously watched as revenues declined during those tougher years. Over the past 31 years, we've been challenged with ongoing turnover of the President's position and at one point in time, fought back the possibility of impending bankruptcy. And as luck would have it, we've maintained and continued our vision of serving the air-cooled enthusiast.

As I've researched the history of our leadership woes and what these people had to do to keep the club moving forward, I now have a greater appreciation for the challenges they've had to face. While I sense some might have been falsely accused of financial misappropriation or misuse of authority, I have little proof otherwise that would substantiate those claims. But, what I have found has been rather interesting and thought I might share my opinion concerning our past 31 years and the positions many of our club members have held.

This club is not unlike any other car club. We've got a small group of people who have been dedicated to their leadership responsibilities and few helpers within the troop along the way. Bill Pickering, Bob Gilmore, and others were visionaries. Their vision did not have to be insurmountable to make a difference. But nonetheless, their best intentions were at hand.

It's interesting in that when you become a leader (board

member), everyone who has not taken that responsibility always has an opinion and an expectation that you should be doing more ... and often more than what you are capable of. I am probably no different. I have never met Bill Pickering or Bob Gilmore, but I have a great appreciation for what they themselves set out to accomplish.

Those directors who have served before me know that I can be rather demanding of my expectations. Michael Epstein, Peter Cook, and Sherri Corrao will most likely tell you that I often set my expectations higher than I should ... especially when you consider the fact that we are all volunteers and have always had the best interest for the club at heart.

Michael, Peter, Sherri, and a long list of other board directors have often worked their hardest without the expectations of a well-deserved "thank you." Having walked in their shoes ... I can attest to the fact that their job did not come easily.

And so, I would like to thank these individuals: including Jim Sigfried, Terry Shuller and all the others who have served in a director's position. You have devoted countless hours to the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America.

It was once said that "people support what they help create." These people have helped us create the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America of the past and of the future present. Russell Cordell, Kimberly van Mourik, Michael Epstein, and Heinz Schneider have been the pillars of this association.

With having looked back at the past I can tell you I'm excited about the future we wind up for a new year. I would like to take a moment and thank all those who have supported our mission and believe our future will continue to grow.

Unforgotten Memories

"There was once a time when I'd set out for a ride in my beetle and ... " yes, you've heard that line before. In fact, you've probably led off with a story about your VW using the very same words.

We've all had one type of VW or another over the years and probably have a list of heartwarming stories we could tell. Stories of happy moments, stories of sad moments and stories of downright frustration are those types of stories we often tell over and over again. We're looking for those types of stories that make us laugh and at times ... might cause us to shed a tear. Regardless, we'd like to hear of your favorite memories. Your shorty doesn't have to be of any particular length nor does it have to focus on one air-cooled model over another; we just ask that you have fun sharing those memories with us.

You can email your stories along with photos to us as burtonwood.vvwca@q.com or you can mail them to: Unforgotten Memories, c/o VVWCA, PO Box 1842, Mason City, IA. 50402.

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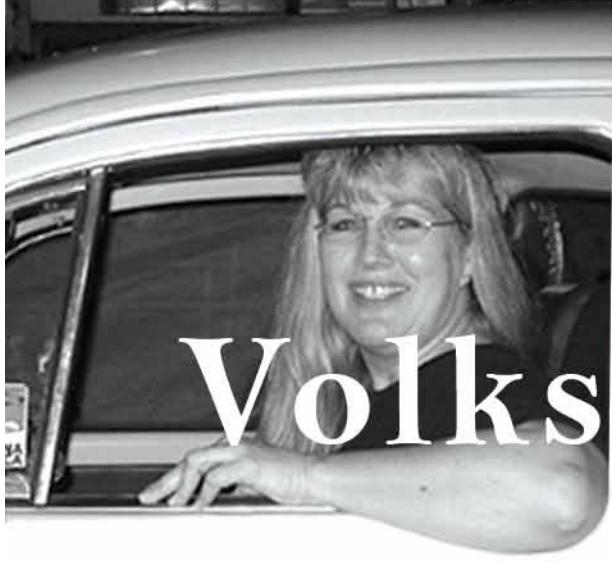
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VolksWoman

by Lois Grace • vlkswmn@sbcglobal.net

Solvang Vintage VW Veteranentreffen #2

Oscar's Story

Near the end of September, Rob and I began preparing for the Vintage VW Veteranentreffen, held in Solvang, CA, near Santa Barbara. The first one—in 1990—had been so much fun we decided to attend this event every year. This time we drove Oscar (my restored 1958 Bug convertible) instead of Vernon, my 1959 Single Cab who'd taken us there and back in 1990. Follow along as my photographic memory recalls the events of the trip:

FRIDAY

6:30 a.m. We get up, planning to leave at 8 a.m.. HAHAHAHA! Oscar is not loaded yet, and the dog has to go to the kennel.

7:30 a.m. Rob leaves to take Rachel to the kennel, a half hour away. I'm loading Oscar, and stealing furtive glances at Vernon while I do. Does he know we're leaving him behind? Last time, HE made this trip. Does he notice? Oh dear. I suffer a pang of conscience as I fit the last of the traveling stuff into Oscar's trunk. WOW. Beetle Travel Space is much smaller than Type II Travel Space.

7:37 a.m. I notice that Rob has forgotten Rachel's bed. After he comes back, we load that into Oscar and take it to the kennel, losing another half hour. Oh well.

9:30 a.m. Back from the kennel, and we're heading down highway 101, south. The club caravan is due to leave at 10:00. We thought we'd be long gone by now, and in reality, we'll be lucky to join up with them. HURRY, HURRY.

10:04 a.m. There is one car waiting for the caravan, a '58 Ghia coupe. We're not late! We stop and join them to wait for the rest.

10:20 a.m. Rick Spohn (our club prez) yells (Volks) "WAGENS HO!" and the caravan is off. The day is sunny, bright, and warm, and spirits are high. Everyone is smiling and waving and honking as we pull out. I'm too busy chewing my nails and gulping Maalox to honk or wave. Just think, barely 250 miles later, we'll be in Solvang!

12:45 p.m. All 6 cars in our caravan pull into a restaurant in Paso Robles for lunch. The trip has been uneventful, with one notable exception: when we left San Jose, Rick was driving his '56 convertible Bug. When we arrive for lunch, his fiancée JOY is driving. How'd they DO that? Presto chango, the old switcheroo on the highway! He told us he'd gotten tired, so asked Joy to take over, which she did. While driving. On the freeway. And, none of us even noticed! After lunch and a couple oil checks, we are off once again.

3:00 p.m. Santa Maria, and as we drive towards the city, we notice a huge column of brown smoke rising from the east. Looks like a mushroom cloud. It's only a grass fire, common in California this time of year. This one looks pretty big and I'm glad to be driving away from it.

4:10 p.m. SOLVANG! We made it. This small, Danish-inspired village is a tourist attraction full of gift shops, restaurants, and yep, tourists. We are threading our way carefully through the throngs of late-summer visitors. The main street is jammed with people and they look curiously at our cars. And, at the end of the street as it heads into the hills, is another monstrous column of smoke. Another fire? Can't be. But it is, and I worry again. This one appears even bigger than the Santa Maria fire. The smoke is so thick it makes the fire look closer than it really is. We find out later that it's 25 miles away from us, and the wind is blowing the other way. Rob goes in to the hotel to register and Oscar looks quite at home with his black-and-white paint scheme. He's not even breathing hard from the trip, but I'm bushed! No funny smells, and his oil looks brand new. WOW, whatta guy! He's a trooper, just like his big brother Vern.

6:30 p.m. We wander downstairs to the social going on in the hospitality suite. Pizza has been ordered and is going fast. There are a lot of people there, so many that they have begun spilling out onto the lawn around the pool. After chatting with some friends, Rob and I decide we'd like a real dinner, and go off in search of a restaurant downtown. Oscar has been bedded down for the night under his car cover, so we walk. It's a beautiful night, and we finally settle on a small place with a patio. We have a nice meal outdoors, where we can watch the 18-wheelers come roaring through town carrying bulldozers.

Fire trucks follow, on their way to the fire in Happy Canyon.

SATURDAY

It's so dark out when I wake up that I can't tell what time it is. Oh well, we'll have plenty of time to get ready for this show, so I'll go back to sleep, I did, and wake up again to find it is still dark. Those dang hotel curtains! They could've used something like this in the bombing raids of WWII, I'll bet. I looked at my watch to find it was YOW! 8:00! Time to roll! We're out and on our way to the meet before you can say "FAHRVERGNUGEN!" Under his cover, Oscar is coated with a fine film of white ash, coming off the hill from the fire.

