

New Beetle Update

Introduction Issue

February/March, 2001

In 1993, I purchased a brand new VW EuroVan. This was my third VW Van and in my opinion, the best yet. However, VW did not sell many of them and they only imported them for that one year. By the time my Van was two years old, I began to feel like I had an "orphan" on my hands. VW seemed to abandon the Van and the dealers did not know much about them. This led to the idea of starting a newsletter called EuroVan Update.

It is now more than five years later and I am still publishing the newsletter. Some of my faithful subscribers write me that they have sold their EuroVans, but that they still want to subscribe. We have developed a sense of camaraderie since we have shared and resolved many problems together. I have learned more from the subscribers than I ever thought possible. Of course, all this information is shared on the pages of the newsletter and everyone benefits.

The EuroVan was plagued with problems from the very beginning. (Sound familiar?) The Update identified a way to save \$1500 by preventing a catastrophic chain of events that resulted in a blown air conditioner compressor. The solution was a \$3.00 part. In addition, the Update was instrumental in provoking a recall on leaking fuel lines. This recall did not happen until most of our Vans were seven years old, but VW finally responded after two years of efforts by the Update and our subscribers. There were some reported engine fires from this gas leak, so we could very well have prevented bodily harm, too.

There were numerous other "fixes" that we printed in the Update. Many of our readers reported that they would take the article to their VW dealers or to their mechanics and show them how to repair their Vans. Of course, we have many readers who enjoy performing their own repairs and the Update provided them with essential "how to" information and the encouragement to tackle some jobs that they had never attempted before.

I have had more than one subscriber lament the fact that they did not have such a newsletter for their other car. This planted the idea of starting a New Beetle Update. There was only one problem: I needed a New Beetle. As a long time VW owner and a Beetle fan, I just had to have a New Beetle. Well, I finally made the plunge and am now the proud owner of a silver 2001 New Beetle. That, in a nutshell, is how this effort came about.

Did you know that there have been more than 100 Technical Bulletins published by VW that are directly related to the New Beetle? If you own a New Beetle, your owner's manual tells you how to get a free index of the Technical

Bulletins. If you wanted to order all 100 bulletins, the cost would be over \$200. What kind of information are you missing out on? Well that depends. Did you have electrical problems that your VW Dealer repaired under warranty? If not, you should be aware that many of the '98 & '99 New Beetles had grounding problems in the electrical system. How about wind noise? Did you know that there is an adjustment that can easily be made to reduce this noise? My collection of pertinent Technical Bulletins is 1½ inches thick and growing.

The first issue of New Beetle Update will be dated, April, 2001. The contents will include a complete listing of all the Technical Bulletins that pertain to the New Beetle. Both the title and the order number will be listed along with information on how to order these from VW. In addition, the five most important (or useful) bulletins will be summarized and explained in the first issue of the Update. This will provide you with some valuable information that could save you time, money, and frustration. At least one bulletin will be featured in each future issue of the Update.

Other regular columns include "Repair Tips", "I Wish My New Beetle Had...", "Questions", and "Letters". In future issues, these will be selected from submissions of our subscribers. A repair tip that is published will earn an extra issue to be added to their subscription. We will also accept submissions of feature articles. If you do your own repairs and would like to try writing an article, ask for the writer guidelines. If your article is used, you will be rewarded for your effort with a subscription extension.

The major feature article in the first issue is on basic vehicle maintenance. This will get you started on doing it yourself if you are so inclined. For those that use the dealer or a local mechanic, the article will help you determine if you are really getting the service you need and the service for which you paid.

There is also an article on how to change the bulb in your headlight. Sounds simple. Have you tried it? We will show you how with pictures.

I have ideas for a number of articles. They include replacing the brake pads, bleeding the brakes, replacing the series resistors in the heater blower, battery replacement, thermostat replacement, serpentine belt, a warning about the big fuses, and the list could go on. Before deciding what article to write next, I'll see what is reported in the enclosed questionnaire. The compiled results from your feedback will tell where the trouble spots are and where to focus the effort.