



## Fixing Up Your Vehicle

Do-it-yourself tips on mechanics, painting, decorating!

Tips by Gary, Spain:

**NOW WITH ALL THE CAMPING LETTERS** everyone has the burden & vision to go mobile. But for many in poorer fields it may be difficult as vehicles are quite expensive. One alternative is to get an older vehicle & little by little fix it up as time & finances permit—which is what I did, PTL!

**I WOULD SUGGEST GETTING A VEHICLE THAT IS MECHANICALLY SOUND** but not to worry about the paint job or the interior too much. You can find an "ugly" looking van for quite a lot less than a nice clean one, with both of them having the same motor condition, & then you can do the fun part of turning it into a nice mobile home—the guys working on the paint job & mechanics & the girls making the curtains & planning the "kitchen" etc.—a real family project.

**I BOUGHT A 1971 VW VAN** that I thought was reasonably sound mechanically, altho' the body was just an ugly empty shell. Slowly I found out that my van was just as bad mechanically, but PTL! Six months later I had a very nice running van & it was nice looking, fixed up inside & out!

**MEANWHILE THE LORD TURNED ME INTO A RATHER PROFICIENT MECHANIC**, having taken out the engine several times, putting in a new clutch & even rebuilding a gear box!—A real miracle as I really didn't know much about mechanics before. But now I've got the

faith for just about anything that could go wrong.

**I LEARNED REAL FAST** that I couldn't go running to the "doctor" (mechanic) every time something went wrong. For example, the clutch slipped on the van & the VW house wanted \$400 to repair it! I tried to provision it but with no success. We just couldn't afford to pay to have it done for us, so I knew I would have to do it. PTL, two days later it was repaired, & it cost us exactly \$151! A brother & I took the engine out in front of a mechanic's garage (he lent us a big hydraulic jack) & instead of buying a new clutch plate I got the old one refaced (provisioned!), & the clutch pressure plate which cost \$100 new I found in a junkyard for only \$15!

**ABOUT MECHANICS:** I've found that there are two different kinds of mechanics—honest ones & dishonest ones! The honest ones (at least in this country) will bend over backwards trying to help you, especially when they see that you aren't a rich tourist & that you're not afraid to get your hands dirty & do it yourself.

**MOST OF THE HONEST MECHANICS I KNOW** are the sweetest, sheepest, down-to-earth people—men who will open their hearts as well as their garages to you after they see you there under a dirty greasy car with a wrench in one hand & a car book in the other, doing the best you can.—And more than once I've had them end up there under the car doing it for me!

**THE DISHONEST ONES, HOWEVER, WILL PAINT A VERY BLACK PICTURE** for you, especially if they see how little you know about mechanics. They'll tell you, "Oh, it's a big job, very complicated. You could never do it yourself. The whole engine has to come out" etc. etc. They'll really try to scare you & discourage you! Maybe it's to get you to let them do it for you. I don't waste my time with them or even listen to them.

**WHEN I REPAIRED MY GEAR BOX**, I asked a mechanic that if I did all the work using my tools would he let me use his jack when it was time to drop the motor out. These men are usually quite busy, & I make it very clear that I will do everything, only needing the use of his jack for a very short while to "drop the engine" & then later on to put it back again.

**MOST WILL AGREE TO THIS** & show you a place outside near his shop or next to it where you can do it. I made it plain that I had my own tools, as most mechanics don't like to lend their tools out, especially to a novice—& he will probably be using them anyway.

**ONCE THEY SEE ME OUT THERE WORKING AWAY** I've found them more than happy to give me advice on any difficulties that may arise, & I've been thankful that there was someone near to ask. Usually I've ended up having witnessed to everyone there in the garage (& even the neighbours!) by the time I've finished, & been invited to eat with them & with an open invitation to use their facilities whenever I need, TTL!

**CAR REPAIR BOOKS:** Do-it-yourself shop manuals are available for most models & are such a big help—for me a real necessity! They tell you step-by-step almost everything you need to know,

from setting the points to a complete engine overhaul.

**TOOLS:** You really get what you pay for with tools. Cheap tools will deform or break under stress. Good tools are expensive, but well worth it. The best are a "chrome-vanadium" steel. Also I got me a one-piece mechanic's worksuit. They're not expensive & a real need, as if you do any work on your car you will ruin your clothes. No matter how hard I try, I just can't seem to avoid getting greasy.

**JUNKYARDS:** One of the biggest blessings to a mechanic is a junkyard! I almost never buy new parts now as they are so much cheaper off a wrecked vehicle in a junkyard. Also you can find all the little odds 'n ends for your old van such as door handles, arm rests, floor mats, light covers, hubcaps, even nicer seats & door panels—all the things you need to restore your van to its original condition. You do have to learn how to deal with junkyard owners however, as they can be "real characters" in some countries, strange people! (Ed.: See No. 170:29-33!)

**A PAINT JOB:** To have the van painted, they wanted over \$400! So a brother & I looked for a paint & body shop to try to provision use of their spray gun, compressor & painting room provided we did all the work & bought the paint. The second place we went to agreed & the owner was so sheepy!