10:00 a.m. The sun is relentless, beating down on us with a fury. There are LOTS of vendors out there, Wolfsburg West, Vintage Parts, and many others. The swappers have been here for hours, and the car show is shaping up, with many nice examples of vintage VW-hood represented. Jon Peters towed his '50 sedan down, and there was a beautiful '52 convertible there, only hours out of the shop (I find out later it belongs to Dick Christensen). There was a large contingent from a VW club in Arizona that made the trip in from Phoenix. Rob and I park Oscar next to one of their crowd, in a nice blue '59 sedan, and I begin cleaning Oscar up a bit. Afterwards, as I walk through the swap area, I run into Chuck Coli, of Chuck's Convertible Parts. He's making the rounds and invites me to join him. We spend a while digging through parts and goodies and marveling at the NOS semaphores one guy has brought out.

2:00 p.m. It's now so hot out here that a lot of people are leaving. With no shade, the sun is really intense. Rob and I pack up about 3:00 and with Chuck and Rick, head back to the hotel pool.

6:30 p.m. Rob and I go downstairs, to the banquet hall to see how things are progressing for the awards dinner tonight. Surprise! Everyone is already there, and the buffet is being put out. We find a spot at a table with some friends, and the ceremonies begin. Jon Peters makes sure everyone is fed, and then starts the raffle. VW of America has donated some really nice things, among them a neon-colored plastic picnic set that I would KILL for. But alas, it goes not to me, but to Mike Epstein, vice prez of our club. Well, if I can't have it, then there isn't a nicer guy I'd wish to get it. Besides, maybe I can worm it out of him later. Hahahaha! The awards are given out - the spectacular '52 convertible Bug gets first in its class and Best of Show. Oscar and I are VERY honored to win second in the convertible class, behind this car. It was a beautiful example of its kind, and the black-and-cream two-tone paint wasn't bad either!

10:30 p.m. Rob and I fall into bed, trying to rest up for our long trek home tomorrow. The weekend has gone SO fast, I can't believe it's over already.

SUNDAY

9:50 a.m. After breakfast, a group of us gather on the street in front of the hotel to watch the cars assemble for the wine tour. We are not going with them. With the thought of 5 hours in Oscar getting home, we're not anxious to spend another

couple driving the wine tour. But they don't need us, there is already a large crowd waiting to go.

10:25 a.m. Rob and I take off with another couple, Jeanne and Bill, in their '60 European sedan. It's getting warm again, and as we stop for gas in town, I'm sidetracked by an elderly German couple, drooling over Oscar. The man tells me that he had bought a '58 sedan, new, in Germany. "I loved that car", he says, looking wistfully at Oscar. He leaves, telling me how he'll never forgive himself for selling it.

11:55 a.m. After leaving Solvang, we arrive in San Luis Obispo, college town, home of Cal Poly. San Luis is also home to one of the most famous (and gaudily conspicuous) hotels around, the Madonna Inn. It's pink and purple and full of rock and concrete fishponds and caves and lots of wrought-iron geegaws. Jeanne has never been here and wants to stop for a peek, so we do. The ladies' room looks like it's been designed and executed by ZsaZsa Gabor, and the men's room sports a WATERFALL. (no, I didn't go in, Rob told me) With her curiosity now satisfied, Jeanne and the rest of us climb back into the Beetles and off we go again.

1:15 p.m. Lunch stop in King City—oops, Bill's favorite burger place is closed so we opt for Burger King. Ten gallons of iced tea perks us right up and we face the road again.

1:45 p.m. South of Salinas, the wind picks up and blows. I mean, BLOWS. Coming from the north, against us, it's almost strong enough to blow me backwards, it seems. As it is, it'll ruin Oscar's gas mileage. It's not making us very popular with the folks behind us either. With my foot in the floor and Oscar gritting his teeth, we manage a steady 50 mph against the headwind, until the road turns toward Monterey and we get some relief. It's really unnerving when your car is pointed straight and the splines on your steering wheel are vertical.

4:25 p.m. After a bad case of driver's (and passenger's, I suspect) fatigue and bun rot, we pull into the driveway at home. We're back! Oscar has done 526 miles, every one of them without incident. Why does this surprise me? I wonder. This is what VWs are meant to do. Somehow though, I can't dispel the notion that I've just driven my FOOD PROCESSOR halfway down the state and back. It's what I see when I look under the decklid. Could it be that I'm being influenced by the maze of electronics and automotive STUFF that lives under the hood of our Dodge truck and Saab? I'm ashamed to admit this. It's time to get back to simpler things; cars the way they should be: reliable, dependable, reasonably comfortable, and noisy. AHHHH, the good old days - of 36 horsepower, cramped confines, familiar eggbeater sound, and that odd VW-only smell. Nothing like a long trip in one of these creatures to make me nostalgic. SIGH.

8:26 p.m. As we unload the last of the trip from Oscar and the suitcases, Vernon is watching. Oscar can't wait to tell him all about it, I'm sure, and as I close the garage door I hear them whispering. I'm glad they've both been given the chance to go to this meet. It's something every aging VW should experience at least once.

Volkswagen Beetle in 1994

Still Selling Well

The surprising high Beetle sales in Mexico during the previous three years, as has been pointed out before, were fueled by the low price that had been negotiated by the Government and measures taken by the factory, the unions and the Dealers. These arrangements came to an end in 1994 and caused sales to decline to 78,276. A record of 98,321 Beetles had been sold the year before. 1994 sales were however still entirely respectable considering that the Beetle had now been in production for 56 years.

1994 model Beetle chassis numbers started with 11 P 0 000 001 in October of 1993. To stimulate sagging sales three special edition model Beetles were introduced during 1994. The "40 Year Anniversary" edition, to celebrate the fact that Volkswagen started to built cars in Mexico in 1954. Another special model was the "Fire Beetle" which had alloy wheels, a black onyx metallic exterior color and a black interior with red stitching. The third special edition was the "Jean" model which featured denim cloth interior. Jeans models had always been popular in Germany and very popular in Mexico and had been reintroduced over the years a few times and just as they would be again reintroduced in future years. To get a better price, in previous years some dealers even made their own "Jean" models by using denim seat covers. Another odd special model for 1994 was the "Volkswagen Beetle Edition One". According to reports, it was painted in pink metallic and its interior had pink embroidery. Not much is known about that one perhaps the market did not react very positively to this type of color combination.

To decide what car colors to use for cars built in Mexico, Volkswagen de Mexico usually had some cars painted with colors provided and suggested by their paint suppliers. These cars were displayed for a number of days in front of the factory and the secretaries and other employees were asked to give their opinions. The problem with that was that too many people like certain colors but never would buy one in any of these particular colors. At the end, what usually happened was that the head man of sales, who was a Porsche fanatic, decided to use mostly the same colors that Porsche was using at the time.

The 1600 cc engine that had been in use in Mexico for many years received a number of upgrades for 1994. Some of these would have been very welcome many years before in the US. It received a disposable oil filter and interestingly enough, hydraulically self adjusting valves. The wider Chrome bumpers with a wider black center strip as well as disc brakes became now standard. The compression ratio, because of the poor fuel quality available in Mexico, had to be lowered to 6.6 to 1.

Other Volkswagen News in 1994

March 22, was declared as the "World Beetle Day" at the VW veteran meeting at Bad Camberg, Germany where the late Heinz-Willi Lottermann used to have its Veteranen-Treffen every four years. – In July the 16th, the millionths Golf was produced and as part to celebrate this special occasion a special model series called "Rolling Stones" were produced. – Brazil celebrated the production of the 11 millionths Volkswagen in that country. A concept of a new Beetle was introduced to the international press in Detroit on January 5th. An event widely covered by most TV stations in their evening news and by the printing press the next day. To generate more interest and to further gauge public reaction, on March 29, a New Beetle was displayed jointly with a 1966 Beetle convertible at the "Tavern on the Green" at New York's Central Park. Both of these cars were used again for a display at the NY International Auto Show the same year. The 1966 Convertibles used for these displays belonged to a long time VVWCA member and the previous VVWCA historian, Bob Cropsey, also author of the excellent VW book "Volkswagen - History to Hobby" ISBN 0-9765261-0-7, now in its second printing

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by Heinz Schneider s.heinzo@verizon.net

Memberships: what happens if VVWCA experiences future financial problems?

