



# Autoist

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**THEY LOVE IT**

**THEY HATE IT \***

*\* The waiting, software glitches, dealers, poor corporate communication*



# Autoist

Since 1955

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New Family memberships are \$26 for the first year, then \$20 per year for renewal. Add \$6 to these amounts for residents outside the U.S. Pay by check to VWCA, P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542, or visit [VWClub.org](http://VWClub.org), click the "Membership" tab and use a credit card to join or renew.

## ABOUT THE AUTOIST

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# Driver's Seat

BY CLIFF LEPPKE ✉leppke.cliff@gmail.com

## Where has my little car company gone?

**C**onsumer Reports' guide to new cars lists only six small cars. Some of them slated for extinction: Hyundai's Accent and the Chevy Spark. Plus, small coupes have nearly vanished as Hyundai dropped the Veloster. VW's Beetle, which fit into this category, is history. Who would have thought the little-car craze would fade?

There was a time when pint-size vehicles rode to the top of the sales charts. Foremost was the plucky Beetle, a perennial A-lister. Even the Chevy Chevette had scores of buyers seeking relief from 1970s inflation and gas pains. Datsun's slogan was "Datsun saves," usually with an image of a fuel pump nozzle. And Honda's was "it makes it simple." These days full-size pickups take the retailing top spots. And they're longer, wider and taller than ever. Most make a 1959 Cadillac's flamboyant excess seem tame. No subcompact is on the top-10 sales list, although Toyota's compact Corolla makes it. But the top-selling non-pickup passenger vehicles are compact crossovers. Toyota's RAV4 rules this category.

Rewind to the fall of 1963. In the November issue of *Popular Science*, Devon Francis wondered "where, oh where, has my little car gone?" During the sparkling autumn of 1959, he reminisced, U.S. automakers, after a "clout on the head" caused by little foreign cars selling in hundreds of thousands and customers turned off by Detroit's chrome-clad-

cars as big and powerful as railroad locomotives, changed course.

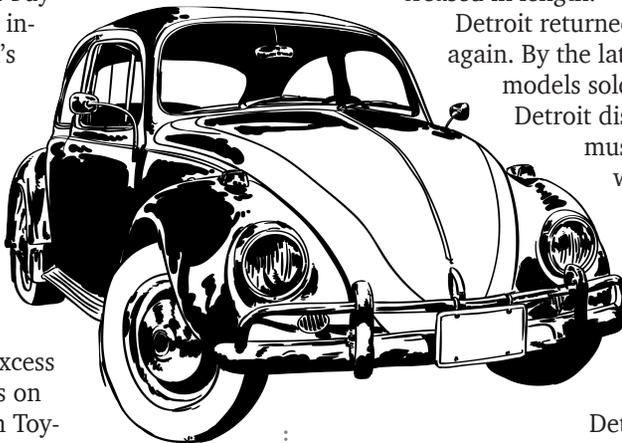
Detroit rolled out compacts for 1960 including the Ford Falcon and Chevy Corvair. Their dimensions and horsepowers were modest. By the 1964 model year, the Falcon, which weighed 2,396 pounds, fattened up to almost 3,000. The Pontiac Tempest which had four cylinders under the hood got a 348-hp V-8 and Buick's Special expanded from 188 inches long to 203. Of the roughly dozen cars classed as compacts in the early 1960s, only four for 1964 hadn't increased in length.

Detroit returned to the small car field, again. By the late 1960s, small foreign models sold like hotcakes. While

Detroit dished out pony cars and muscle cars that gained in weight and size, sub-compacts from abroad drove right in and claimed a beachhead. They countered the inflationary times with low prices and cheap operating costs.

Detroit's response was the Chevy Vega and Ford Pinto. VW countered with the Super Beetle.

By the mid 1970s, Detroit rolled out precision sized cars — basically deluxe variations of its compacts such as the Ford Granada. Things changed. GM's Sheer Look downsized cars (the original Rabbit had crisp Sheer Look lines, too) lost needless weight, and eventually front-drive compacts from all of the Big Three plus the AMC Alliance signaled a shift toward practical economy cars.



