

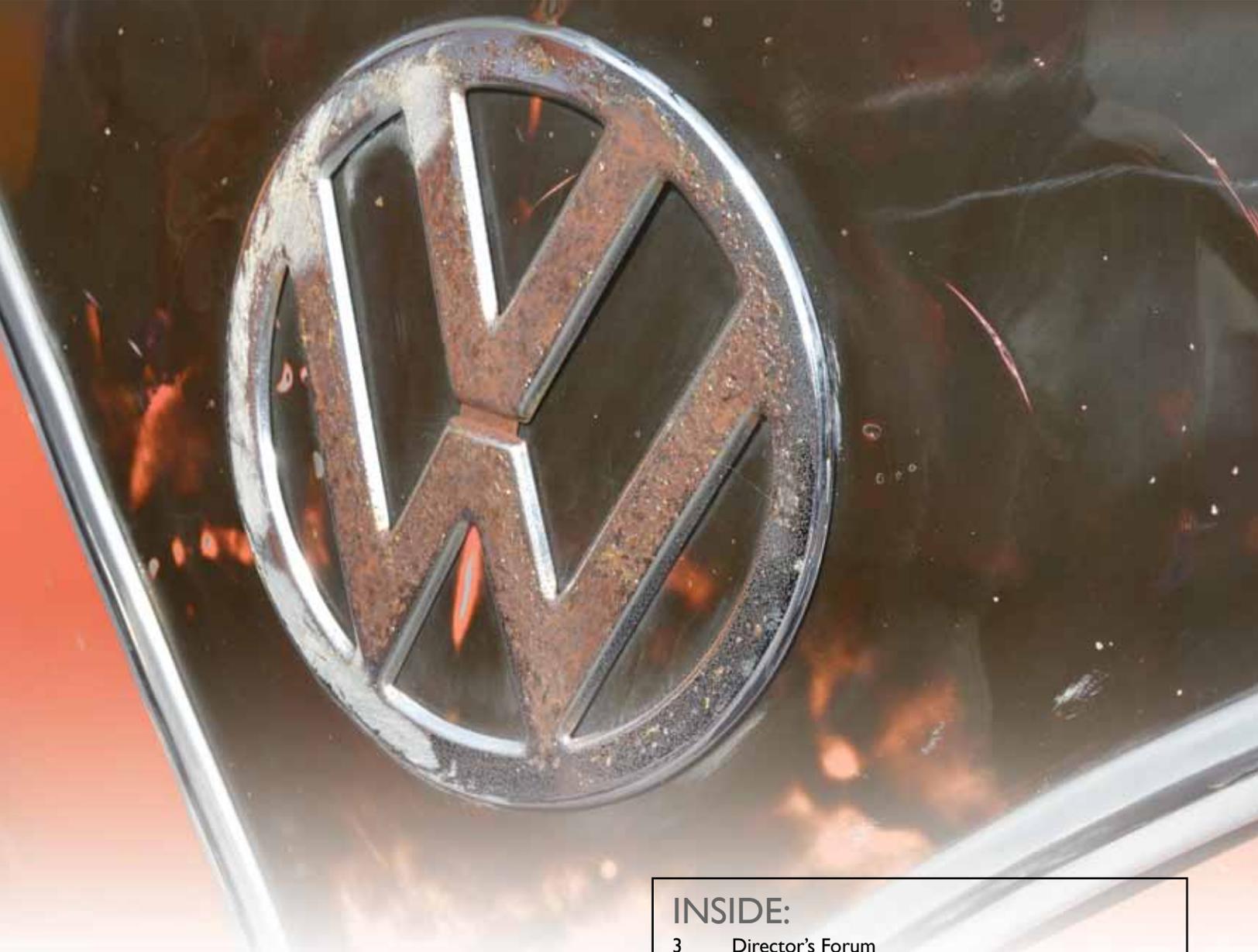


# VintageVoice

September/October 2012

Volume 37 • Number 5

The Vintage Volkswagen Club of America Newsletter • Established 1976



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# Holidays

*Russell Lordell*

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*10 Mike*

*Peggy Amidei*

*Kimberly van Housd*

VINTAGE VOLKSWAGEN CLUB OF AMERICA

# Director's FORUM

by howard query

Burtonwood@vwca.com

As much as we tolerate it, winter strikes many of us every year throughout various parts of the county. Although this last year's season was mild for most of us, we still endure sub-zero temps, blowing snow, roadways packed with ice and the process of preparing our VWs for a long winters nap.

In a way, it often seems a bit depressing that it's time to garage our favored Beetle, Ghia or Bus for several months while we await the signs of spring. But as it may be, over two thirds of our country faces nature in one of her worst moments.

I would hope that many of you have taken time to properly ready your VW for winter storage prior to the reading of this article. If you are like me, you've probably waited until the last minute ... just cold temps set in and snow has started to layer itself on the ground. But nonetheless, preparing your VW for winter takes only but a few hours and a little bit of pre-planning.

I for one am not an extremist by any means. I do not remove the battery, drain the gas tank or place my VW on jack stands. I typically drive my VW throughout the winter every chance I get. However, in this part of the country ... I have to take into consideration that our city uses road salts to melt the snow more frequently than one might take a shower. So, I plan accordingly and wait until the roads are dry of snow, ice and any road salts that may have been left behind.

But still, I prep my VW as if it might have to set in a cold garage or storage unit for several months to come. I've seen many a time in this area when snow storms have knocked on our back door almost weekly.

For me, prepping my VW for winter is rather a well-planned but simple task. I fill the tank with regular gas, two thirds full and I always use a gasoline additive, such as Sta-bil or Seaform. I never use ethanol based fuels if

at all possible. Although ethanol based fuels reduces our independence on foreign oils and supports our agriculture, it can attract water to the fuel tank of our VW, causing sludge than will most likely cause damage to your engine.

Ethanol can soften gas lines and gaskets, it can cause your engine to misfire and the ultimate damage will ultimately cost you thousands of dollars to repair. My suggestion, stay clear and prep your VW properly.

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previously start the engine for at least 30 minutes every three weeks. I've been told that running the engine for this amount of time helps reduce moisture in the crankcase, recharges the battery and helps lubricate internal engine components.

Although often neglected, making sure tires are inflated to the proper pressure limits, thus saving myself some time reflatting tires when I expect it. As well, taking a few minutes to grease the axle, front-end and other components of your car helps to ensure your VW will be ready for the summer months to follow.

Whether you store your VW inside or outside, or simply let it set until the next day your drive it ... take time to prepare for the winter elements ahead of you. If driving during the winter, always carry the appropriate tools you may need in the event you should get stuck or should you encounter engine problems.

And remember, air-cooled Volkswagens are different than other cars on the road. The engine is placed in the rear. Whether you're driving on ice or impacted snow ... your stopping distance is a lot longer than that of the cars today. Remember too that turning on an ice coated corner in an



air-cooled VW requires a bit more caution than one might use when driving an SUV or front wheel drive vehicle.

Whether you're storing your VW for the season ... or as I ... prepping it for the winter months to come ... taking a bit or time to prep for the winter months to come ... just might save you some time and expense in the months to follow. Enjoy the winter ... it's a great time to drive your VW.

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*Jack Ashcraft's*  
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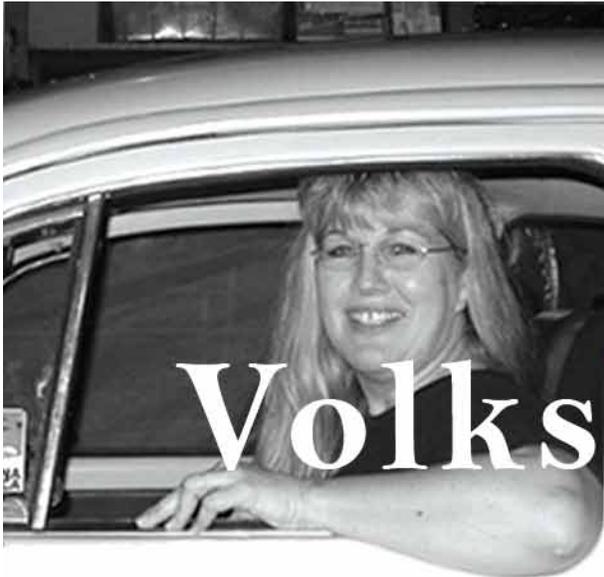
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## Buying A Used Car? Don't Ask Me!

# Woman

by Lois Grace • vlkswmn@sbcglobal.net

Every so often, I am asked by a friend or acquaintance for help in buying a used car. I guess because my used car buying-to-selling ratio is so high, they think I'm an expert. I AM an expert, of course, but they never find this out because they never seem to take my advice.

The latest friend to fill my email in box with questions is someone who is very bright, just not about certain things. She is a highly skilled technician in her field, and has a heart of gold. Neither of these attributes make her any good at a used car purchase. In fact, she is downright pathetic when it comes to spending money on automobiles. In the past few years she has bought an Olds Delta 88 (I can't recall what year but suffice it to say that it had so many problems it was not worth the cost of registration), a 1980 300 D-class Mercedes turbo diesel (broken a/c, and a shift problem), a 1984 Ford Escort wagon (of all the cars she's had this is proving to be the only one worthy of repair) and a couple others I can't remember now. All the cars needed big repairs to make them road worthy. This is a woman who runs her own business and takes great pride in helping our troops overseas. She is not feeble-minded. I would say that, rather, she has a distorted view of machinery.