Q: I just renewed my membership for another three years shortly after that our local VW club announced they were calling it quits. I'm told there was no cash available to refund my membership from them. With all the financial burdens of the economy these days, I was wondering what might happen if the VVWCA were to go belly-up.

A: That's a great question and though we cannot make any promises of certainty, I can tell you that the VVWCA has set aside funds for providing membership refunds in the event such a travesty would happen. Our club, like any other club is dependent on the growth and dues of our members. By establishing efficient cost management processes, we've been able to reduce many expenses with the exception of postage and printing costs of the *Vintage Voice*.

Membership Reminders: what is the process?

Q: I know I'm to refer to the printed mailing label on the *Vintage Voice* in order to determine the expiration date of my membership, but was wondering what methods you use to remind members that their renewal is due?

A: Other than the mailing label. We try to use a 4 notification phase process using email and the postal service. We first mail you a postcard reminding you that your membership will soon be expiring. One week later, we'll send you an email reminding you of the same (proving we have a current email address on record). As time draws closer to the expiration date, we'll send out another email and postcard as a final reminder. If we do not have a current email address on record, you'll only receive the post card. Note: You can also refer to your membership card for the actual expiration date of your membership.

Drive Your VW To Work Day

Q: Friend tells me there is a National Drive Your VW to Work Day, but I can never find out when it's to be held.

A: The 16th annual Drive your Volkswagen to Work Day is held on Jun 22, 2012. This world-wide cyber event is hosted by Mid America Motorworks. For more information go to: www.mamotorworkstv.com/vw/events/ Naturally, you'll need to advance the calendar to the month of June.

Solder Your Tips

Hey Howard,
While reading your column in the latest *Vintage Voice*, I was reminded that years ago ... I did solder some of the connectors and wires on my '62 sunroof. I started by soldering the eye on the lead from the starter solenoid to the voltage regulator, tinned both leads attached by the clamp

connector on the voltage regulator and soldered the spade clip on to the wire at the headlight switch. I don't now recall if I soldered the clips on the jumper between the headlight switch and the ignition switch or not. This made a world of difference and I could not complain about dim headlights

Bruce Galloway, Las Cruces, NM

Director's Comments: Thanks Bruce. Every tip like this really helps. Other tips from our members are greatly appreciated.

What's in it for us gals?

Q: Why is it most the items for sale on your website seem to be primarily oriented towards the other gender in this club? Have you ever considered offering something for us gals?

Kathi H., Springfield, Missouri.

A: This is a very good question and very easy one to answer. While attending a VW event this summer, I was introduced to a line of specialty food seasonings packaged by a company called Sophie's Choice. They offer a variety of seasonings that you mix with olive oil to be used with dipping breads. They are absolutely great and can be used in various ways. They were liked so well by our official VVWCA taste tester (my wife), we decided we'd team up with them and offer a small line of their products for sale on our website and in the newsletter. Watch for them soon.

Chapter Club Designation

Q: Our local club would like to apply for a VVWCA Chapter Club designation, but we've heard the process has changed and might involve a filing fee. Is this true and when would information be made available on the website.

A: Hopefully, the website will be updated prior to the end of January. All Chapter Clubs regardless of prior status will have to pay a filing fee, but have the opportunity to earn those funds back through the course of the calendar year by helping the VVWCA grow editorial content for the *Vintage Voice* and our membership. All of the details are sketchy at the minute but should be finalized soon.

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Bus restoration: Part 1

The pick-up line

By Lyndon Thenhaus • lyndonthenhaus@yahoo.com

What we have here is a 1965 Deluxe under construction. I picked up this Bus from Way out Salvage in Arkansas in October of 2010. My friend Barrett was also picking up a 62 Bus from the yard the same weekend, so he and Alan came down from KC with a trailer to pick his Bus up. Not having a trailer myself to pick the VW Bus up I asked my dad if I could use his tilt back trailer. I had to take a 200 mile easterly route to the countryside of Belle, MO. for the trailer after he agreed to the use. This would put me 300 miles further out than my friends, but we managed to meet each other in a close time frame. 500 miles there and 250 miles back was a full weekend. I had never been to the yard before, but let me tell you it's a hike and a half down boulder driven roads and not much for road signs.

I had only seen a couple of pictures of the Bus before going but knew that it was "mostly" complete. Upon arrival I immediately was checking the bus over real good. I was not impressed with the amount of work this Bus would take to get back on the road, also understood that they all take a lot of time and work. With doing a 64 Beetle from start to finish I knew it could be done.

The good: Deluxe walk thru Bus, great original headliner still intact with just a small hole towards the back, doors shut





very nice with very little effort, deluxe trim still intact, some pop outs in good shape, complete 1600 single port still installed, lots of paint intact, good rear floor, clock and all the dash was there, cargo floor in good shape, door panels in place.

The bad: Smashed nose with gallons of bondo, bad long rocker install with gallons of bondo, bay window rear corners welded in and bondo was a plenty, short rocker is shot, cargo door rocker shot with more bondo, all jack points, outriggers and cross braces need replaced, front floors 80% gone, missing spare tire housing, missing passenger seat, rear seat, middle seat, some pop outs are shot and the list goes on with more to come.

After toying with the idea of the work involved in getting this back on the road it really had me thinking twice about the purchase. I walked away at least six times and looked at other VWs around the yard. I finally came to the conclusion that I wasn't driving back to Kansas City with an empty trailer and no

Bus to drive one day. We finally came to an agreement by him providing some more pop outs, better rear bumper which I had to pull off of another Bus. We got a late start for the drive back after loading the two Busses, arriving back around 10:30 pm on a Sunday night. They dropped off Barrett's Bus at Alan's and I drove home and left my Bus on the trailer for a few days. The Bus was then dropped off at Alan's due to the city of Gladstone not allowing non licensed cars in the driveway and his place is an ideal location to work on the Bus. Alan is a true guru with VWs and I trust his ability and recommendations. This Bus has sat now for a year with no work done to it. Pay no attention to the dates on the pictures that have been posted. I did start collecting parts though while I worked on Barrett's Bus and numerous other VW projects over this period. Here are a few shots of the good bad and the ugly. There will be no corner or part that will not be touched by a grinder and welder. This will be the introduction of the Bus. Some panels have been welded into place and more of the rebuilding will accompany some future Newsletters. I hope the project keeps rolling along as it is right now. The weather has been great on the weekends. I have not expected the weather to hold as it has. I've expected to be working on the Bus in the snow and cold weather so far. I've got to man up for this project!



FINISHING THE EXTREME DUNE BUGGY MAKEOVER

Meyers Manx project finds completion with a little help from a friend

Effingham, Ill. (December 21, 2011) - A challenge was issued at Funfest for Air-Cooled VW 2011 on Mid America Motorworks' corporate campus in Effingham, Ill. Could a team of eight people successfully complete a Meyers Manx makeover in two days? The crew from dunebuggyarchives.com was on target to do just that until a severe storm ended their progress on the second day. Thanks to VW enthusiast and owner of Midwest Autosavers, Dr. Darby Milnor, the makeover will soon be complete.

The 1969 Meyers Manx Dune Buggy came to Mid America Motorworks with original certification. During Funfest, Bruce Meyers, creator of the Manx, confirmed that the buggy is an authentic Meyers Manx.

"We really hoped to finish the makeover ourselves after Funfest, but several other projects have been demanding our time," said Josh Yager, Extreme Makeover coordinator and VW Merchant at Mid America Motorworks. "We know the Manx is in great hands with Dr. Darby and we can't wait to have it complete and show-ready for 2012."

Attendees at Funfest for Air-Cooled VW watched as the engine, exhaust, frame, interior and headlights received upgrades. The Manx's color scheme gives a nod to the Corvette side of Mid America Motorworks, sporting Torch Red accents on Cyber Gray. The interior, completed by PERFORMANCE CHOICE manufacturing division, features C5 Corvette seats and a custom back carpet.



Dr. Darby will complete wiring, dash and gauges, convert to disc brakes, add an aluminum axle beam and add suspension components. The completed Manx will be on display at Funfest for Air-Cooled VW 2012, June 1-3 at Mid America Motorworks.

Mid America Motorworks offers quality aftermarket parts and accessories for Corvette and Air-Cooled VW enthusiasts. For more information on Mid America Motorworks or to request a free catalog, call 1-866-350-4543 or shop online at www.mamotorworks.com. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Sunflower State Sesquicentennial

by Bill Pierson • kabprsn@yahoo.com

The German Car Club of Kansas (GCCK) hosted its fourth annual Sonnenblumen Autofest in Salina, KS on September 24, 2011. This year we were celebrating not only our state's sesquicentennial, but also the 125th anniversary of the automobile. Deciding to spotlight both events was a no-brainer when we discovered that the patent for the Benz Patentwagen was applied for on January 29, 1886, Kansas' 25th birthday!