► TURN TO PAGE 27

# Small Talk

VW + AUDI AT A GLANCE

## NEW & IMPROVED

**TAKING A FLIER:** VW Group China unveiled the brand's first-ever eVTOL, or electric vertical takeoff and landing drone prototype, dubbed the VMO. The company is hoping to make commercially available flying cars a reality in the next couple of years, developing software and local R&D with the goal of a four-seater cabin and autonomous flying capabilities with a range of about 124 miles. Flight tests are scheduled late this year.



## EV NEWS

**CAL CARS:** California rolled out a plan to restrict and ultimately ban the sale of gasoline-powered cars by the year 2035, a move that may lead a dozen other states that typically follow the state's lead on setting auto emissions standards to adapt similar rules.

**CHARGING STATIONS:** VW and Siemens have agreed to a deal in which the two companies will jointly invest \$450 million to double the number of Electrify America charging stations in the US and Canada by 2026.

**SUBSCRIPTION EVs:** The EV subscription service Autonomy, a California company, has placed an order of 2,200 VW EVs, part of a 23,000-vehicle purchase from

Tesla, GM, Ford, Rivian and others.

**QUITE THE BUZZ:** Five months after production on the ID.Buzz started, VW announced that orders in Europe had approached this year's production goal of 10,000 units. Norway (3,400 orders) and Germany (2,500) topped the list.

**CANADIAN BATTERIES:** VW is eyeing Canada as another EV battery production source, a move that would enhance qualification for the US's revamped EV tax credits.

## COMPANY NEWS

**GOLF EXTINCTION?:** With rising emissions standards and the trend toward EVs, the writing may be on the wall for VW's current Mk.8 Golf. VW CEO Thomas Schafer told Germany's *Welt* that escalat-

ing Euro 7 emissions standards would effectively make all ICEs roughly \$3,000 to \$5,000 more expensive. The end could come by late this decade.

## MONEY MATTERS

**CHATTANOOGA:** With the July production launch of the ID.4 in Chattanooga, the vibe is alive. The plant is hiring 1,200 more employees, putting its total at more than 5,000, from a pool of more than 7,000 applications. Plant CEO Chris Glover says that production targets are about 150,000 vehicles this year, and he's hopeful of doubling that number in two years with the building of the ID.4 and the existing Atlas and Atlas Cross Sport SUVs.

**SHARP GROWTH:** China fueled VW's battery-electric vehicle deliveries in the first half of the year, totaling 217,000 units, up 27%. VW's European deliveries made up 59% of sales in the first half of 2022, while its 63,500 deliveries in China made up 29% of sales. The US was third, making up 8% of BEV sales, with only 17,000 ID.4s sold here.

**NEW-CAR COSTS:** Data from Cox Automotive report that the average new-car transaction price in July reached \$48,182, up slightly from June, another record high.

# Retro Autoist

FROM THE VWCA ARCHIVES

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## 10 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012:** In building a workforce at its Tennessee plant, VW has said it doesn't want to hire assembly-line workers who have developed "bad habits" at previous manufacturing jobs. "Inexperience is a key," said Gary Booth, director of the Volkswagen Academy training operation. "Some of our best employees came from McDonald's. They know standardized work."

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012:** A 2013 Jetta Hybrid recorded a speed of 185.394 mph (298.363 kph) at the Bonneville Salt Flats, the fastest speed ever achieved by a production-based hybrid car on the famed Utah site. The feat was accomplished during the Southern California Timing Association's annual Speed Week in mid-August.

## 20 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2002:** After 23 years and more than 223,000 cars sold in the United States alone, VVoA is saying goodbye to one of its most popular vehicles, the Cabrio, introduced in 1979 as the Rabbit Convertible and replaced with the 2003 New Beetle Convertible.