My friend is what I call cash-deprived. She spent no more than \$1000 for any of these gems, and most times she spent less. We all know you don't have to spend a lot to get a nice car but most of the time you do get what you pay for. And, I counsel my friends to have someone who knows cars go along with them (not me, please lord) when they look at one. Usually, once she buys something without consulting me about the particulars, I'll get a string of emails asking why something broke. After losing her trusty old Volvo sedan (a worthy car, but elderly with all the associated ailments), she is now fixated on a used Mercedes, because she has the nearly-non-functional 300D sitting next to her driveway. The poor Volvo was the victim of a hit-and-run hood, that flew off the car in front of her and smashed the Volvo to bits. My advice regarding the upcoming used

car purchase consisted of telling her she would be best off spending her thousand bucks (by now I think she may have saved a little more) on something ugly and dumb, like maybe a Nissan Sentra, that runs fairly well and will cost little to repair. Used Nissans and Escorts have a reputation of running nearly forever and don't cost a fortune to fix. I am sure there are other cars in this category also. Now mind you, I have nothing against Mercedes and I'd own one myself if I had unlimited funds to repair and/or maintain it. But as a former Saab owner, I have no desire to jump right

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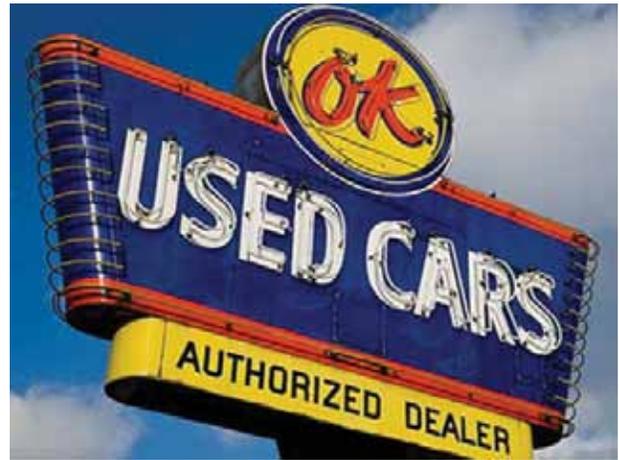
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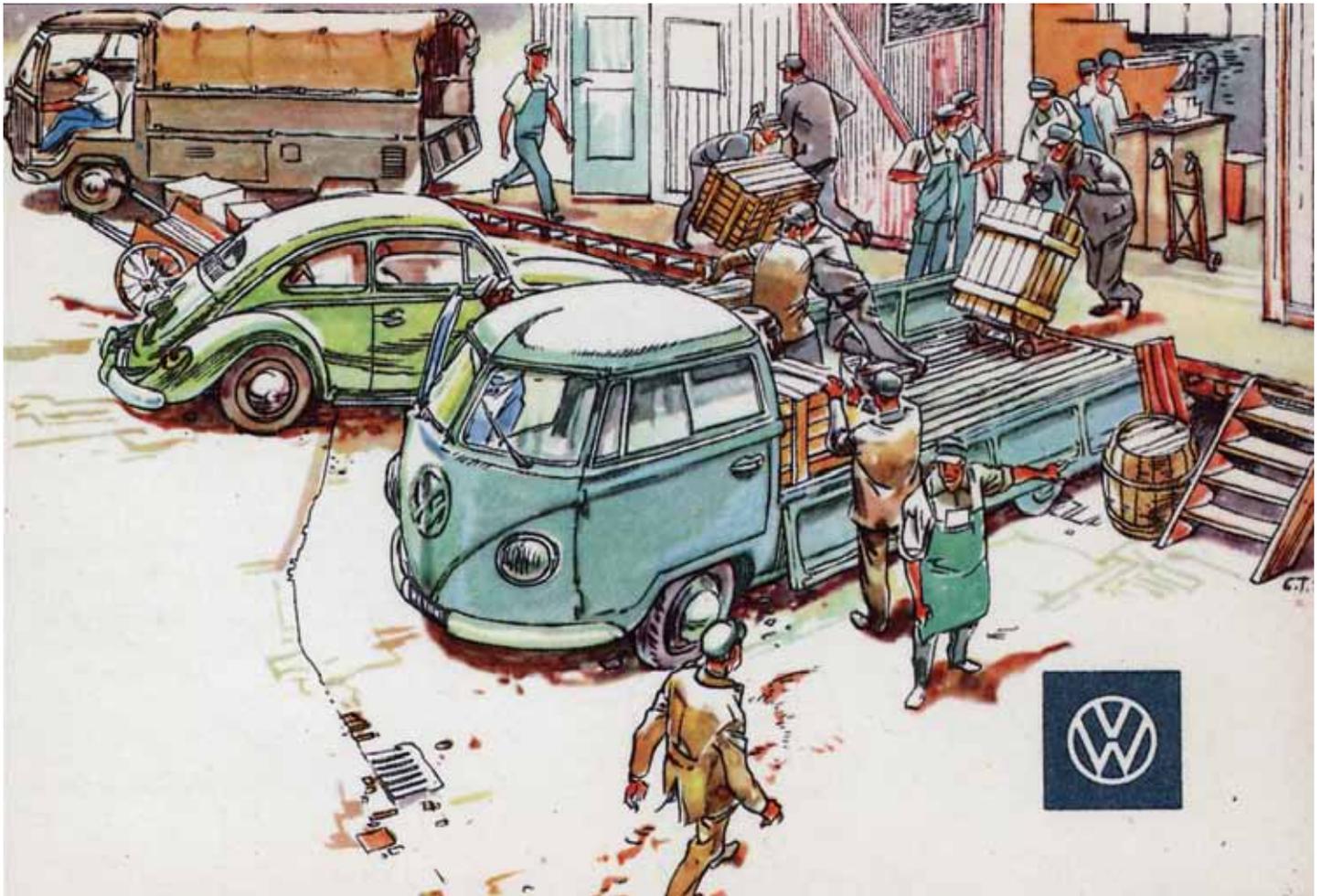
back into that particular well at the moment. I'd like to dry out a little more first.

My friend called me again tonight begging my help with yet another - you guessed it - Mercedes. No matter how many times I tell her to forget about the high-priced luxury cars, she seems to find one more she's GOTTA have. At least I have trained her to check them out before she buys them. She now will take the latest candidate to the local gas station to have them look it over before she decides. I have ranted and raved at her so many times about lowering her expectations to fit her budget, that I can't believe she is still speaking to me. With every phone call or email that arrives I get progressively more and more agitated until I finally blow, and just blurt out the first thing that comes to mind, like Are you out of your mind? Have you been listening to me at all? Cuz if you have, you'd know you have no business buying anything right now, much less a Mercedes! The only thing she can tell me is But it's PRETTY, it has a sunroof and the a/c works. And it's BLUE. Gee, that'll be really handy when you are sitting alongside the road somewhere in the dark.

I may be sensitized to this issue because I have had personal experience with her kind before. SHHH, don't tell anyone but my sister is like this. She will fall in love with a car the moment she sees it and it suddenly becomes the one. My friend and my sister both lack an essential part of the equipment required for successful used car purchasing: the car-buying gene that normal people have. If they want a red car, they will ignore every other qualified candidate that comes along until the worst possible one shows up, which, of course, will be red. And, they will buy it on that basis alone. And pay way too much for it. I guess I have this gene (I thank my dad for passing it along to me), because after buying 4 used cars (3 of which I still own) I haven't been burned once. They were ALL good, honest used cars and haven't failed me.

I think I have pretty much decided that, in the future, I will not be helping anyone buy a used car. So, if you're in the market for a used car, do us both a favor and don't ask me for advice. Seriously.