**IT WAS HARD WORK!**—The whole vehicle had to be sanded, all the big rust spots ground away, dents knocked out or filled, & a week later we were ready to paint our 2 vans. We were able to get car paint at dealer's cost & in the end I spent only \$45 for materials, about 1/10 of what it would have cost had I paid the system to do it. TYJ!

**ALSO WE REALLY WON THE MECHANICS' HEARTS** as they

saw us working hard in the hot sun & so happy at the same time. Sam had Scripture & music tapes going the whole time, GB'M! And boy, you wouldn't believe the change that a couple coats of paint does for an old vehicle. It was truly astonishing! The vans turned out looking brand new!—And a good sample instead of like "hippie vans". We painted the bumpers flat black & the wheels silver & put up color coordinated curtains that Alicia made on her mother's sewing machine.

**THE FLOOR:** I threw out the old carpet & replaced it with a piece of linoleum with an imitation woodgrain design. Carpet does sound cozy, but it just isn't practical. For our way of life it's too hard to clean. But you can sweep & mop linoleum easily, even disinfect it. But a carpet just soaks up a spill & will later smell bad & attract flies. You can cut linoleum with a pair of scissors & glue it down with a little contact cement. If you must have something warmer under your feet due to cold climates, maybe a small throw rug or 2 that could easily be taken up & put back down would be the answer.

**AN INEXPENSIVE CEILING:** I found sheets of white styrofoam for less than \$1 each (1x2 meters & 2cm thick). It took only 2½ sheets to cover the ceiling of the van which I painted a cream color, & it looks real nice. The only trouble I had was finding a way to get it to stick to the metal roof.—Contact cement stuck to the metal but melted the styrofoam, & regular white glue stuck to the styrofoam but not to the metal.

**WHAT I FINALLY DID** was to glue strips of thin cardboard to the ceiling with contact cement on one side & then glued the styrofoam to the other side of the cardboard with white glue.

(Be sure & use only a water-base paint as enamel will melt the styrofoam—& paint it before putting it up, it's easier. A pastel colour is best as it will reflect more light.)

**A LUGGAGE RACK** or roof rack is a real blessing. Get only an aluminum one as any other kind will rust out in no time & look really ugly. They claim that a "galvanized" rack won't rust. But don't believe them.—They will rust, but just a bit slower. So I have an aluminum one & put my spare tire on it & covered it with a piece of plastic. That way I have the space inside the van where the tire was for more storage space.

**BURGLAR ALARMS:** I've had my van broken into 3 times so I am putting in an alarm. There is really only one good kind & that is one that is activated when a door is opened. They work off the door switches connected to the interior lighting. Even when the door is closed again, the alarm continues to sound.

**THESE ALARMS I FOUND IN DO-IT-YOURSELF KIT FORM** at electronic parts houses for 1/5 the price of a ready-made unit. They are easy to put together, you just have to know how to solder, but that's easy, & fun! You can even find an inexpensive soldering iron that runs off a 12-volt car battery—a useful thing to have in your mobile tool box.

**ANOTHER KIND OF ALARM** available in kit form is one that works by the breaking of a metallic tape (just like you see in store windows). This kind is good too because a would-be thief can get that your van is protected & might therefore be discouraged from even attempting to break in. (Window sign helps!)

**RUNNING WATER:** It's easy to have running water for your little sink (if you have one) by

using a 12-volt electric fuel pump which you can find at a junkyard. Put a hose from one end of it into a plastic water jug full of water & another hose from the other end of the pump going into the water faucet, & that's it! Mount an electric switch somewhere handy to turn it on & off & you've got running water in your van! It's a lot more convenient than the foot or hand pumps.

**NICE PLASTIC BOTTLE-HOLDERS** are available from most big dept. stores to keep bottles from falling over & spilling. Stackable plastic vegetable bins are real space-savers for the kitchen area & look nice too. I even use one for my Mo Books & Bibles!

**I CONNECTED A SMALL SPIRAL NOTEBOOK TO THE DASHBOARD** with 2 little self-sticking plastic hooks. Now I have a verse in view to memorize or review when I stop at red lights. The hooks are placed horizontally & into each end of the spiral. The notebook can be taken out & the pages changed easily.

**I TAPED A SMALL "OUR SYMBOL"** to the lower corner of the back window so that it can be seen from outside. Maybe all of us that are mobile can do this (?) & that way we would be able to recognize another Family while on the road, yet still be safe. Happy fixing & travelling for Jesus! Love, Gary.

### Keeping Things Organised!

From Cherran, Europe: **HERE ARE A FEW WAYS WE'VE FOUND TO KEEP OUR CARAVAN ORGANISED & tidy with our big family of 5 children:**

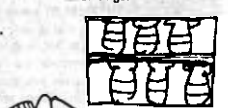
**FOR TOILETRY ITEMS:** I made 2 bags with pockets out

of strong cloth (denim) to hang on both sides of our wash basin in our little toilet room.



This way there is not a bunch of little things lying around everywhere, & everything stays put while on the move. These can be bought, but I have found them to be very expensive & not very strong.