## 30 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992:** Volkswagen and Ford are joining forces to produce a minivan for the European market in 1994. The seven-seat van is based on a stretched wheelbase of VW's Passat. Meanwhile, VW has announced that it will join Japanese automaker Suzuki to build a new minicar. *Postscript: The popular Ford Galaxy, a seven-passenger multipurpose vehicle, was based on the VW's Sharan minivan. Meanwhile, the minicar project never came to fruition.*

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992:** Volkswagen is developing an engine that runs entirely on the alcohol-based fuel methanol, the same racing fuel used by IndyCars. The engine is based on a 1.9-liter diesel, but VW says it won't be available until the fuel is widely available, perhaps near the end of the decade. *Postscript: Nope.*

## 40 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1982:** Volkswagen of America has decided to return to its roots as a result of declining sales. It plans to return to stressing its German heritage after identifying itself with the domestics when it opened its American Rabbit plant in Pennsylvania. The company plans to put much of its emphasis on its imported cars — the Jetta, Scirocco and Quantum.

## 50 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER 1972:** Changes on Volkswagens for 1973 are numerous. Only one such change can be called a pure styling change: the newly designed front hood for the 411, which is now called the 412. All other changes were made either to comply with new U.S. safety regulations or are genuine technical improvements. One change is simply cost-cutting: the small sound-absorbing punched holes in the headliners are gone. Now, black dots are printed, mimicking the holes. Bumpers and doors have also been beefed up for safety considerations.

## 60 YEARS AGO

**SEPTEMBER 1962:** Members of the Cuyahoga Valley VW Club's Cleveland Christian Home Caravan made arrangements to escort 44 orphans through the city's metropolitan parks. All sorts of Beetles, from Kombis to Ghia Convertibles, were on hand. Surely, the kids experienced something different from anything they had ever seen before.



**G**ood news has arrived for Volkswagen and its North American customers waiting not-so-patiently for an ID.4.

The company not only starting U.S. production in July, earlier than projected, but also announced in August that a new cheaper model was in the works, with new features across an expanding line.

It's been a rough go in VW's effort to begin a massive, multibillion conversion to electrification.

Post-pandemic supply-chain issues were compounded by the war in Ukraine, where certain key components are produced.

In March, an undisclosed number of ID.4s was among 4,000 VW-branded vehicles worth more than \$100,000 million that sank in the Atlantic Ocean with the cargo ship *Felicity Ace*.

## ID.4 OWNERS WEIGH IN

*Commentary spotlights popularity, software woes*

### EV NEWS

**SOFTWARE ISSUES:** German media have reported concerns about VW's new Euro flagship EV, the ID.3, having "massive software problems." The car has been produced on a limited scale since Nov. 4. It's expected that VW will have to upgrade the software for about 10,000 models this spring.

**NO ID.3 IN THE USA:** VW's Golf-like electric car, dubbed the ID.3, won't be sold in the United States.

News item from the Jan/Feb 2020 *AUTOIST*, raising alarm in 2019 about VW's EV software.

And more than 18 months into the rollout, it appears obvious that software glitches made the cars not ready for prime time.

VW is not alone. In January, *Consumer Reports* released a report on the reliability of EVs based on survey data from model years 2019-21 involving a 3,533 EV sample size and 21 models.

While *CR* reported high customer satisfaction, respondents also reported significant reliability issues. Electric SUVs were found to be the least reliable car category.

In April, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said it was investigating five automakers covering more than 138,000 vehicles with batteries made by LG Energy Solution of South Korea linked to fires.

VW, General Motors, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Hyundai

By Fred Ortlip ✉ [VWAUTOIST@icloud.com](mailto:VWAUTOIST@icloud.com)

and Stellantis have issued recalls since February 2020, most due to internal battery failures that can increase fire risk. (VW has cut ties with LG Energy Solution.)

Ford, Nissan, Toyota, Subaru, Tesla, Rivian and Lucid have made recalls unrelated to fire risks.

In effect, automakers across the board are encountering challenges in producing safe and reliable EVs.