To emphasize our theme, we chose to induct a long-time German car enthusiast as an honorary member of GCCK. Dr. Richard Bergen, the sculptor who created the figure "Ad Astra", which now graces the dome of our state capitol, shared his memories of driving and working on numerous VW's, and trying to encourage his son to follow suit. Other honorees attending this year were GCCK scholarship recipients studying auto restoration at nearby McPherson College, which offers the only such four-year degree program in the country. (www.mcpherson.edu/technology) Sonnenblumen Autofest (that's Sunflower Car Show) is open to any vehicle with a modicum of Teutonic pedigree. Judging is done by entrants, who choose winners in sixteen classes, plus best paint, interior, engine, campsite display, best of show, and least-likely-to-win-best-of-show. With half the classes (and usually two-thirds of the nearly 100 entries) devoted to VW's, our show is predominantly a Volkswagen

event. But we have enjoyed sharing our park with some interesting non-VW marques, including Opels, NSUs, (German) Fords, an Amphicar, an East German Trabant, and a Porsche Diesel tractor.

Family involvement has been a key element of our club since its inception in 2004, so we try to provide a number of activities to keep kids happily busy during the show. We had a nifty valve cover racer track, and kids decorated boxes to look like Buses, which they later "raced" on foot in front of a cheering crowd. Each child was also given a ballot and encouraged to vote for the Kids' Pick winner. Entertainment for the rest of us was provided by a folk singing duo and our local German band. Greeting entrants and generally spicing things up was a trio of our very own "St. Pauli Girls". Their presence was even more appropriate this year, as we were fortunate to partner with the local



chapter of the AMBUCS service club, who set up a big tent where they sold beer and German food!

The prospect of free camping in Thomas Park both Friday and Saturday nights seems to draw a modest group of Type II devotees, who relish the camaraderie of early fall evenings spent chatting around their campfires with like-minded enthusiasts. Great weather also probably helped persuade folks to attend from Kansas City, Wichita, and surrounding

states. GCCK members enjoy going to Nebraska, Mo-Kan, Tulsa, Colorado, Effingham, and Eureka Springs events, and have developed friendships with VW people throughout the Midwest. That's what this hobby is all about, right? Watch for information on www.gcck.org and come see us next fall in Salina for Sonnenblumen Autofest 2012!

Photos courtesy of: John Black, Chip Beck and Maurice Weeks



Making History: Circumnavigating the Globe

Part 2: Asia and Europe

By Janet and Ed Howle

For those who missed it, the first part of this story detailed the first leg of this rally, 3,000 miles crossing the U.S. from April 14 to April 27.

Leg 2: Asia

It was now June 3rd and the real driving adventure began. Most everyone had rallied, or at least crossed the US before, but this would be a first for all of us; languages we didn't speak, road signs we couldn't read, food we couldn't recognize or digest and roads that would rattle and shake every car. Only four cars crossed the Pacific. For various reasons, the others didn't go on. So along with us and our '67 Beetle, we had Jack and Mary Crabtree in his 1929 Model A Ford, Clay Miller and his grandson, Blake in Clay's 1932 Ford V8, and Jerry Price and Roy Geigel in Jerry's 2007 Corvette, the only alternative fuel car. A note: in 1908 only three of the original six cars completed the trip across the US, Asia and Europe. Things are not much different 103 years later!

Even before we left Beijing, we had climbed China's Great Wall, visited Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. But we were not here to sight-see. Our trip was about the challenges of driving across China, Kazakhstan and Russia before entering Europe. Clearing customs into China was our first experience with bureaucracy in authoritarian regimes. Even with our competent guide and translator, "James", it took two full days to get through the process. China was the only country in which we had to get driver's licenses for all drivers and Chinese license plates for each car. Now we had our first significant problem and it wasn't the car. In China, anyone over 70 cannot have a driver's license. Ed is 76. At first it looked like I would have to drive all 21 days it would take to cross China, but someone who remains nameless somehow obtained a fraudulent license for Ed. We don't know where it came from or how he got it, but we were already learning not to ask many questions. Fortunately, Ed never had to show his

license in China so we don't know if it would have passed the scrutiny of the police.

The idea of actually driving in China was daunting and would prove to be even worse than we could imagine. At this point, we had only observed Chinese driving as we went back and forth in our support van over the two days between Beijing and the port city of Tianjin. The first word we used was "creative" later we would add "chaotic". Road conditions vary from being the best we drove in Asia to the very worst any of us had ever driven. The China Highway, where it is completed, is as good as any interstate in the U.S., with signs both in English and Chinese. But streets in cities have no lane markers and no obvious rules for the right-of-way. Roads were clogged by trucks, cars, bicycles, electric scooters, herds of goats, sheep and horses as well as pedestrians. Horse and mule drawn carts are not just competition on rural roads.

The number of cars and drivers has increased exponentially in the past decade in China, which means there are a lot of inexperienced drivers on the roads. Trucks are often in poor repair, belching smoke, terribly overloaded and straining up every incline. We saw more broken down trucks on this trip than I have seen in all my years of driving, and many turned over from unbalanced loads. Eventually you learn to drive with a constant state of anxiety or perish, always prepared to use the horn and brake. In addition, Stewball does not have a right-side rear-view mirror which adds to the lane-changing challenge.

The terrain in China is more variable than the U.S. with mountain ranges to below sea-levels in the Gobi desert. We encountered a sandstorm that was worse than dense fog, and flooded roads. Our cars took their beating, but survived the odds that were thrown at us. For us, food and lodging were our personal challenges and the food in China became a big part



of our weight-loss program! By the time we crossed the border into Kazakhstan, we never again wanted to see chopsticks or a lazy Susan with multiple dishes of unrecognizable food that made us sick!

Crossing borders took a particularly big dose of patience. China to Kazakhstan was the worst. In summary let me say it took ten hours and then we still had miles to go before our stop in Almaty, Kazakhstan. We finally arrive there at 1:30 am. Not a good day. It wasn't just the border, Clay had to replace his alternator and Jerry had a slow leak in a tire that required him to stop and check it on a regular basis.

We had our first "bad fuel" day in Kazakhstan. Normally fuel was readily available and octane ratings, while most likely not the same as the US, did not cause problems. We always used the highest ratings we could find. Fortunately, Stewball was very forgiving except the day from Almaty to Balqash. That day, when we stopped, the owner had to start a generator to pump gas and Ed could imagine the slug stirring around in the tank. Sure enough, the engine starting missing and dieseling when Ed turned it off. The only way he could stop the engine was to stall it. It ran without the ignition on. This only lasted until we were able to add better fuel. We found Kazakhstan to be a country of contrasts. There are no GPS maps for Kazakhstan, you don't need them, there aren't many roads. The capital city of Astana is as modern as any western city, with good roads leading in and out (for a few miles), upscale hotels and good restaurants. The countryside, however, is





another story. In China, Jerry had to load his low slung, heavy car onto a trailer for 138 miles of he absolutely worst road imaginable, a passage that took him 22 hours. The rest of us were able to negotiate this section, very slowly, but even on the ground, it took us 10 hours. Now in Kazakhstan, once again on rough, pot-holed roads, it was slow going. I'm sure by now he was sorry he ever brought the Corvette to Asia.

We entered Russia just west of the Ural Mountains near Kurgan and for the first time, "Stewball" had a problem. Somehow, our right headlight had been broken. Most likely a rock from one of the gravel roads, we really don't know. The problem is in Russia, you must drive with your headlights on day and night and a missing headlight can produce a stiff fine. Unlike China, highway police are everywhere in Russia and with a wave of their billy-club can pull you over. This happened frequently to our group of unusual cars, by my count, an average of 4 times a day. Generally the stop was just to satisfy their curiosity. We never paid a fine or bribe, thanks to our Tatiana, our Russia guide.

Finding a replacement for our headlight in Russia was a big problem since in the 1960s, Russia was still the USSR and cars were not imported from Western countries. Tatiana again stepped in and Goggled Vintage VW clubs in Russia. Sure enough, they do exist. There was one in Moscow and another antique car club in Kazan. Kazan was closer and it turned out they had a replacement light stamped "Made in the USSR." They wouldn't take payment for the light or labor and it all

came with a tour of their restoration garage, followed by tea and sweets. Car guys (and gals) are the same world over. OK, the high beam only lasted two days but the low beam made it all the rest of the way back to our garage in N.Carolina.