# The 1954 Factory Cards

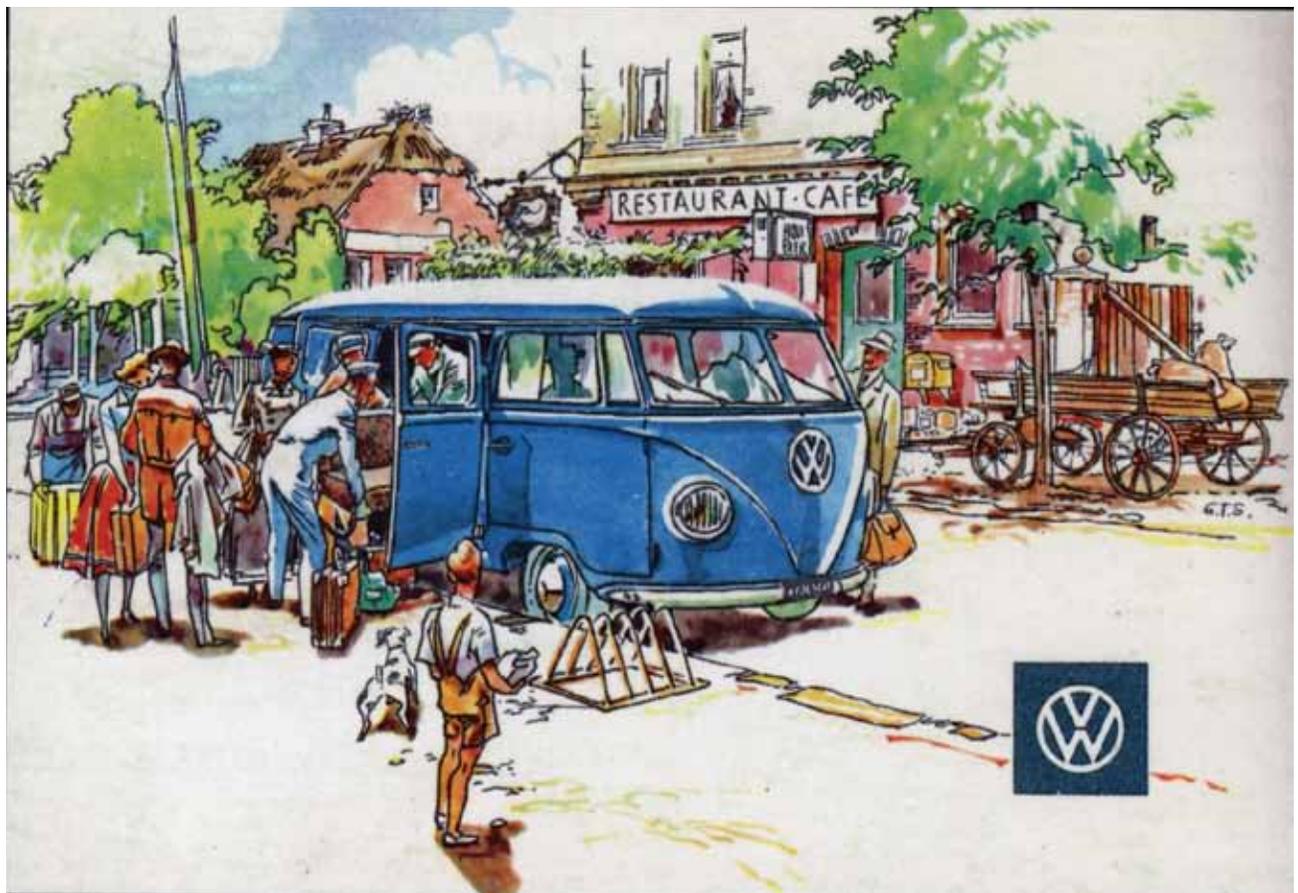
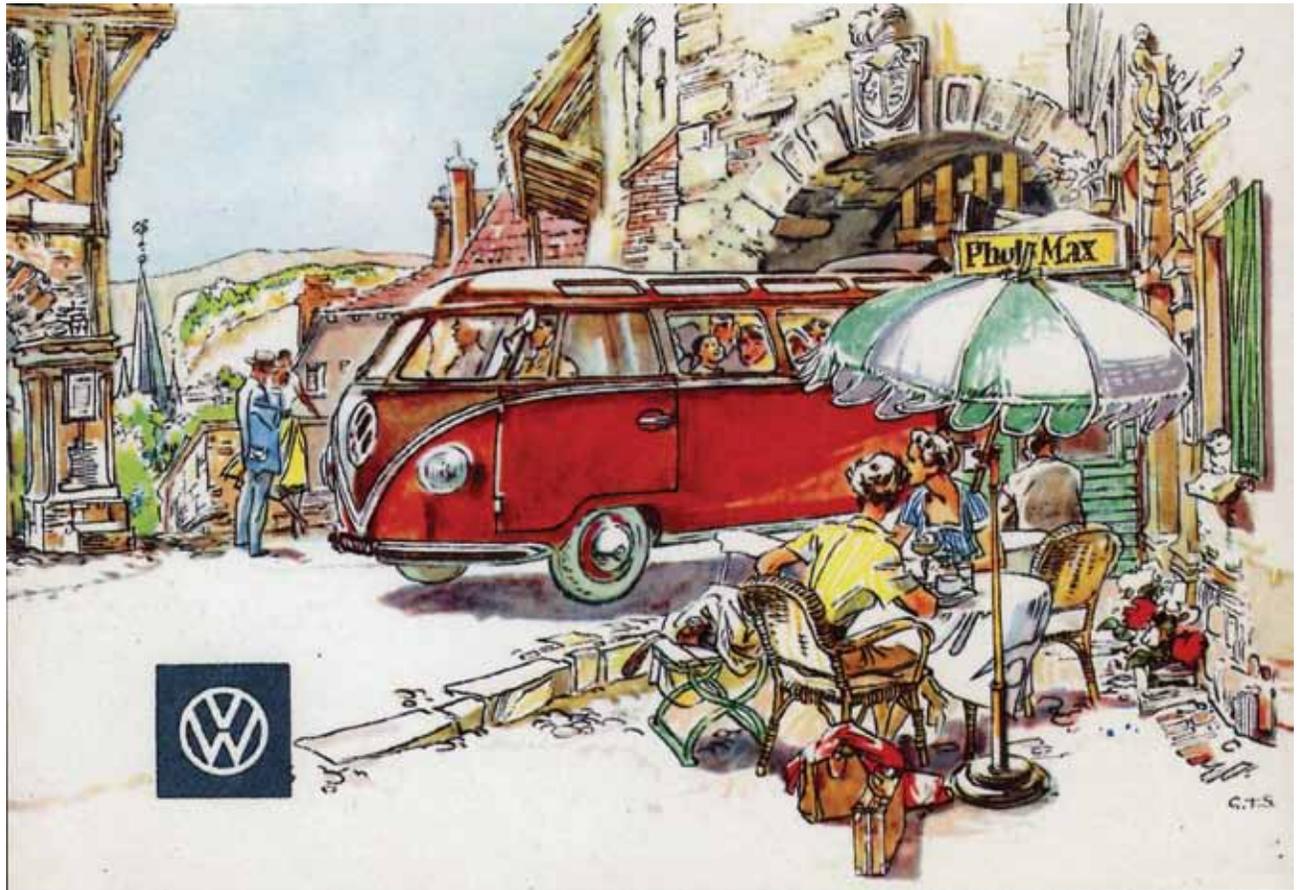