More troubling for VW, McKinsey and Co., a growth, marketing and sales organization, predicts that the company will lose billions due to delays in its Cariad software division, pushing back rollouts of more ID models along with cars from group brands Audi and Porsche.

Software woes led to the CEO's dismissal. Two rising-star executives who helped guide the rollout have departed for jobs with high-tech startups.

And, finally, with the Inflation Reduction Act now law, the \$7,500 tax credit — which VW marketed in ID.4 sales pitches — is probably wiped out for those who were waiting delivery of a '22. (See more on Page 28.)

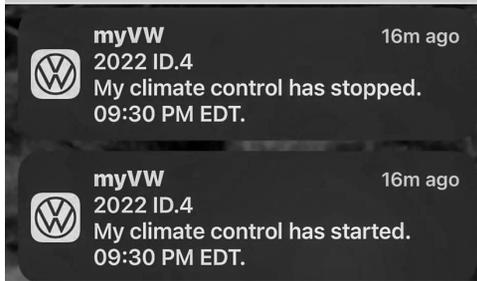
But anecdotal evidence confirms CR's finding that VW's EV is popular. With more than 7,000 registered members on Reddit's ID.4 forum and 9,000 on VWIDtalk, the positive vibe more than outweighs the negative.

Typical upbeat posts:

- It's a 50-mile round trip to the grocery store (we live at the beach), mostly 70 mph highway. I charged before and after the trip, and my power consumption was 15.08 kWh. So \$1.50 to drive 50 miles, at high-speed, with the AC on. I love electric driving!

- I drove 400mi round-trip yesterday and it cost me about \$6 portal-to-portal using two (Electrify America) chargers along the way and for home charging off-peak. People who drive legacy gas cars are blowing money out their tailpipes!

Why does this happen? I am not near my phone or car. I get this a few times a day.



**• Do you have a '21 or a '22?**

We have one of each and only the '22 gives us these ghost notifications. I figured it had something to do with the software differences.

- You have immediate climate control turned on. I don't though! That's what's so weird. Plus I haven't driven for about 4 hours when that message in the pic popped up. And it only lasts for one minute each time.
- I've gotten thousands of notifications from the VW app in just a couple of months. The car sitting in garage, doing nothing, (giving) 5 or 6 climate setting notifications.
- Interesting. I don't have this issue and myVW app so far has been flawless in terms of the connection etc., too. Not sure why some are facing this issue and while the rest aren't to be heard.



The network connection icon is missing, and I can't connect on myVW anymore. I tried resetting the infotainment center (twice), but that didn't help.

- Pull Fuse 19 (5 amp fuse) for like 10ish min, then reinstall. Start up and give it a few minutes and it should come back.
- This has happened to many of us.
- Don't pull anything. It's the cell carrier. In my case it came back after a couple days.
- Rebooted the CPU and fixed it when happened to me.

• 14 months and 18,219 miles, and so far no end in sight for my love of our black 1st Edition.

Many owners seem from the mold of old-time Beetle devotees who brushed off the car's shortcomings while embracing its quirky positives, such as:

- People who are worried about software updates that don't affect drivability are probably better off buying an iPad than a car.

But the car's capacitive touch controls and a sluggish interface underpowered by version-2 software in 2021 models are almost universally panned by owners who have relied on knobs to push, pull or turn. MY22 models with third-gen software are said to be more responsive and reliable though not without minor annoyances. No knobs, but at least steering wheel buttons offer some solace.

Many acknowledge frustration acclimating to a new system but come to accept it. After all, it's an otherwise pleasant means of transportation, not a cellphone. But if it feels like a spaceship, shouldn't it always act like one?

## ID.4

The typical gripes:

- It boggles my mind that infotainment systems are so bad on brand new \$40,000 cars. It is the primary way people interact with their vehicles now and is hugely important to the overall experience.

- The VW software stack is truly a dumpster fire and the lowest point for this vehicle.

- Sometimes this car is closer to owning a computer than a car. My default action is to turn it off, wait a period of time and then restart it.