Leg 3: Europe

Europe seemed so quick and easy after our many days in Asia. Roads were consistently good and often we could even read the road signs. We were met in Vilnius, Lithuania by rally friends from Germany who had arranged for us to have the car serviced in Berlin, then on to Poland, Czech Republic, Switzerland and finally France. Clay continued to have problems with his Ford but even with all his issues, we all made it to Paris. Stewball proved to be the most reliable car on the race. We were the only car that didn't even change a tire! Paris would not be our last stop in Europe, we still had to drive the cars to Amsterdam for shipping back to the US. Stewball arrived safely in Savannah, Georgia and Ed drove him back and into our garage, this completed our circumnavigation. As mentioned in Part 1, the timed, scored portion of the rally did not continue in Asia and Europe so there was no winner. I think all of us that completed the trip would agree with the slogan from the Great Race. "To finish is to win".

Would we do it again? If anyone comes forward with the money—we've spent our own—we will be on the road again. Perhaps the Pan-American Highway from Alaska to Patagonia? It's only 15,000 miles and Stewball is eager to go.

Beetles rock!

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VW Box

The picture (Sept-Oct 2001, Page 15) of the couple in the VW box reminded me our VW box. When we purchased our VW bus in Lafayette, La., the dealer gave us a VW toy box on wheels, celebrating the slogan "If you want to carry something, get a box." (Remember? Maybe not). Here's our "VW stable" new bus (1964?), 1960 Bug (we still have it), toy box. The toy box was used heavily by 3 children. The couple pictured (page 15) obviously have a stronger box.

Mary Jean Fowler, La Veta, CO



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Is it for sale?



By John Henry
zarwerks@charter.net
<http://www.thebugshop.org>

Driving my freshly restored 1957 Beetle around, I get stopped by people often. The most common question has to be "What year is it?" Many people compliment me and go on to tell me about "the one they had". Some ask if I am selling it. I am not.

But I had given some thought to what I have put into the car, and how I would have to ask for all of that time and effort back, before I would "sell" it to someone. I took some time to write up a fictitious reply that I might use...

"Nice car! Is it for sale?"

"Well, sure it is for sale, everything has its price"

"How much are you asking?"

"Well, it'll cost you \$11,312 in cash, plus you'll need to give me 8 years of your spare time, roughly 6 hours per week, I'd say. After that there is another 2 hours per week of time in front of the PC, surfing vendor sites and asking questions on newsgroups. Then I'll need another \$233.17 for long distance phone charges to parts suppliers and private sellers, gas to and from VW shows, parts I broke and wrong parts that I ordered (but you can have those, I saved them). You will also need to fix the broken window in the garage and assorted other damage from flying tools. You will have to get the acetone burns off the kitchen table and those grease stains off the new family room carpet (near the fireplace)."

"Then you will need to somehow get my kids to unlearn six or seven swear words that they are starting to repeat when they think I'm not around, and then you will need to pay my wife. You will owe her about 77 nights renting a movie and sitting on the couch (watching but not listening to the movie,

gossiping about friends instead), 14 'quiet' dinners after the kids are in bed and some kind of compensation to her for the time we drove halfway across Maryland on the way back from my parents after Christmas to find that guy selling the set of barely-worn, wide whitewall Firestone 5.60x15s (the time the kids were screaming after being in the car for 12 hours and I refused to go straight home; ask her, she'll remember). You will need to paint the house and take my kids to the McDonalds Playplace about 23 times. You need to shoot hoops with my son for about 7 hours total and go look at least 44 drawings that my daughter made.

"You will also have to call at least a dozen friends of ours and re-arrange the dinners and cookouts we missed (I think one event was actually a wedding, you may need a suit). And you will have to go to my in-laws on 38 Sunday afternoons for dinner (food is actually pretty good though). You probably should also apologize to my neighbors for the times I was running the compressor well past midnight."

"You will have to replace roughly 8 square inches of skin and sub-dermal tissue on my body, mostly from my hands, but one big chunk right above my eye. At least one skin graft for a severe post-welding burn will be needed. You need to repay 3 of my friends somehow for favors involving sweating and swearing, and loan them at least 6 of your tools, 2 of them you may never see again. I'll need 19 T-shirts, 2 pairs of jeans, 5 pairs of shorts and one nice collared polo shirt (shouldn't have been working in that one anyway)".

"You'll need to come by and disassemble the 'cold storage' bay that I made for the car across the back of the garage, and take down the rack above the garage door that is used to store the 'show' wheels off season. You'll have to explain to

my kids that they can now ride their bikes in the garage again and the garage doors can be opened when daddy's car is out of the storage space and their friends are over."

"Still interested? Let me know. If you are, I'll stop on the way home and buy the paint for the house."

Director's Note: John Henry has often been a large supporter and contributor of the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America and other popular Vintage Volkswagen forums. While this article has long appeared on many websites, I still find joy in reading it and feel it is very much appropriate to this day.

Classifieds

COST: Members receive 2 free classified ads. Limit of two per issue. Non-members: \$10.00 . Each ad will appear in two issues of the Vintage Voice.

MAXIMUM LENGTH: 75 Words

PHOTOGRAPHS: 1 photo per advertisement please. Photos cannot be returned.

LIMITATIONS: Ads are published on a space available basis. Copy submissions must be typed or legibility hand written. ONLY VW parts, cars, toys or literature will be accepted. No cars for sale newer than 1982 can be accepted. VVWCA accepts no liability relating to the purchase of an advertised item.

WANTED

VVWCA Newsletters from 76 through 81 and 84 through 87 so I can make a comprehensive history of the VVWCA for our website. Would be willing to pay all shipping costs. Contact me at vvwca@att.net or 913-831-6225. My address is also listed under the Chapter Reps for the state of Kansas on our website. Thank you, Mike Epstein.

Looking for a 1957 Speedometer or repair shop. I can be reached at Rodney Sweet, 259 Godfrey Road, Mystic, CT 06355. rodcweet@att.net

PARTS AND SUCH FOR SALE

License plate frames (new) 1950-1985, \$45.00 ea. Date Plates (new) with S/S stands or over-rider clamp 1950-1985 \$45.00 each. ID stamps year of car (goes on f/windshield right side bottom corner \$7.00. Stainless steel vent locks - long stem (piece of mind) \$25.00 for a pair. Venetian Blinds from Australia, oval or big window, \$260.00.

Remember, the Wiener Foundation has our own payment plan. You pay what you want, when you want & we ship anywhere in the world. Also, any member buying any VW item by Christmas will receive a FREE ID stamp with their order. That's seven bucks on the house. That's what the Weiner Foundation is all about (giving). All items plus shipping and handling. Phil Weiner, 9625 SW 15 ST, Miami, FL. 33174. T/Fax 305-552-0982 (Call first when faxing). PS: Would the person from San Francisco who called me about a rear fender, please call me again as I have located one for your convertible.

1949-1952 round taillights, needs restored, \$500 plus shipping. Hebmuller original door glass including frame, \$500 plus shipping. Terry Schuler. 814-243-8859.

1952-1982 VW Factory Shop Manuals.: \$29.95-\$99.95. Aftermarket VW shop manuals (6 different publishers): \$9.95-\$34.95. 54-79 VW Restoration Manual \$37.95. Alex Voss, 4850 37th Ave So., Seattle WA. 98118. Tel: 206-721-3077 toll free 888=380-9277.

Pre 1969 ½ Karmann Ghia cabriolet top frame. Complete frame, nuts, bolts and any fabric. Heavy & bulky so you arrange transportation from central Wisconsin. \$350.00. John Benz. 920-787-4940. campwaushara@hotmail.com.

Patches, Pins, stickers, decals for sale. 99% VW related. Prices start at \$1.00. 100 mil gas tank, in box and ready to ship. Koch resto. \$275.00 Condition 1-10: a good 10. After forty five years , it's time to unload. If it's VW Vintage, I'm sure I can help you. Call & let's chat. All items & shipping. Call Phil Weiner. 305-552-0982. Willing to part or sell it all cheap.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Start your advertisement with the name of the item you're selling. Be sure to include the price and your phone number or an email address. Please do not use abbreviations. Your item will sell fast if you clearly indicate the condition of the item

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SUBMIT YOUR AD TO: VVWCA Vintage Voice, c/o Kimberly van Mourik, PO Box 1472, Nederland, CO 80466-1472

One VW Thing fuel resv can. Black in color. Condition: 8. Complete in good condition, needs paint for show. Price \$250.00. No dents & shipping. Bosch and Hella flood lights, condition: 9.. Yellow fluted lenses in working order. Price: \$950 ea pair and shipping. Chrome excellent. Bullet fenders, condition: 7, needs restoration but solid. Price \$400 plus shppings. As mentioned before, everything is up for sale. No price to small for conversation. Make an offer. I will be gland to kick around with you. Contact Phil (Hotdog) Weiner. If faxing (same number) call first. 305-552-0982.