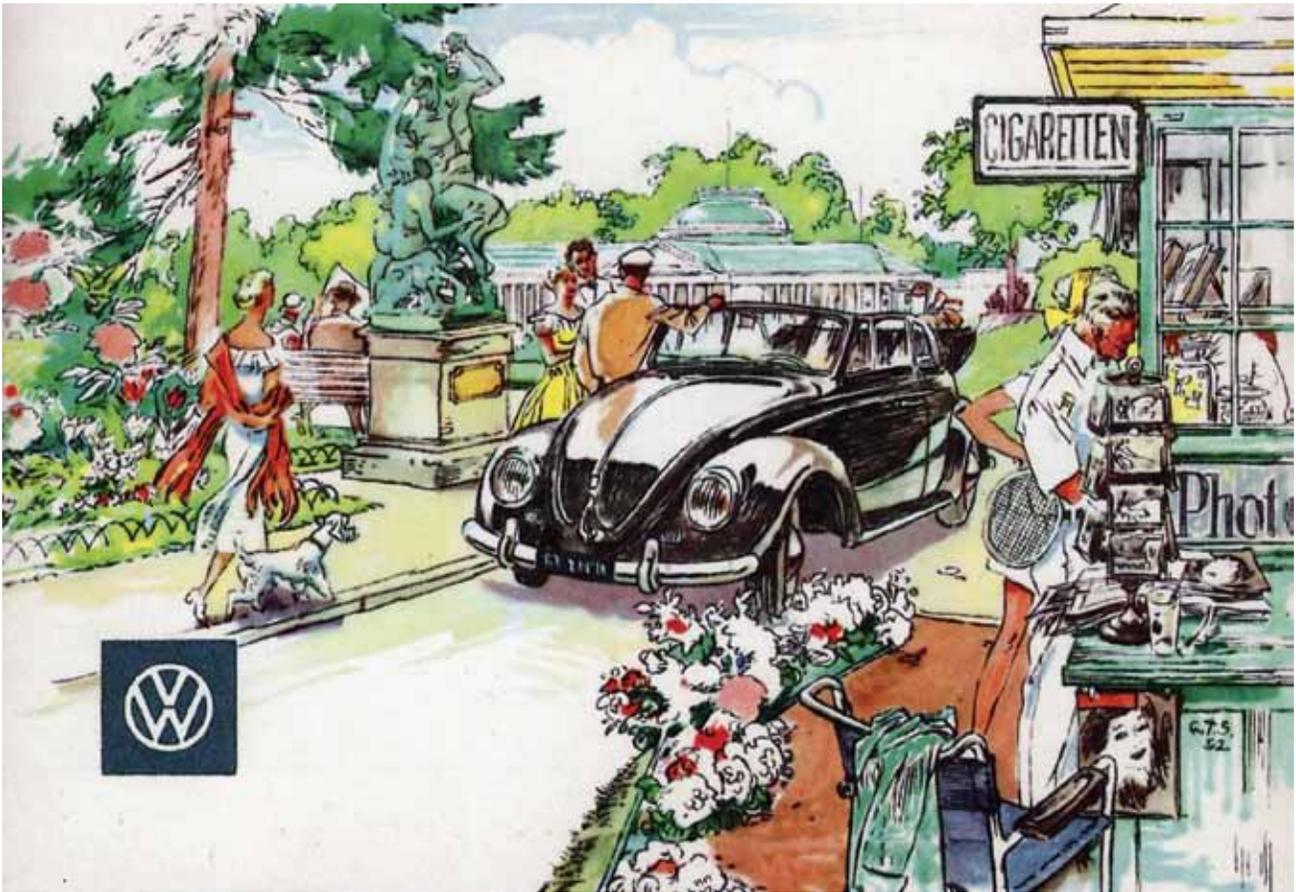
By Mike Epstein

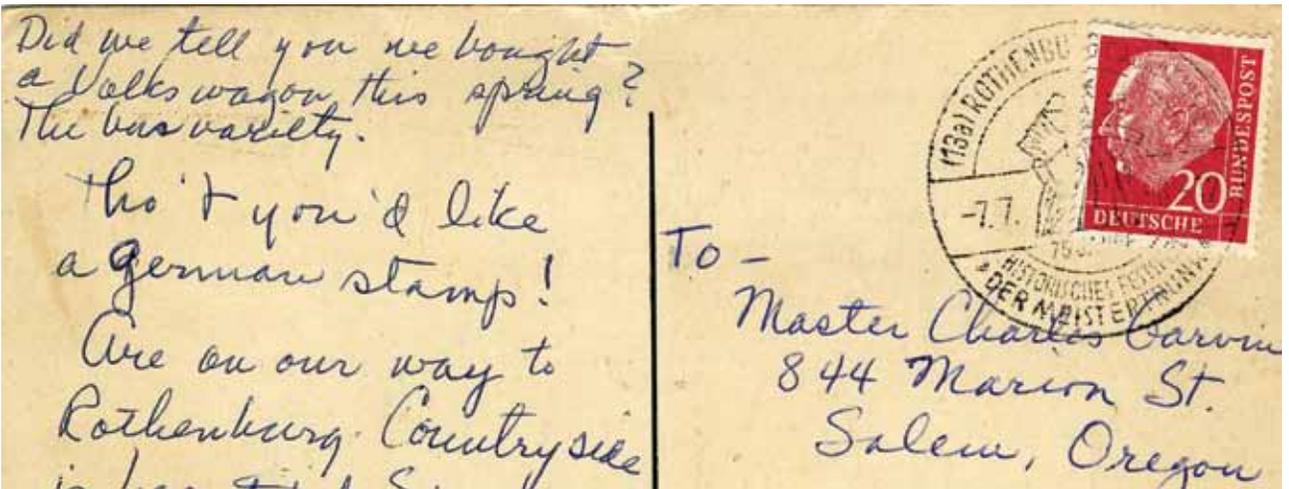
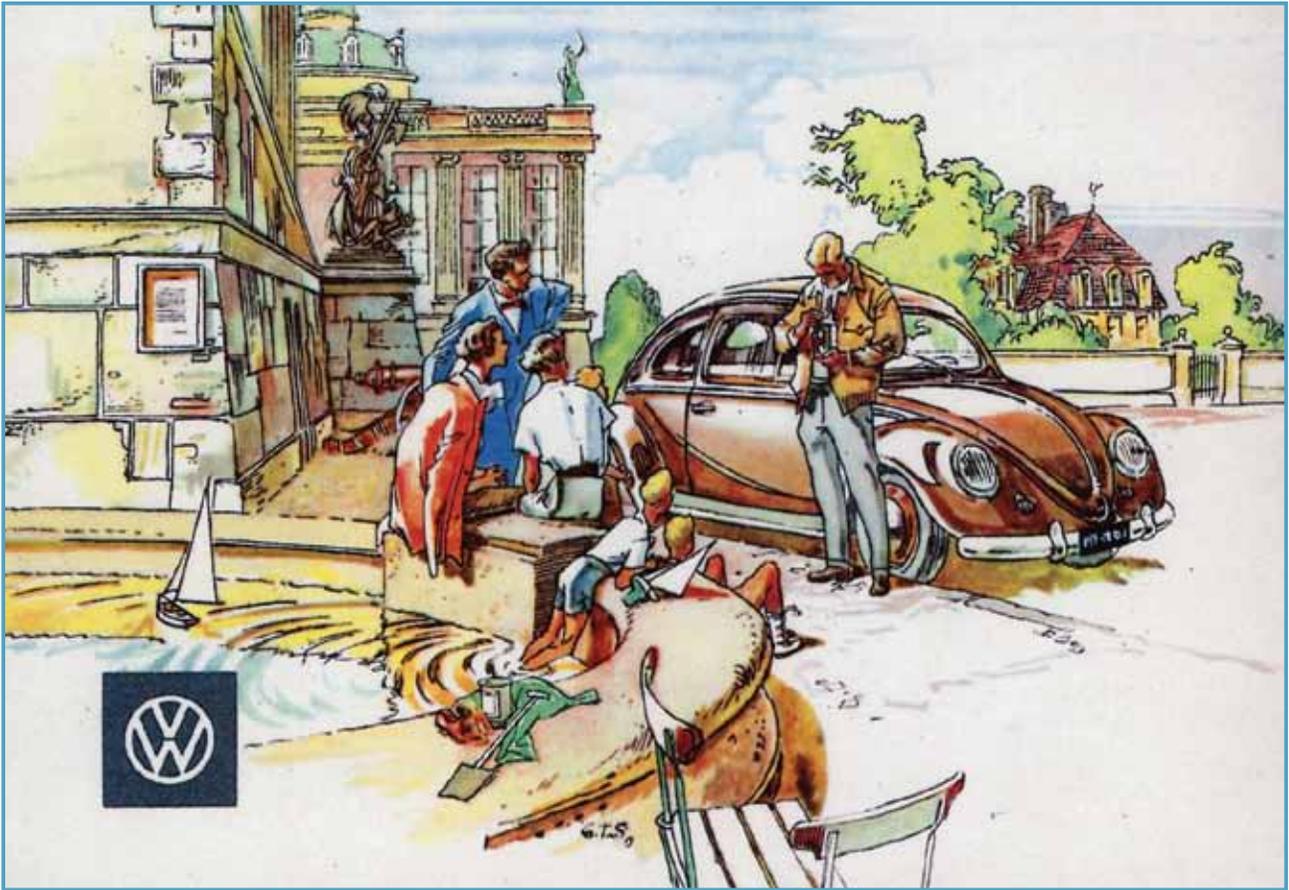
Collecting postcards by the set or series has long been a goal of postcard enthusiasts. The difference between a set and series is that a set was issued together as a whole; and a series was issued one postcard at a time. It is not always known in which matter a collective group was sold. The challenge for a collector today is knowing how many postcards are in a set or series and what they all look like. Please let me know if you're aware of any other cards that belong to this set or series.

The seven cards features here are circa 1953/54 as can be told by heart tail light lenses on the Beetles, and the buses are Barndoor in style as they no overhang on the roof above









the windcreens. They're all artist's rendering of either the Beetle or the Bus depicted as doing everyday type situations. The postcards have very plain backs with one horizontal line placed in the center of the card and one vertical line on the left side about 1/3 the way down from the top. No other marking are present as they will be once Volkswagen starts putting a part number on their postcards as well as the Volkswagen logo. On this set the Volkswagen logo is on the front of each card.

These are all very beautiful, bright, and colorful cards. The artist is only known to me by the initials on each card, "G.T.S."

Collecting postcards can be a real challenge if you're looking for certain specific types or subject matters, but when you do find one, it really brightens up your day. I hope I've given you some inspiration to go out and collect postcards no matter what the subject matter.

# Last of the Free Ice Cream...

By Don Hotka dhotka@earthlink.net

I've enjoyed free ice cream at this business for the past 3 years. My free ice cream treat all began as payment I'd receive for restoring their '63 Karmann Ghia. 2 years ago ... I'd continue to receive an ice cold sweet tooth treat for working on and getting an old rusty '61 bug to run ... and stop. Later that year, I installed a new floor in that same bug ... in which I'd be compensated with even more ... ice cream cones.

For me, I've always found it difficult to lose weight! And the owners haven't helped any by continuing to offer me more free ice cream this next year for tinkering again on their Karman Ghia. And since the ice cream is free, I find myself visiting almost daily. But now, it is time for me to graciously thank them for their generosity and pay for the ice cream cone(s) I have come to enjoy so very very much.

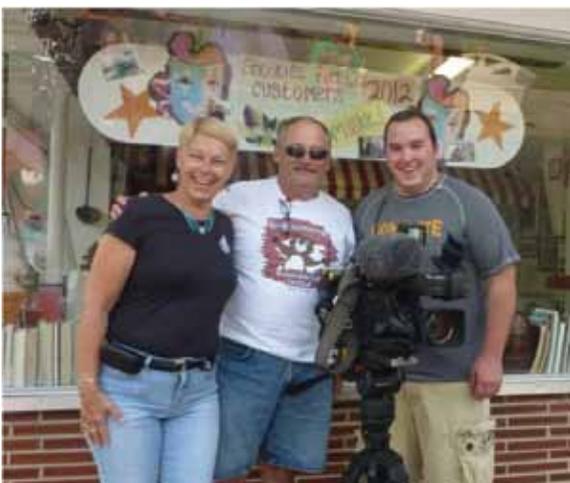
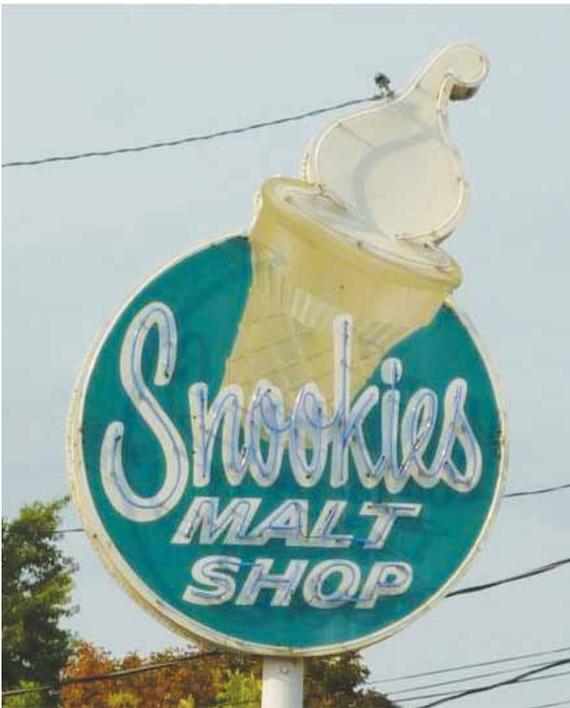
Snookies Malt Shop is about a mile from where I live. And to past the time on those warm summer days, I'll often walk with the dog down there as they also offer "doggie cones" for their canine friends.

It was only by luck that on the last day of the season, our local TV station was "live" on the scene to hear my "free" ice cream story. My timing that day couldn't have been better. My wife Gail thought for sure that this piece would never make it off the cutting room floor. However, on that night's newscast ... I story made the news a couple of different time. ...but they had me in their story a couple of times...just a couple of comments...but my smiley face!

This last photo is of me and the owner ... Snookie (Marilyn, who had been nicknamed by her grandmother) along with the photographer from our local TV station.

Yes, my story about my free ice cream cone(s) made the Sunday night news ... and to think ... I owe it all to a couple of Volkswagens.