- I've been seeing lots and lots of complaints about the buggy software of the ID.4 that just never gets updated. Different owners have different issues and obviously no one is really happy about it. Is this enough to get rid of the car itself? About to go pick up one but all these "error issues" make me wonder if I should just sell it back to the dealer.

But voices of reason often emerge:

- One thing to keep in mind is that the people who

aren't having issues aren't creating posts on social media called "Not having any issues." Social media skews toward and rewards negative things, so you're bound to see more reports of those things. People often come here to report and look for solutions to problems they're having anyway, and if you're not having problems, there's not much to report, so the problems will seem more prevalent than perhaps they are.

But some problems can be serious, or appear to be. Whether to take alerts seriously can add more stress:

- I was taking my first road trip to visit a friend in the hospital, and I got a red light announcing electrical failure. I immediately pulled over and shut the car off. After a while I restarted it and it went to yellow. I got to a town and am waiting the towtruck from VW. Had to check into a motel as dealer said he couldn't look at today. Has anyone had a similar adventure at 2,500 miles?

### First year view of an ID.4 Pro S AWD after 8,400 miles

*From the VWID4Owners forum on Reddit.com.*

Infotainment lags, but my wife and I are using CarPlay or Android Auto most of the time, so it's not a huge issue. What does suck though is you can't cancel it connecting to wireless CarPlay/Android Auto, so regardless of who's driving, it'll just default to the last phone it used.

Mobile app (myVW) was awful but now is a little better.

We're in Boston, range loss during the winter is real, and you really feel it on longer road trips. It's annoying but not a huge issue.

Turning radius on this car is amazing, and it's great at navigating Boston's famously terrible streets.

We did a camping trip with two friends to Acadia National Park, and they remarked how comfortable the ID.4 was and fell asleep in the back. Also, the USB-C chargers are fast chargers, which meant everyone easily topped-up their phones and tablets.

Public Level 2 chargers, especially free ones, are usually not worth the hassle (for their slower charging speeds).

Level 3 charging has been great, especially at Electrify America stations. It did take me a while before realizing you need to use the app to start your charging session if you want it to use the free plan. There's enough of them that we've done trips around New England without any anxiety, but you do need to plan your trip around it. [The ABRP app is widely endorsed.]

Home charging is awesome. We only need to plug it in once a week but no more "oh (crap), I forgot to get gas before my appointment this morning." Also, we avoided how awful gas prices have become. We had a 220v 30-amp circuit and NEMA 14-30 outlet installed in our garage. I use a portable charger (Splitvolt) and might buy a longer one and have it mounted to the wall.

My dad (late 60s) loved it so much he also picked up a 2021 ID4 Pro S RWD! He was lucky enough that his dealership had them. He's been charging with a 120v outlet and a nearby EA station, but it's annoying enough that he's having a Level 2 installed.

All in all, I'm very happy with the car. I'm on a three-year lease, and I'll either buy this one outright or get a newer ID.4 model in the future. [VWCA](#)

• Yes, BOTH of our ID.4s [unclear on model years]. On one it went away right after a restart (get out, walk away, walk back, get back in) and on the other it went from red to yellow like yours and then the next day was normal.

The issue has not reoccurred on either one.

• It is good to be cautious, but this is a frequent false alarm issue. It will hopefully be fixed if we ever get a software update.

• I had the same problem and it hasn't come up again after 6 months.

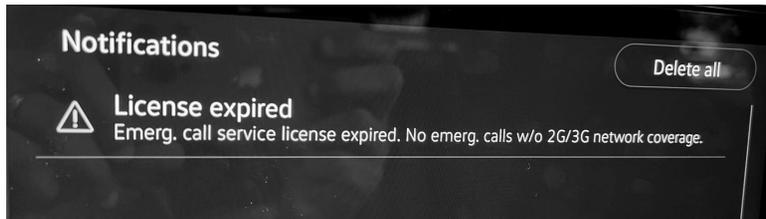
• I submitted my 7mo buyback request yesterday (lemon with 25 days in the shop so far) and I'm still in the honeymoon phase. Hoping to do an exchange because I still want this car.