A complete VW Hobby. 1946 VW Model. New & used parts. Model cars. A VW Library. VW factory parts books. 3 cars for parts. Special tools. 860-868-2568. Everything VW related – one price. \$15K OBO. Garth Collins. Marble Dale, CT.

CARS SALE

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1961 VW Beetle. Completely restored. L-380 Turquoise, many first place trophies. Runs and drives perfect. Call for details. \$8,800.00. Ralph Johnson. 302-220-6322. Bear, Delaware.

Two good Volkswagens at newly reduced prices. Call me for info and mail fliers. 1.) 1982 Westfalia/Vanagon pop-top camper. Very good California. Mostly original & new brakes, tune, tires. Now \$6,000.00. Shows well and fun camper. Air cooled. 2.) 1982 Rabbit convertible. Very good driver. New Brakes, radiator, tires. Good original interior and top. Enjoy summer sun. Decent car now \$3000.00. Both need to be sold. Don Bowker. 330-274-8872. N.E. Ohio. Call before 10 pm EST.

1968 Beetle. White with black interior. Needs nothing. Comes w/ detachable tow bar. 207-460-3375. (Me.) Kenneth Taplin. ktaplin@gwi.net. \$5000.00. (July-August 2011)



The Volkswagen Beetle Used As Mini-Taxis In Mexico City

Anyone who has ever visited Mexico City could not help noticing all the many Beetle mini-taxis circulating and offering their services. For many years they were part of the color of this city and offered economical transportation to its citizens and to tourists alike.

Mexico City is one of the largest cities in the world with over 20 million inhabitants and with a somewhat unpredictable public transportation system on one hand and millions of its citizens not having cars on the other. No wonder that as soon Volkswagen Beetles started to become available in Mexico in the late sixties, enterprising men started out using their Beetles to offer very reasonable transportation services. The only conversion they did to their cars was to take out the front passenger side seat for easier access to the rear seat. Up to the arrival of the Beetle in Mexico City, taxis were traditionally large American cars, which were very expensive to operate.

In 1971 with the encouragement of the city Government and with the help of Volkswagen de Mexico an effort was made to organize Volkswagen mini-taxi operations. A consortium purchased 500 Mini-Taxis. All cars were painted in yellow with white colored roofs. Volkswagen de Mexico helped to establish what was called "El Central de Mini-Taxis". It looked and was somewhat organized like a regular Volkswagen dealership. A place where mini taxistas could get their cars serviced and where they could purchase cars and parts at a discount. A memorable widely distributed publicity picture was taken from the air in 1971, showing all of these 500 taxis parked in the large central plaza in the center of Mexico City, in it's famous Zocalo.

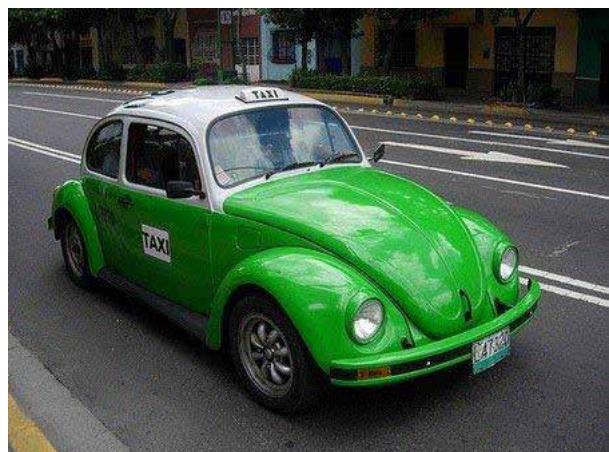
Later when catalytic converters were installed in 1991, the Mexico City government requested that all newly purchased Beetle mini-taxis to be painted green with a white roof. This was an attempt to encourage passengers to use these more environmentally friendly taxis. At the same time new taxi permits were required to reign in the many illegal taxistas. Many individuals by just painting their cars yellow and white were intruding on the legitimate business of the licensed taxis.

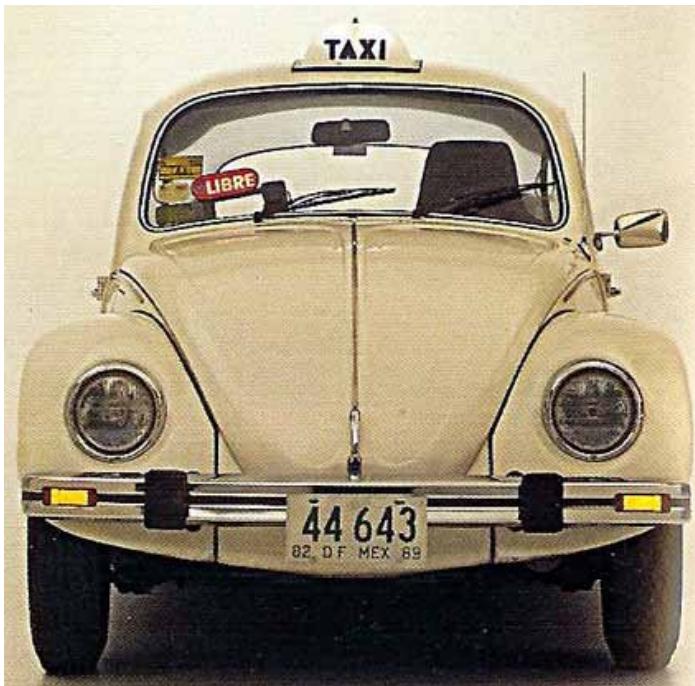
How much of the newly introduced catalytic converters and the later added fuel injection and electronic ignition helped with

the pollution problems has to be questioned since thousands of older yellow cabs were still operating. As far as the color goes, in 2010 by decree of the City government the color of all the taxis had to be changed again. This time it had to be gold at the upper body part and maroon at the lower. This was to celebrate the bicentennial of the declaration of the independence of Mexico from Spain. What the colors of gold and maroon had to do with Mexico's independence has never been explained. It was most likely the idea of a politico who wanted to create an image for himself.

The sale of Beetles to taxi operators had been a major part of the VW business until 2001 when the Mexico City government passed an edict outlawing all two door taxis after 2002 that were more than ten years old. A declaration by the transportation ministry of the city openly admitted that the law was mainly passed to get rid of the Beetle taxis. The Beetle was considered a nuisance and claimed to be responsible for most of the city's terrible air pollution. Besides, they described the Beetles as being uneconomical and using up valuable natural resources because of its allegedly high fuel consumption. Another factor mentioned was that two door taxis were considered dangerous because many of them were used to kidnap its passengers. Passengers would be driven to a location by crooks to where accomplices would wait and rob them. In many cases passengers were forced to empty their accounts using their ATM cards. Officially about 400 of these kidnappings a year were reported in Mexico City alone. How many actually took place in mini-taxis nobody will ever know since crime is traditionally under reported in Mexico. Citizens are afraid to report to police because often times the police are worse than the criminals.

It seems that Volkswagen had also lost its good connection with the politicos who can be and had been made many times to look the other way after the handover of some pesos. The loss of this substantial taxi business made Volkswagen finally decide to stop Beetle production all together by 2003. Since the last Beetle was produced in 2003 the end of all Beetle mini-taxis in Mexico City will be in 2013. Owners of Volkswagen Min-Taxis could get rid of them sooner by accepting of about US \$ 1,500





Beetle Replacements, First Attempts

It is not necessary to repeat again the opinions expressed by Heinz Nordhoff on how bad an impression he had of the Beetle when he arrived in Wolfsburg in 1948 to become head of VW. For that reason it was no surprise that as early as in the fall of 1948 he talked to Ferry Porsche, the son of Ferdinand Porsche, the original designer of the Volkswagen, to start working on a Beetle replacement.