**Director's note:** Snookies Ice Cream and Malt Shop is located at: 1810 Beaver Ave., Des Moines, IA 50310



## Volkswagen Ending Kombi Production

Volkswagen is ceasing production of its iconic Kombi after 63 years of non-stop production, in response to more rigorous safety regulations in Brazil. First introduced by the Wolfsburg Company in 1950, it was also known as the Type 2 – following the Type 1 (Beetle), and featured that unmistakable split front windscreen. Since the mid-nineties the T2 has been built at VW's Anchieta factory in Sao Paulo with the plant constructing around 251 units per day. They retain their familiar 1.6-litre air cooled engines for the Brazilian market, but models destined for Mexico feature a fuel-injected 1.8-litre water-cooled power-plant – easily identified by their large front-mounted radiator.

From January 1, 2014, Brazilian law dictates that all new vehicles must be equipped with both passenger and driver airbags and ABS (anti-lock braking system). Volkswagen deemed it economically unviable to bring the T2 in line with the regulations, so production is slated to end on December 31, 2013.

Depending on who you talk to, the manufacturer's cheeky Microbus concept will be launched as the new generation Bulli in 2015. Time will tell.

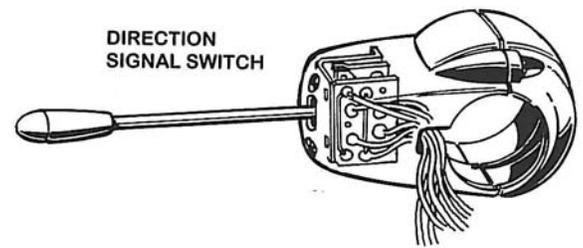
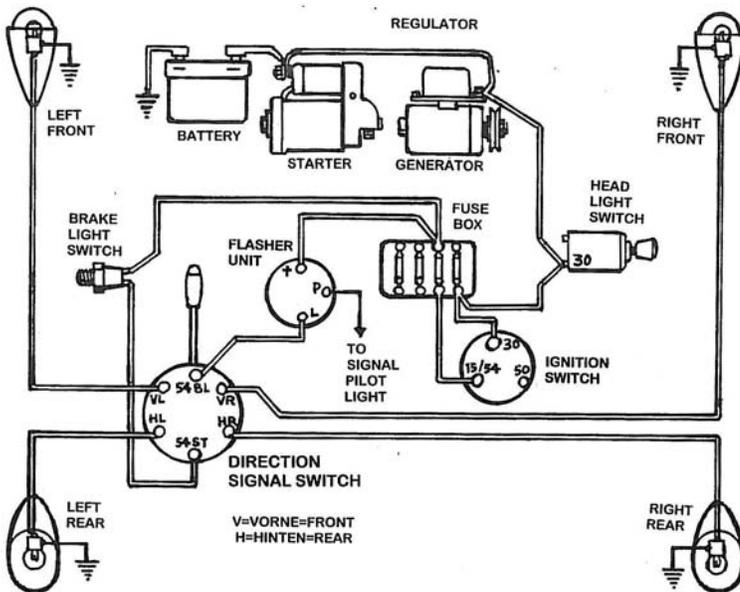
*Source: German Car Scene (submitted)*



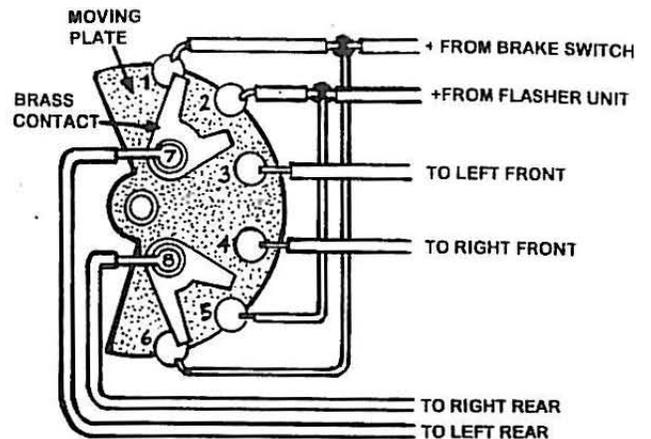
## Please help us identify where this photo was taken ...

There are times when even a good historian gets stumped. Such is the case in this instance when Heinz Schneider, VVWCA Historian stumbled across this photo. We've searched our libraries high and low and cannot determine when (year) or where this photo had been taken. We can presume the photo was taken at a Kubel testing facility ... as the uniforms are a dead giveaway, but we need your help labeling this photo. If you've got any suggestions that could be of help to us, please email Heinz Schneider at [s.heinz@verizon.net](mailto:s.heinz@verizon.net).

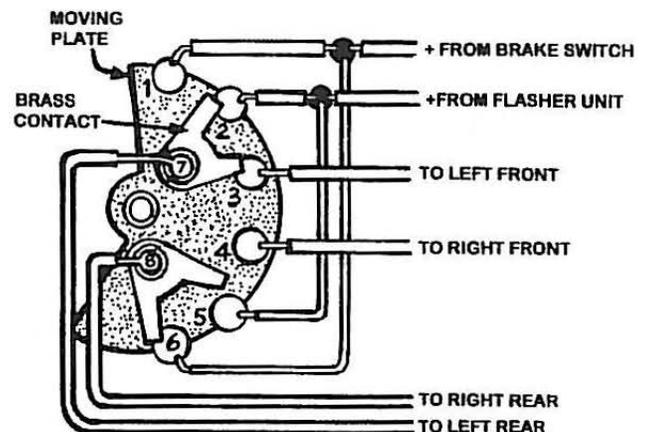
## SIMPLIFIED DIRECTION SIGNAL WIRING DIAGRAM



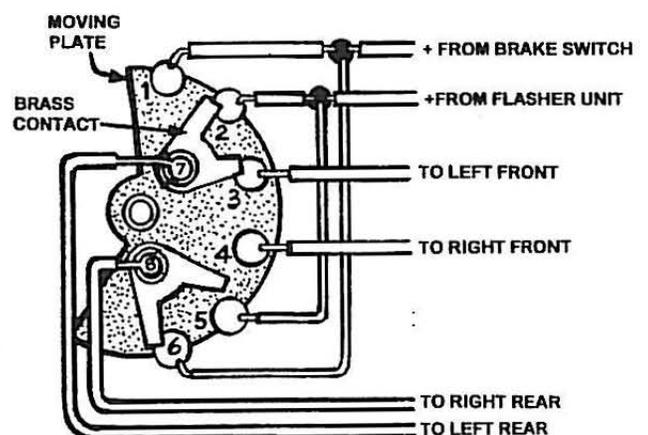
1-NO DIRECTIONALS; BRAKE LIGHTS ON



2-LEFT DIRECTIONAL; NO BRAKE LIGHTS



3-LEFT DIRECTIONAL; BRAKE LIGHTS ON



## Those Pesky Direction Signals

By Jack Ashcraft [jacksonashcraft@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonashcraft@gmail.com)

Volkswagen type one electrical systems are really pretty simple, but one area that is poorly understood -- even by VW technicians -- is the direction signal wiring on pre 1962 cars. The reason for the confusion is the rather clever internal wiring of the direction signal switch itself, which allows the off-side brake light to function even when the turn signal is in use. The phantom drawing of the switch shows the six wires attached to the contact plate portion of the switch.

To understand any electrical circuit [in ANY car], you need to be able to isolate that circuit from the maze of other wires in the overall electrical diagram. Let's take a walk through the simplified circuit for the pre-1962 Beetle direction signals. From the + side of the battery, current flows to the solenoid of the starter. This is a tie point--current does not flow through the solenoid in this instance. Current continues to the voltage regulator--another tie point--the on to terminal 30 of the headlight switch, which is another convenient tie point. Current flows to one side of fuse 1--another tie point--then on to terminal 30 of the ignition switch. Assuming the switch is "ON", current flows through the switch, out terminal 15/54 to fuse 2, through fuse 2 to two places: 1] the direction signal flasher unit, and 2] the brake light switch.

We must have either stepped on the brake pedal or selected left or right signal. Let's assume we stepped on the brakes. Current flows through the brake light switch and on to terminal 54ST of the direction signal switch. Now the fun begins, and from here on we have to figure out what happens INSIDE the direction signal switch.

There are three drawings of the internal switch connections.

Look at number one. Note that the moving plate has not rotated, since we have not asked the direction signals to work. Current flows into connection 1 at the top. The top brass contact passes current to its center connection [7], and out to the left rear lamp. At the top, current also passes through an internal wire to connector 6 at the bottom, through the bottom brass contact, out its center connection [8] to the right rear bulb.

No connection has been made to either connector 3 or 4, so the front bulbs do not light up.



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Now we take our foot off the brake pedal and turn on the signal switch for a left turn--look at the number two switch drawing. The moving plate has rotated clockwise, which rotates the brass contacts. There is no current from the brake light switch, so we can ignore that wiring. Current is now flowing--intermittently--from the flasher unit to connector 2, through the top brass contact, out its center contact 7 to the left rear bulb. The top brass contact now also touches contact 3, so current also flows to the left front bulb.

Now for whatever reason, we have to apply the brakes while we are turning left. Look at switch drawing three. The left signal current passes to the left front and left rear bulbs as before. Now current also passes from the brake light switch, through the internal wire to contact 6, through the bottom brass contact, out its center contact [8] to the right rear bulb. So we have the left side blinkers winking merrily away, and VOILA! the right rear stop light is on, too! Pretty slick, eh?

It should be obvious that the same thing will happen--but to the opposite side lamps when the RIGHT side signals are selected. The moving plate will move anti-clockwise and the same magic happens when the brakes are applied. I figure some fellow scratched his head for quite a while to figure out how to make that happen--all because the VW bean counters didn't want to spend the extra pfennigs for a second bulb and some electrical wire on each side at the rear. As I said before--pretty clever.