Though anecdotal, reports of electrical system failure pop up in the forums with expressions of fear and relief ranging from "the car is completely bricked" to the problem "just goes away."

Reports have cited AWD models with front motor failure needing replacement and owners having to wait weeks for new modules. The topic "failed front drive motor" at VWIDTalk has more than 90 posts at this writing including:

• I spoke to a friend who has been in the car industry for a few years. He said that front motors failing happens all the time. They have a name for it (which I can't recall). I think because there are so few ID.4s that maybe it seems like a bigger issue than it is.

(The post continued:) I have a family member who bought a Tesla. She got it soon after I got my ID.4. It died three times. The first two times, Tesla tried to put it on her. It was only after the third time did Tesla finally take the car in for service. It was there for two or three weeks, then she got it back. No problems since. This whole situation makes me think that



Is there a way to delete this emergency call message or mark it as read?

- It pops up every time I start the car and is annoying more than anything.
- No way to delete it yet, seems to be a bug on the 2022s. Mine does it as well.
- Been following multiple people with this problem because it prevents you from logging into your profile and it always logs you in as anonymous guest. I haven't seen any resolution yet.
- I have my profile set up and this message does not prevent me from using my profile.
- I have it too. My dealer just looked at it and was dumbfounded.. i now ignore.

for 2022 ID.4s.

Though the sample size is small given the number of cars delivered, a service rep for a St. Louis dealership who checked with his ID.4 techs said, "They are unable to recall any local ID.4s that have had this problem. I have not seen any bulleting or any other communication from VW that there any concerns."

Meanwhile, "if we ever get a software update" has been a recurring complaint among 2021 owners. Many early customers waited more than a year to get their car, compounded by more weeks of waiting for newer customers while later-built cars sat in U.S. ports getting an incremental update and a more robust 12-volt battery.

Owners of 2022s are getting cars with the latest software and reporting better performance and reliability.

With 2023 models moving into the pipeline, many owners of early 2021s wonder if they've been forgotten:

- It is hard to believe that after 16 months with this vehicle and we are still on (version) 2.1.
- My biggest gripe at this point is just the pure lack of communication on the part of VW. It feels incredibly (crummy) to have promised something to your beta testers and then completely (mess) them over once they buy the car.

Dealer sources suggest a fall timeline. ID.4 updates require about eight hours of dealer time to install. Future over-the-air updates from home are promised.

But the St. Louis service rep noted, "VW doesn't give us a lot of heads up on that stuff." **VWCA**

EVs will have a number of problems until the technology improves. For now, I am willing to roll with it because I love my ID.4.

Yet, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows no consumer complaints

# SHOULD YOU BUY A **RESTORED VW?**

*Gremlins can lurk under newly painted skin*



**T**his spring, I became my neighborhood's VW technician. Those who live near me discovered their longtime auto mechanics, tools

and know-how vanished. An import car repair shop closed for good. One of these neighbors, who owns two older VWs, called me. He'd heard I

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knew something about VWs — umm, just a little. This led me to meet his family's 1966 Bug and 1971 Karmann Ghia.

Both of these VWs were previously restored. They looked fine in their repainted skins, so he bought them. The usual collector-car advice is simple, buy a rejuvenated vehicle; it's a lot less hassle. A jalopy, in contrast, is a money pit.

This advice has a grain of truth. For instance, some people pay more to resurrect their car's showroom glory than a fair price for that restored treasure.

There's a problem with this blanket recommendation; it doesn't caution you to carefully inspect an flashy old car. Hire

a marque's expert or consult a brand's collector club. My father, for example, began his own collection with a Ford Model A and a 1927 Buick. Each car's sanctioned club offers guidebooks and other aids meant to locate and preserve high-quality vintage or antique vehicles. Some collector communities offer certification, indicating a passel of picky judges confirmed its provenance.