Discussions about this subject took place in the small Austrian-German border town of Reichenhall. Apparently Nordhoff and his lawyers were eager not to inconvenience the Porsches, who were still residing in Austria at the time, by choosing this place far south from Wolfsburg. Nordhoff wanted to clear up the legal entanglement the Porsches had with Volkswagen. The Nazi Government had over the years made many concessions to Porsche and by the time the "Thousand Year Reich" ended after twelve years in 1933, Porsche and his son in law Anton Piëch were well entrenched and pretty much in full control of Volkswagen. For obvious reasons, by the end of the war, the Nazis were out of the picture. Nordhoff wanted a free hand and to be the only one in charge. Therefore he had to clear up the legal rights the Porsches had accumulated. As far as the Allies were concerned, who confiscated the VW factory at the end of the war; they already had conceded to Nordhoff and promised not to interfere with him running the company as he pleased.

For the Porsches to concede, Nordhoff and his lawyers made a number of very favorable financial concessions. VW assured Porsche to supply all the parts needed to build their 356 model sports cars. Another favor agreed was to distribute these sports cars through the Volkswagen dealer network. Also part of the deal was a lucrative deal to develop a Beetle replacement. This first attempt for Beetle replacement received the Porsche

for each car taken out of circulation. Unless the law changes after 2003 there will not be anymore Volkswagen Mini Taxis in Mexico City after 2013.

During the eighties and nineties other smaller cars made by Nissan and General Motors had become available and were also used for small taxis. It was however the Beetle that was the most popular one. It was estimated that in 2008, out of a total of 100 000 taxis operating in Mexico City 60 000 were Beetles.

Beetle mini-taxis were not only popular in Mexico City. They were used in other Mexican cities as well for low cost transportation and to encourage entrepreneurship for people of limited means. Sometimes families were pooling their money to put one member into the taxi business. Anyone having watched international news must have seen the occasional mini taxi in other countries than Mexico, like for instance Brazil and South Africa to mention just two. It is pretty certain that this too will become part of history and we will eventually see them only in pictures from the past.

project number 402.

In his first Autobiography published in 1976, Ferry Porsche said. "Our first aim was to modernize it (the Beetle) and we succeeded fairly well. We used the same engine and transmission but with a unitized body and chassis and a redesigned front axle featuring McPherson struts. Ferry claimed this development resulted in a prototype ready for production. However, in his second autobiography, published 13 years later, in 1989, he writes again about this first project for Volkswagen. This time he states that it had a shorter wheelbase of variable lengths, whatever that means. While previously he had claimed that the 402 was a car ready for production, now he described it only as a design study. There seem to be no pictures or drawings available of this study or of a prototype for that matter. A VW historian points out that no further details of Project 402 are known. An official list of Porsche projects for Volkswagen does not mention a 402. That number just does not exist for some reason. We do however know that Nordhoff wanted to replace the Beetle. Specifically, what he wanted was a car to that looked more attractive, have a more comfortable ride and most importantly to have unibody construction to reduce manufacturing costs.

Nordhoff, before he came to Volkswagen, had worked for many years for the German General Motors affiliate Opel, where in 1936 they introduced the most modern German built car at the time, the Opel Kadett. This car was designed specifically for low cost mass production. It became the most successful prewar German built car with 107 608 sold. This, despite interference by Nazi officials who tried to boycott this car by not delivering enough rationed materials to Opel. Besides having for its time a modern looking body, it also was of a monocoque design. Monocoque was the name used

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The Historian's Corner continued

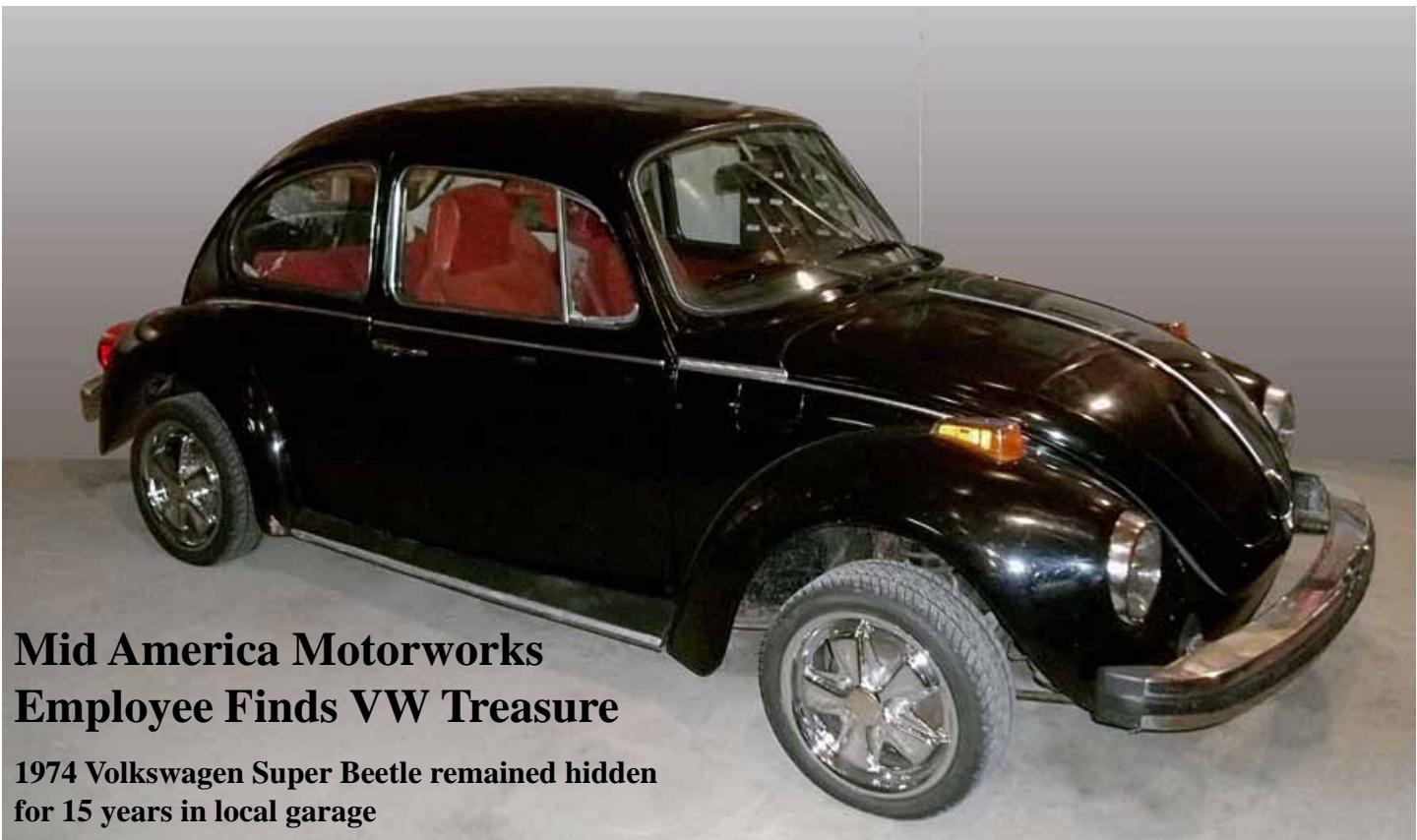
in those days for cars that did not have a conventional frame. Today the name unitized body is more commonly used for this type of construction. Instead of having a frame supporting the body the unibody design goes without it and the body itself serves to support all the mechanical parts, like the suspension and drive train. For years, Nordhoff tried to have such a design used for Volkswagen as a Beetle replacement. It would have saved Volkswagen a considerable amount of money in production cost. Except for the Type 2, the Transporter, until the introduction of the Type IV in 1968, Volkswagen did not use unibody construction. The Transporter developed under Nordhoff in 1948/49 actually did not have a true unibody, it had what is called an integral frame where the body was welded to the frame to form a unit.

The main concern Nordhoff had at Volkswagen during the early days was to look for a car to sell that was more up to date. We do not know much about project 402. Whether it was just a feasibility study as Porsche mentions in his second autobiography or whether it was ready for production, as he claims in his first one, we probably will never know.

While Porsche gave some thought about a Beetle replacement in Austria, in Wolfsburg others were also working to do the same. One of these was Rudolf Ringel, a man left in Wolfsburg by the Porsche team after the war; he had helped to set up Kübelwagen and Beetle production in Wolfsburg. Ringel, while with Porsche worked on the design of the Kübelwagen and later designed for the British major Ivan Hirst the two seat Radclyffe sportster and the first in house four seat convertible used by Ivan Hirst. Under Nordhoff, Ringel gave the Beetle more attractive front and rear ends and eliminated the running boards. Pictures of these attempts have been published. The man in charge of all development in Wolfsburg at the time was a Mister Hauser. He was responsible mainly for the development of the Transporter but also mentions in a memo to Nordhoff that besides the Transporter he was also working on modernizing the Beetle and on a model identified as "X". The X model, also mentioned in other publications, was never identified. I do suspect that, because of the great secrecy surrounding it; it must have been a Beetle replacement.