Vol 37 No 5  
September/October 2012  
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The Vintage Voice is published  
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period: Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/  
June, July/Aug, Sept/Oct, Nov/  
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# You Never Know

by Jerry Coffin

In 1983 on a weekend in May, I had decided to take a prospecting trip to Manitoba, Canada and had gone to a junkyard looking for VW parts. I was informed by a young man that he was unable to sell me any parts until his parents returned in an hour or two. I asked him if there were any other junkyards nearby that might have any VW stuff. He replied that there was a junkyard in Plum Coulee, but he didn't think that they had anything VW related. I decided to take a chance and go anyway as I had time to burn. As I arrived there I first noticed an Oval Window Bug perched on some 55 gallon oil barrels and a Microbus in the distance. I went into the office to inquire about the VWs. I was told that the 51 Deluxe Microbus had been sitting in a farm field for 18 years but that it would start and was drivable, though stopping was an issue as the brakes were bad. We went outside and he took the hand crank and started it up. I drove it a few laps around the junkyard and asked him how much he wanted for the Bus. He replied "\$350.00". Since I was going to Canada I had exchanged my US Dollars for Canadian Dollars and agreed to the price. As I handed him the \$350 in Canadian Dollars I could see the disappointment in his face as he was expecting US Dollars. I pointed out to him that we were in Canada and that he had to give in. At that time \$350 Canadian was equal to \$250 in US Dollars.

After the weekend, I returned to my shop and the following weekend my wife and I went back with a tow vehicle and proceeded to tow the Bus home. As we were returning that evening, my wife said to me that she noticed bright lights as we passed under the last bridge, so I looked when we went under the next bridge and sure enough something was going on. We pulled over and found the Bus had lost a tire and was riding on the brake drum. We replaced the tire and hit the road again. The rest of the trip was uneventful.

I started to research the availability of parts for restoration and found out that my Bus was the oldest known to exist in the world at that time. The other issue was that there were no after-market parts available such as rubber for the glass or sunroof parts. After much consideration, I thought it would be best to sell it. I ended up selling it to a guy in California who happened to have a lot of the factory sheet metal that was needed to restore the Bus. He told me that I could keep the barn door engine lid which still hangs in my garage. A year or two later I heard that he had sold the Bus to Flat Four in Japan.

## --- Fast Forward to February 2011 ---

I received an e-mail from a guy in Japan who was looking for the ex-owners of a 51 Deluxe Microbus, a 54 Panel Bus and a 52 Pick-Up. I responded that he was in luck: as I was the ex-owner of the 51 Deluxe Microbus and I also knew the ex-owner of both the 54 Panel Bus and the 52 Pick-Up but hadn't had contact with him in a while. He said 'that he was so pleased that he had found me after 6 years of searching. He had purchased the 51 Deluxe Microbus from Flat Four and they had done a poor job of restoring the Bus so he was planning to restore it properly. He was wondering about the history of the Bus and if I had any old photos of it that I could scan and e-mail to him. I replied with the history and that I did have some pictures, but it would take me a little while to search for them in my photo albums. He was 'fine with that and I proceeded to search for the photos. After finding the photos, I had my wife figure out how to scan them and we e-mailed them to him.

The morning after they were e-mailed we saw on the news that Japan had been hit by a Tsunami the same day and wondered if he had received the pictures. We waited for a response from him but heard nothing for months. My curiosity got the better of me after 3 months and I e-mailed to see if he was okay and if he had received the e-mailed photos. He replied that he and his family were okay as they live in Tokyo and he did in fact receive and appreciate the photos.

## --- Fast Forward Again To March 2012 ---

On the first anniversary of the tsunami, the mailman came to my shop with a package in hand and said it was from Japan. I was puzzled as I wasn't expecting anything from Japan. He looked at the custom form and said it was a toaster. I replied that if I wanted a toaster I could just go down the street to the local store. We had a good laugh as he left I took the package into my office, opened it and saw that this was no ordinary toaster, it was shaped like a VW Bus—COOL! There was a thank-you note from the guy in Japan which included pictures of what the toast looks like. It gets an imprint with the VW symbol toasted onto it—DOUBLE COOL! The top of the toaster has a cover that looks like a sunroof and when you remove it and look inside, you can see the VW symbol inside on one side.

I called my nephew John (Jay) Snell who is into Buses to tell him about the toaster and he informed me that he had seen one for sale on e-Bay. I decided to research the web a little and found out that Volkswagen made 5000 or 6000 of them and apparently had given them out to the first 5000-6000 customers who had brought their cars in for service at the Japanese dealerships.

I have a collection of VW memorabilia, toys and books and will treasure this toaster as part of my collection. And, "NO" I have no intention of using it (even though it would be cool to have VW toast for breakfast) because in all my years of cleaning toasters I have never been able to get one as clean as when the toaster is brand new.

## Important Volkswagen People: Friederich Kuntze

During the late thirties, Porsche went twice to the US to study mass production and looked at the same time to hire experts who would be able to help him finalizing the Volkswagen car for mass production and with setting up a factory for its production. Nobody in Germany had any experience in producing cars in large volumes. About 20 Germans or German Americans working for US car manufacturers, most of them for Ford, followed the call of Porsche and the fatherland. Most historians do consider Kuntze; the man we are looking at today, as one of this group. His situation however was somewhat different. He was not one of the ones who were approached and solicited by Porsche. Porsche did not go to the US to hire specialist until June 30th 1937 but Kuntze started to work for Porsche in May. For reasons no one seems to know he came back to Germany in early 1937 and applied for a job at Opel, the German General Motors subsidiary. Opel however had no need for him and he went instead to see Porsche. Perfect timing! It was just at the time Porsche and Volkswagen were considering building the VW factory and were looking for guidance and he was hired May 1st 1937. Because of his vast experience gained in the US he was asked to draw up a layout for the VW plant. He applied all the knowledge he had gained at Ford during his work there and had the very first drawings of the VW factory ready in no time. These drawings have been published in number of books about the Volkswagen history. The VW factory was more or less based on these original drawings. Because of his connection to Ford he was well informed about the just completed new Ford factory at Dagenham in the UK, which had been built during the early thirties and was at the time considered the most modern car manufacturing plant in the world. There are a lot of similarities between the British Ford factory at Dagenham and the Volkswagen-Werke. No doubt, having Kuntze on his staff gave Porsche the courage to tell Hitler that he felt up to the task of designing and taking charge of building of the VW factory.

Kuntze had immigrated to the US in 1917 and was employed by Ford in Detroit from 1926 to 1936. He worked himself up from a simple engineer to become a member of Ford's top management and consequently designed and was put in charge of the construction of Ford's new electric power generating plant at Rouge River in Michigan. After its completion he was put in charge of running it. He became an American citizen, Nov 27th 1931.

It is to Kuntze's credit that the projected VW factory did get its own power plant which made VW completely

independent from any other power source. This decision was probably influenced by his experience at Ford. Many agree that without this power plant Volkswagen would not have been able to start up production as early as it did after the war. He was also the one who insisted, against strong opposition by pencil pushers, on using the steam and hot water from the cooling of the generator turbines to heat the factory and the new adjacent City, at the time called the KDF-Stadt, now known as Wolfsburg.

Kuntze was not only responsible for much of the factory layout and 100% responsible for its power plant; at the end of the war he had more chances to prove himself invaluable. Towards the end of WW2 Hitler had given orders to destroy, meaning to blow up, anything of value. Hitler wanted the allies to find a completely destroyed Germany. Because, according to Hitler, the Germans were not worthy to survive anyway since they did not win the war for him. So it happened that some crazy SS men showed up during the last days of the war with the intend to fulfill Hitler's orders and blow up the power plant, the utility lines, steam pipes and bridges leading from the factory to the city. Kuntze was able to talk them out of it.

Later, once again he had to use his assumed authority, since Porsche's son in law, Anton Piëch, the man who had been in charge at VW during the Nazi time, had fled to Austria at the approach of American troops in April of 1945. The Nazi guard protecting the plant had fled too. Some of the foreign laborers, who had been forced to work at the factory under severe conditions during the war, went on a rampage. These poor souls were trying to work off their hate and frustrations and do as much damage to the factory installations as possible. Kuntze protected the power generators from being damaged with the help of some French forced workers who had still not gone home after their liberation. It seems that Kuntze had treated these French workers well in his department and that is why they were willing to help him to keep order.

As the American troops occupied the factory in early April of 1945, Kuntze again had another chance to save his power generating plant. For some reason an American military commander told Kuntze to shut down the power plant. The American commander was unaware that shutting down the power plant would cause irreversible damage to the generator units. It would have made it extremely difficult to restart them. Kuntze refused and it is said that for disobeying these orders, he was arrested and put in a prisoner of war camp until December of 1945. Once out of prison, Volkswagen would not rehire him at the insistence of the British. They used the fact that he had joined the Party and had agreed with their policies as the reason.

The Kuntze story is a very interesting one. He is one of many who contributed greatly to Volkswagen and never got much recognition, most books dealing with the VW history do not even mention him at all. Searching the internet shows nothing. Pictures of him have been published but each one shows a different person, so it not possible to even show how he looked like.

I had written a short profile on Kuntze before, which was placed on the old VVWCA website October 2002. As a result some people contacted me, including a Kuntze relative living here in the US. He asked me for more information about him. I could not give any more than I had already written at that time. Another person whose name I unfortunately do not remember anymore sent me transcripts of official documents which showed that Kuntze arrived in New York April 17th 1926 on the SS Columbus. On November 17th 1931, he became a US citizen in Detroit. He renounced his US citizenship Oct 15th. 1939. His 16 year old son returned to Detroit December 1946, because of his age the son must have been born in the US and therefore been a US citizen. Yet another person sent me an email and a copy of a German newspaper article where Kuntze is mentioned to have lived in Wolfsburg as late as in 1953 in one of the Volkswagen built executive villas in Wolfsburg.