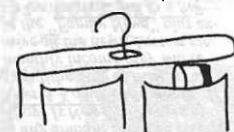
**IN THE KITCHEN:** We use another similar holder for cooking utensils such as spatulas, graters, knives etc. It hangs with up almost no extra space & are in easy reach of the stove, is tidy simple to make. You can use scrap material or old clothes to make them.



Adjust pocket sizes to fit the items you want to store—spoons, graters, paring knives, etc.

**FOR SHOES:** Again, I sewed a similar holder, only much larger, for our shoes. Instead of a dowel rod, I used a hanger inside the top seam with a button hole for the hook to go thru'. We have 3 of them hanging in the closet so we can neatly & easily store the many pairs of shoes

we have with so many children.



**FOR TOYS:** I made many simple cloth bags with drawstrings for different toys—one for lego, one for blocks, puzzles etc. Everything stays in order but with virtually no extra weight or space of boxes.

**SIMILAR BAGS, ONE FOR EACH CHILD,** keep socks neat. All these little lovable items stay together in the right place with each child's clothes. These bags are extremely lightweight, take up almost no extra space & are in easy reach of the stove, is tidy simple to make. You can use scrap material or old clothes to make them.

Cut across here, turn edges over leaving enough space for drawing to go thru'.



Sew closed so buttons don't open. Sew closed at bottom.

Takes about 5-10 minutes on a sewing machine!

**ONE OTHER SPACE SAVING TIP:** We keep a 10-litre water jug in the same case as our gas bottle outside the caravan above the hitch. A hose runs from there under the caravan to a little foot pump so we have water from the tap without losing the space that a water container normally takes up under the sink, giving us much more inside kitchen storage. (Watch freezing!) ■

## Friends Old & New Get In Touch!

Letters Received by WIM & LIMs!

"DEAR FRIENDS, I JUST WANT TO SAY THANK YOU for the love & kindness you have given to me in the Mo Letters & little booklets. I am a student learning to be a school teacher, in my 2nd year. I hope to use many of the Mo Letters & ideas in my teaching practice after I become a qualified teacher. You have helped me a great deal & now Jesus is in my life & I don't worry myself so much about the state of the world. Instead I try to be a sample of God's love. So thank you very much for the love you have given to show me the way."—Sharon; Europe.

"EIGHT MONTHS AGO I WAS WORKING for an electronics firm. I was tired, unhappy & very lonesome. Then the most wonderful thing happened. In the building where I was working someone gave an employee some literature & it was passed around as a big joke. But I didn't think it was so funny, because the things it said about being alone were the same unspoken things that were inside me. I told them I could not see the humor in their joke, & when I returned that evening to my car I found the literature stuck to my windshield. I called the phone number on the literature & shortly after met the Family. There followed the most astounding sense of belonging & love I have ever felt. They showed me a Jesus that was not revengeful but forgiving. He was not condemning me but loving me all



Jonas Singer & family—wife Sally & 2 of their children—Francesco & Melodie-6. Happy to be back in touch!

the while I was sinful & wrong. I now have a Friend whose name is Jesus & I'm not lonesome anymore. I'm not working anymore because 6 months ago I had a very bad health problem. My wife & 5 children are going to start tithing as soon as we have some money coming in. A parting word: My mother, father, 2 brothers, a sister, my brother's wife & children have all been saved, TYJ!"—Ray & Mary; U.S.A.

"THRU' YOUR KOMIX I HAVE BEEN REALLY INSPIRED & would love to have my own lit to read & share with others. I am a catacomb member of the Family of Love, & one day hopefully, Lord willing, I will be a member 100%. Please send me some Komix, Basic Mo Letter Book, FNs as soon as possible. I love you brethren, & it will be a great part of my life to have these materials. I'll be happy to help you thru' donations. GBY! Your sister, Laurie."

"I HAVE JUST VISITED A HOME IN AMSTERDAM. I liked it there. They were so happy in the Lord & sang songs for me. We ate together. It was the first time I'd met the members of the Family, except my brother. It was really exciting that day. I love the Family."—Ferdinand; Holland.

"I'M HAPPY TO BE REPORTING AGAIN. With my trip to Greece my vision is to get mobile. Sally & I are looking this next week for a good-size caravan. I was really touched that Dad & Maria thought enough about me to have Faithy phone me & invite me to work with WIM. I went for 1 week & stayed for 3, ha! I'm trying now to tie all the ends together & serve the Lord."—Jonas; Europe.

"DAD, HAVE COMPASSION ON ME & ACCEPT ME ONCE AGAIN as a son, because I have really abandoned you since the Old Revolution. The Lord began to deal seriously with me & to chastise me severely. I was thrown in jail, lost documents, lost friends & family. Then walking in the street I found one of your Letters which said, 'Love, humility & prayer solve all problems.' I went & prayed for 2 days fervently, & the Lord gave me the courage to go ask the brethren for pardon. I want to serve Jesus with my whole heart."—Otavio; South America.

"DEAR FOL, I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST LITERATURE. I find your ideas refreshing & exciting. Not often do I come across such bold but honest literature. I live in a cabin on a tree farm. I hunt & generally live off the land. Before, I work-