None of the early attempts bore any fruit. After Volkswagen had plenty of money during the fifties, development activities to replace the Beetle and variations of it went into overdrive and never stopped. Nordhoff did never stop to pursue the idea of replacing the Beetle, despite his official announcements. Porsche, the factory and eventually Italian designers like Pininfarina, and Ghia and even Karmann were all involved. We will have a closer look at these attempts in the future with pictures.

While no car was ready to replace the Beetle in the fifties there were however two convertibles introduced in July of 1949, the two seat Hebmüller and the four seat Karmann convertible. And in late 1949 the Transporter was introduced to the public, production of it started in early 1950.



Mid America Motorworks Employee Finds VW Treasure

**1974 Volkswagen Super Beetle remained hidden
for 15 years in local garage**

Effingham, Ill. (December 07, 2011) - Every car enthusiast dreams of opening that fated barn door to find a forgotten piece of automotive history. Josh Yager, Volkswagen merchant at Mid America Motorworks, made that dream a reality when he found a 1974 Super Beetle only 15 miles from Mid America Motorworks' corporate campus in Effingham, Ill.

The Bug's black exterior was hidden beneath 15 years of garage dust and dirt, giving Josh only a glimpse of the red interior. Still, purchasing the car was an easy decision. Josh (no relation to our Chief Cheerleader) learned about the VW, called the owners to inquire about the car and made the purchase all in one day.

"Seeing Bugs at work all the time, pretty soon you get the fever to have one yourself. I missed driving my fully-restored 1963 ragtop and I wanted a daily driver that came with a few projects. I saw this car and loved the colors -- it's just what I was looking for," he said.

With only 76,000 original miles and most original parts still on the car, Josh knew he had something special. He is only the third owner of the Super Beetle and has plans to make repairs and upgrades during the Winter. He has already started the process, choosing a new rebuilt carburetor as the first Mid America Motorworks part he put on the Bug. He has also replaced the fuel tank, installed chrome Fuchs replica wheels and tires, and added a ceramic exhaust muffler for improved appearance, sound and performance.

Josh plans to replace the floor pans, upgrade the entire front suspension and interior -- from carpet to seats -- as well as some minor electrical fixes. The Super Beetle will be completed and on display at Funfest for Air-Cooled VW June 1-3, 2012.

Mid America Motorworks offers quality aftermarket parts and accessories for Corvette and Air-Cooled VW enthusiasts. For more information on Mid America Motorworks or to request a free catalog, call 1-866-350-4543 or shop online at www.mamotorworks.com. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

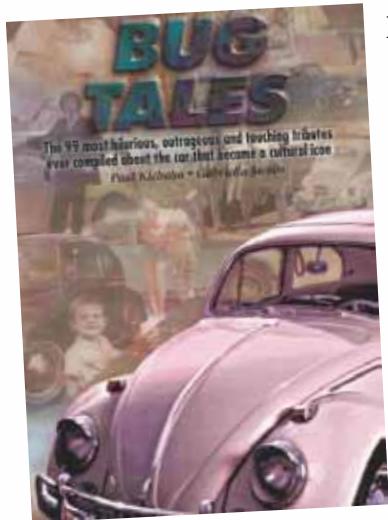


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The Volkswagen Library



Bug Tales

The 99 most hilarious, outrages and touching tributes ever compiled about the car that became a cultural icon.

By Paul Klebahn and Gabriella Jacobs. Published in 1999 by Oval Window Press Inc., 4650 Lake Forest Drive, Suite 508, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242, 606 442 7110. ISBN 0-9669474-0-1. 240 pages, A few black and white drawings and black and white photos.

Let's see, Volkswagen built and sold over 21 million Beetles, many of which had been resold at least once and some many more times. I good guess is that there are at least 50 million people out there whose lives have been touched by the Beetle and other

Volkswagens in one way or another. For many buyers the Volkswagen was just basic transportation while others became very attached and had stories and very interesting experiences to talk about. This is the premise of this book. The author solicited stories of ex and present, mostly Beetle owners to share their experiences. According to the authors of this book they did receive a lot of contribution but selected the ones they considered to be the best.

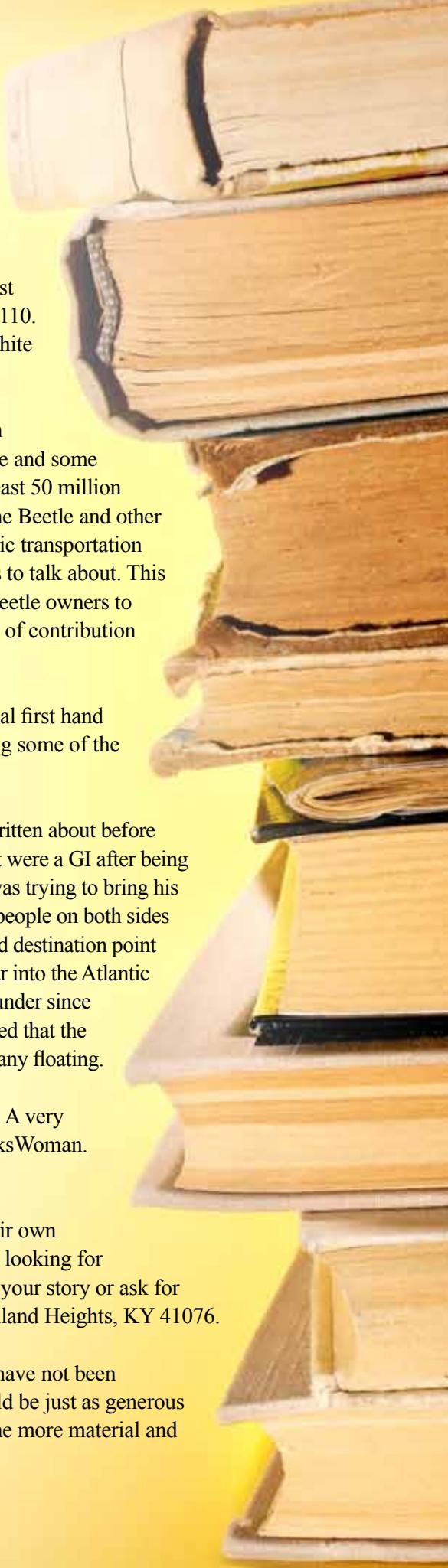
All the stories published have something interesting to say, they are all very personal first hand experiences and some are very touching. I could not help getting misty eyed reading some of the more poignant ones.

One of the stories that appear in this book is one I have been familiar with and had written about before for the Vintage Voice. I think it appeared first in Road & Track. It is about an incident were a GI after being stationed in Europe for many years, very much against all military rules and codes, was trying to bring his Beetle back home to the US in a military air transport. After the GI had a number of people on both sides of the Atlantic lined up to cover his transgression, a last minute change at the intended destination point on the US side made bringing in the car too risky. The flight crew had to dump the car into the Atlantic Ocean. The flight crew speculated on how long it might have taken for the car to go under since Volkswagens were known to float. After some more reflection they however concluded that the damage sustained on impact of the car hitting the water would pretty much preclude any floating.

The book is not only about Beetles, other Volkswagen car stories are also included. A very good story was contributed by Vintage Voice contributor, Lois Grace, our own VolksWoman. She relates her tribulations with her single cab VW pick up-truck named Vern.

Many of the stories in this book will most likely remind many of our readers of their own experiences with VW's. Judging by the notes at the end of the book the authors are looking for more stories for another book. Anybody out there have a good one? You can email your story or ask for information to: Bugtales@aol.com or just write to Bug Tales, PO Box 76272, Highland Heights, KY 41076.

Apparently the authors have received many contributions for this book, some that have not been published. It would be nice if some VW fans out there that have a story to tell would be just as generous with their stories to contribute to the Vintage Voice. We are always looking for some more material and your story would this way perhaps reach a wider audience.



Happy Holidays



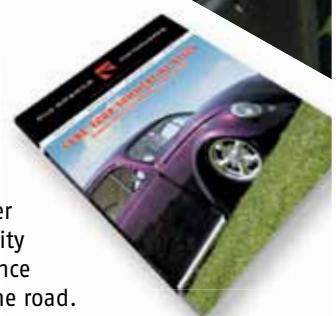
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