## More About “El Volkswagen Sedan, Ultima Edicion”

The more I researched and looked into the history of the last series of classic Beetles produced, especially what is known as the “Ultima Edicion”, the more confused I got. It all started with an email I sent to Volkswagen in Germany inquiring about the serial numbers of the very last Beetles built. These numbers are sometimes called VIN numbers, Vehicle Identification Code, and before that, chassis numbers. The reason I contacted Germany was the fact that some Mexican dealers, expecting a great demand and higher profits, converted some regular Beetles into Ultima Edicion versions and sold them at a higher price. I thought that Vintage Voice readers who may be interested in acquiring such a last edition Beetle would want to be sure they actually get the genuine thing with the correct VIN number.

Volkswagen answered to my inquiry with the surprising claim that 7,535 Ultima Edicion were built. The last one in July of 2003, they further explained that they unfortunately did not have any records of Mexican VIN numbers in Germany. Neither did they know how many of the last Beetles built were 2003 or 2004 models. They apologized



for the fact that this was all the info they had and asked for my understanding. At the same time they informed me that Mexico does not keep any archives. A copy of a brochure in Spanish attached to the email showed an Ultima Edicion Beetle advertised as a 2004 model.

I followed up my questioning because of their surprising claim that 7,435 Ultima Edicion were built, which is in contrast to all other information handed out in 2003 that claimed the number to have been 3 000. To this inquiry they suggested if I wanted more information to go to VW de Mexico and gave me an email address of a contact person in Mexico, [consuelo.minutti@vw.com.mx](mailto:consuelo.minutti@vw.com.mx). I sent a

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number of emails to this contact but not surprisingly did not get any response ever.

More surprising information about the 2003/2004 Beetles came from the man who originally had been in charge of the Volkswagen Museum and VW Archives at Wolfsburg, Germany. In his 2005 book called the "Volkswagen Beetle Chronicles", he mentions in one part 2,300 special

last series 2003 Beetles in another part of his book he lists 3,000 Ultima Edicion. The book is otherwise very comprehensive, but unfortunately lists no VIN numbers. These published figures let me to the conclusion that probably 2 300 Ultima Edicion were built and sold as 2003 models and 700 as 2004 models. There is also in this latest book the, new to me, information about 300 special Beetles built in 2003 called the Summer Beetle.

I have spent a lot of time trying to clear up the confusion about these last Beetles. There is a lot to be found on the internet and I am sure there will be more in the future. Most of what I found is not necessarily less confusing. It is known that the very last Beetle was sent to Germany to be displayed at the VW Museum. A group of enthusiasts from the UK however claim that the last Beetle suffered great salt water damage during its shipping to Germany and had to pretty much completely restored. They also suggest that the car on display in Germany may actually not be at all the last built as claimed. Another story talks about the pen ultimo Beetle built, which according to reports was bought by Mexican Volkswagen dealers to be given as a present to Pope Benedict, a known Volkswagen enthusiast. This car supposedly never made it to the Vatican and disappeared and its whereabouts is still unknown to this day.

In the past British authors have published many books about Volkswagen with usually very accurate information; let's hope that soon a book will come out clearing up much of this confusion about these last Beetles. It is sad that no more accurate information is known about the very last ones of these significant cars. What we know and what seems to be correct is that 7 435 Beetles were built in 2003, the last one built in June. 3000 of these were probably Ultima Edicion models designed as some 2003 and some 2004 modes. There was also a small series of 300 Beetles built either in late 2002 or early 2003 called the Summer Beetle. Buyers beware. Check the VIN numbers.

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# The Volkswagen Library



## **Volkswagen Beetle Specification Guide 1968 – 1980**

*By Richard Copping. Published in 2010 by Crowood Press Ltd, Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire SNB 2HR, Great Britain. ISBN 978 1 84797 167 8. High quality Hardcover, 127 pages. Many excellent pictures of mostly British versions of Volkswagen Beetles.*

The same publisher, Crowood Press LTD, has over the last few years, with using different authors, published a series of books under the subtitle, 'Specification Guides' covering just about every vintage Volkswagen product ever produced. Some of these have been reviewed here for the Vintage Voice. The last Vintage Voice had reviewed the specification guide covering the 1947 to 1967 model Beetles.

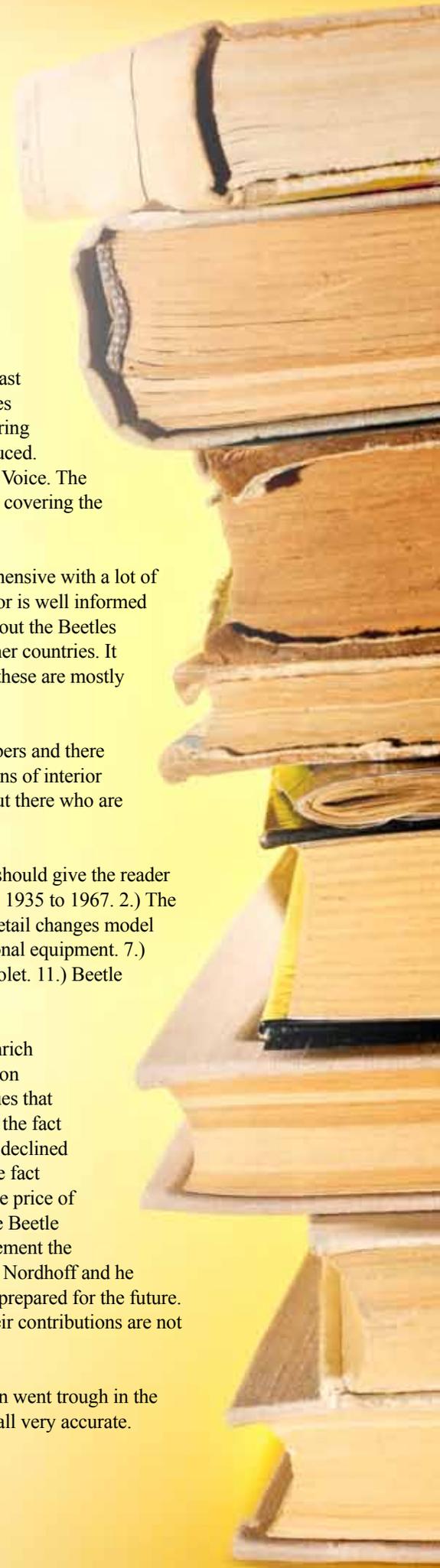
The book reviewed here covers the years 1968 to 1980. It is, like they all are, very comprehensive with a lot of detailed information regarding most of the changes made over the years covered. The author is well informed and the book includes some information I have not known before. Especially the details about the Beetles built specifically for the British market and how they differ from special version sold in other countries. It does however also mention what changes were made to the Beetle just for the US market, these are mostly changes made to comply with legal requirements.

VIN numbers are given by the calendar years and also by model years. So are engine numbers and there are year by year color samples showing the different colors used. There are even descriptions of interior upholstery materials. All of this information should be very helpful to all the aficionados out there who are restoring their cars.

All information is presented in eleven groups; the descriptions of these are listed here and should give the reader an idea what are the main subjects covered. 1.) The Beetle's creation, survival and success: 1935 to 1967. 2.) The Beetle's decline and fall from Grace: 1968-1978. 3.) Production survey. 4.) Specification detail changes model year by model year August 1967- January 1980. 5.) Engine options. 6.) Factory-fitted optional equipment. 7.) Paint and trim colors. 8.) Accessories. 9.) Special edition Beetles. 10.) The Karmann Cabriolet. 11.) Beetle exports, assembly and manufacture outside Germany.

Over the years I have noticed that the writers of this series of books do greatly admire Heinrich Nordhoff, the first CEO of Volkswagen after the war. They blame the demise of the Beetle on Nordhoff's successors. In the section "The Beetles Fall from Grace" Richard Copping argues that the first two successors tried to get rid of the Beetle. Nowhere does he mention the obvious, the fact that Volkswagen had become overly dependent on Beetle sales. Beetle sales had drastically declined in Europe, especially in Germany. Another factor never mentioned by these authors was the fact that the Beetle was very expensive to build. The competition was easily able to undercut the price of the Beetle. Only in underdeveloped countries with low wages did it make sense to continue Beetle production as VW actually did in Brazil and in Mexico. The later introduced Beetle replacement the Golf took only half the man hours to build as the Beetle. All of these facts were ignored by Nordhoff and he hesitated much too long to allow for a Beetle replacement or at least he should have better prepared for the future. Nordhoff's successors had their hands full to save money losing Volkswagen. Too bad their contributions are not recognized in these series of books.

While I do not agree with the author's analyses and opinions about the troubles Volkswagen went through in the seventies, all other information given should however be very helpful to restorers and it is all very accurate.



# 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 1987 can be accepted. VVWCA accepts no liability relating to the purchase of an advertised item.

**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 faster if you clearly indicate the condition of the item

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Reps for the state of Kansas on our website. Thank you, Mike Epstein.

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# Solvang

## VW Veteranentreffen 12

Story by Larry McKenzie  
Photos by Grant Reiling

**S**olvang has always been one of my favorite shows. We have a fun time driving our vintage VW's down the less traveled back roads and the wife/family like to come along. The show is on Saturday, which makes the drive back less rushed. Plus the host hotel, in the middle of town, is the gathering place for participants as most are from out of town. This year's event did not fail to delight.

A group of the usual suspects gathered at Mark Merrill's shop about 6:00 am Friday morning. We filled our gas tanks, had some coffee and headed down to San Martin to meet up with a few others at Pete Keesling's place. We had nine very cool vintage VW's on the drive including two 1946 beetles. One of the '46s was Mark's black bug and the other was Eric Hendrikson's green rollback; both are beautifully restored. Most people would trailer those ultra rare Bugs down but not our heroes, they chose to drive them. We took highway 25 from Hollister to Paso Robles, which is a beautiful, sparsely traveled back road. This allows us to leisurely drive the old VW's through the beautiful central California scenery without impeding traffic. The nine cars; the two '46s, a '52 split, a '56 sunroof Bug, a '58 Ghia, '58 convertible Bug, a '0 Bus, a '62 sunroof Bug and a '66 Westfalia Camper all made the trip without any problems. It is such an enjoyable site to drive behind a couple of '46s.

We met up with highway 101 at Mission San Miguel and had lunch



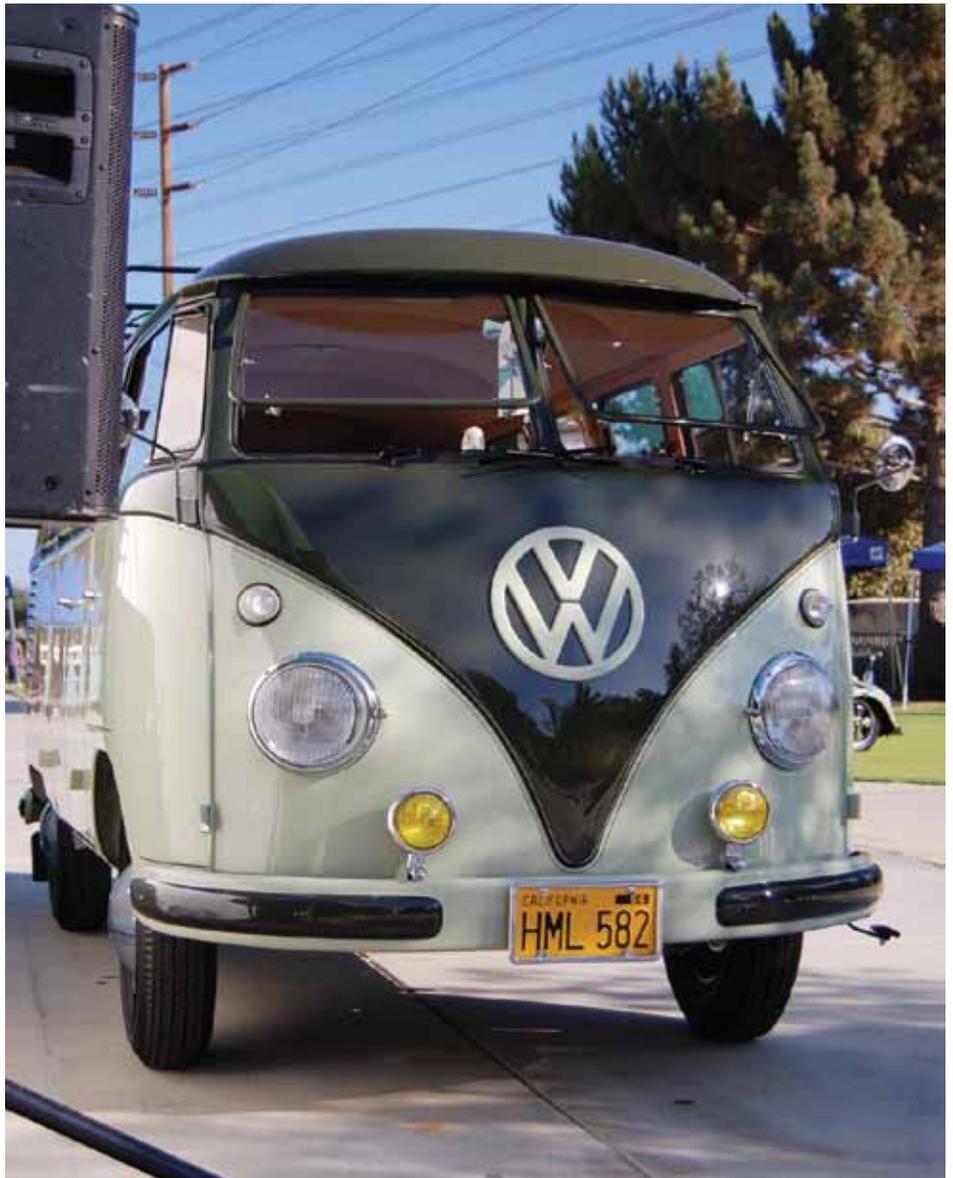


in Paso Robles. We then meandered down 101 at 55-60 mph to Solvang. We arrived at the host hotel late afternoon and a crowd formed around the '46 Rollback. People were quite impressed that Eric had driven it from Mountain View without a care. Friday evening is always a great time to meet up with friends, go out to one of the great restaurants for a nice dinner, and later a stroll around the scenic town.

The show on Saturday was at the Santa Ines Mission in a grassy field, which is only a two-minute walk back to town. This allows folks to come and go from the show, which great to get breakfast or an ice cream. The show had some really nice vintage Volkswagens attending, plenty of splits and ovals even a Schwimmwagen and Kubelwagen came later in the morning. The largest class was the 62-67 Bug group. There was also a good selection of selection of type 3's. One thing that bothered me was there were several nice VW's in the parking lot and not in the show. I asked a few of these people and they said" I thought it was just for show cars", "I'm too cheap to pay' and "I want to leave early". All lame excuses, we need them in the show. The total car count seemed good, not close to the biggest but not too small either. There were about a dozen or so swappers. All in all, a mellow show with great cars and people.

Saturday night was the club Dinner at Anderson's Pea Soup. At our banquet there last year the club did not order pea soup, so this time they did and it really added to the dinner. The best part about the dinner was that I got to be the designated driver and drive Pete's 1960 nine-passenger bus filled with nine people. It drove great and everyone was comfortable, just like in the old VW ads.

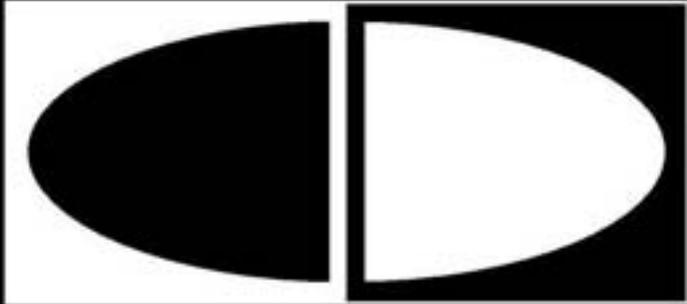
Sunday morning our group skipped the wine tour and headed north after breakfast. We had a fun drive back and stopped for lunch at a small, but fantastic Mexican restaurant called Habaneros and just about took over the entire place. When we arrived back at Mark's we were all very tired but with big smiles on our faces. In two years we gladly do it all again.







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Given its start by the ambitions of Michael Mountjoy and Dave Heilemann, this year's 20th Anniversary event surpassed most everyone's expectations with a record attendance and record number of VWs on display. Unlike events held in the past, there were far less water-cooled VWs on display this year .. thus making for a huge variety of air-cooled Beetles, buses, campers, Ghias and off road VWs. Although a short rainfall interrupted our Saturday afternoon for a few moments, it did not dampen our spirits as we readied ourselves for the afternoon VW parade through the streets of Eureka Springs.

While the city-side parade does not mark the conclusion of this festival, it is one of the highlights of the event. VWs of all shapes and sizes line the parking lot of the Best Western Inn of the Ozarks awaiting their police escort through the city of Eureka Springs. Only two highways provide entrance in to and out of the city, which are closed while more than 200 VWs make their way through Eureka Springs. Eureka Springs is a very unique community and picturesque community. Built on the top and side of a mountain, there's not one street in the community that it on the same level as another. Twisting and turning, city streets resemble arteries leading one into the business area of the city. It's a fun ride through the town as hundreds of people line the streets cheering on a multitude of VWs parading through the city. It is an event for every one of all ages to enjoy.

The awards ceremony is quick to begin upon our return as we all pile into the banquet center awaiting an announcement of



"best of show". This year's ceremony took a bit of a different turn as we had the opportunity to thank one of the original founders of this event and wish him well as he moves off to the sunny shores of Hawaii. Although Dave Heilemann will no longer serve at the helm of an event cherished by so many, we know that he has done well in passing his enthusiasm and knowledge off to Denis Dodson.

Regardless, the success of the event for the past 20 years has been due to all the volunteers, sponsors, enthusiasts and those within the community that make this an event well worth returning to year after year.

**Best of Show:** 1951 Green Beetle, Jason Abernathy, Fort Smith, AR.

**Best Paint:** 1973 Black Ghia Convertible, Pokie Parkman, Fort Worth, TX.

**Best Interior:** 1951 Green Beetle, Jason Abernathy, Fort Smith, AR.

**Best Engine:** 1952 Yellow & Orange Beetle, Bob Faulk, Sioux City, IA



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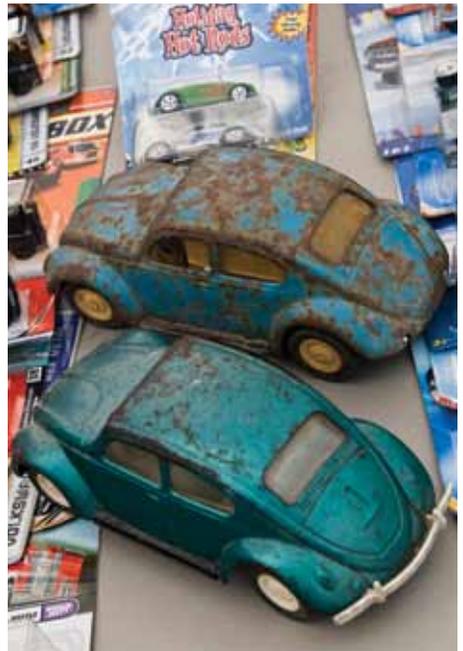
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