VWs don't share that happy fate — they should. My neighbor bought two VWs with build sheets and lots of receipts from a restoration outfit. Those documents looked compellingly professional. Dive into their details and you'll notice evidence of various never-resolved problems and likely major rust repair. One example, I found receipts for two VW bus "sure-start kits." The electrical idea behind this circuitry is sound. Two attempts to install them indicates the car likely has starter troubles, bad wiring or a faulty ignition switch.

And I start this story with the starter. Then, I'll

move to the brakes and lighting systems. I'll illustrate items you can check before buying a lemon.

Now, back to the story. My neighbor couldn't start the car. The engine didn't crank. He bought a new battery, installed it; this didn't work. Help! I gently inquired whether his 1966 Beetle had its original six-volt electrics or was it converted to 12 volts? He didn't know. Nothing wrong there; scores of people don't know VW's electrical systems.

So I headed to my neighbor's Colonial Revival abode with an assortment of items, including a multimeter and trusty VW engine ID guide. After a perfunctory twist of the ignition key to start, and not

even a click, I opened the 1300cc's rear lid. Under it is a 1970-model-year 1600cc engine with a 12-volt generator. Under the car's rear seat, I found a six-volt battery. It turns out my neighbor took his dead 12-volt battery to an auto parts store. They replaced it with a six-volt one be-

cause their battery-spec sheet said 1966 Beetles have six-volt batteries.

Pause for a moment.

This 1966 Beetle presents itself well with glossy paint and no obvious rust damage. But the restored car's shift to a different engine and electrical system should have been disclosed to the buyer. It wasn't. And the engine's air cleaner and other bits are chrome-plated California-style hot-rod items. So, kiss the original air cleaner goodbye, its carburetor pre-heating system and the original timing marks gone. Seek cars with their original parts unless you want a modified VW.

Another anomaly was the engine bay's insulation — gone. Instead there were electrical terminal »



## RESTORATION

blocks routing current to the starter. These unorthodox modifications let me measure starter voltage at a convenient location. After I figured out this deviation from Wolfsburg's engineering, I confirmed that either the starter's solenoid didn't work properly or the ignition switch didn't route enough current to it. After I removed the dashboard's wiring cover, the starter magically cranked and the car started. This ended my investigation, as my neighbor was happy, although I warned him I hadn't confirmed what was wrong.

The next problem was the left rear brake. The car wouldn't move because the left-rear wheel wouldn't turn. Its glossy black brake drum certainly looked spiffy, but I smelled a rat. When I checked the car's parking brake adjustment, I discovered both brake cables were tightened to their limits. A VW with proper brake drums and shoes shouldn't have cables pulled so far.

Next, I discovered the left rear wheel could turn slightly and then it jammed. So, I removed the axle nut with a standard ratchet wrench. Anyone who's done a rear brake job on a Beetle knows that the axle nut should be a lot tighter than that. As I pulled the drum, I heard a pop. Now, it moved freely. Under the drum, I discovered a leaking wheel cylinder and rusty brake hardware damaged by the leak. Due to the amount of crud under the drum, the cylinder had been leaking for eons.

Two things were disconcerting. The first is someone adjusted one of the brake shoes as far out as it could go, but the other one wasn't. Someone didn't know how to adjust a Beetle's brakes. The second item is a disappointment. The original brake drums were turned on a brake lathe, making the braking area wafer thin. Because the drum is now oversized, the brake shoes don't fit. Instead of new brake drums, someone wrenched on cables and adjusters, hiding their errors under that black-beauty drum.

Other items worth noting include none of VW's usual underbody coatings or even the tar-paper and foam floor insulation. Instead, someone installed a carpet kit — the original flooring was rubber mats.

Seat belts weren't attached to VW's mounts and the battery hold-down isn't from a 1966 Bug. These and protruding fasteners for the heater channels indicate likely floor-pan replacements and more. Why, even the reupholstered seats were interesting, neither had locking seatbacks — introduced for the 1966 model year. Yes, I checked this car's identification number — the "6" for 1966 was there.

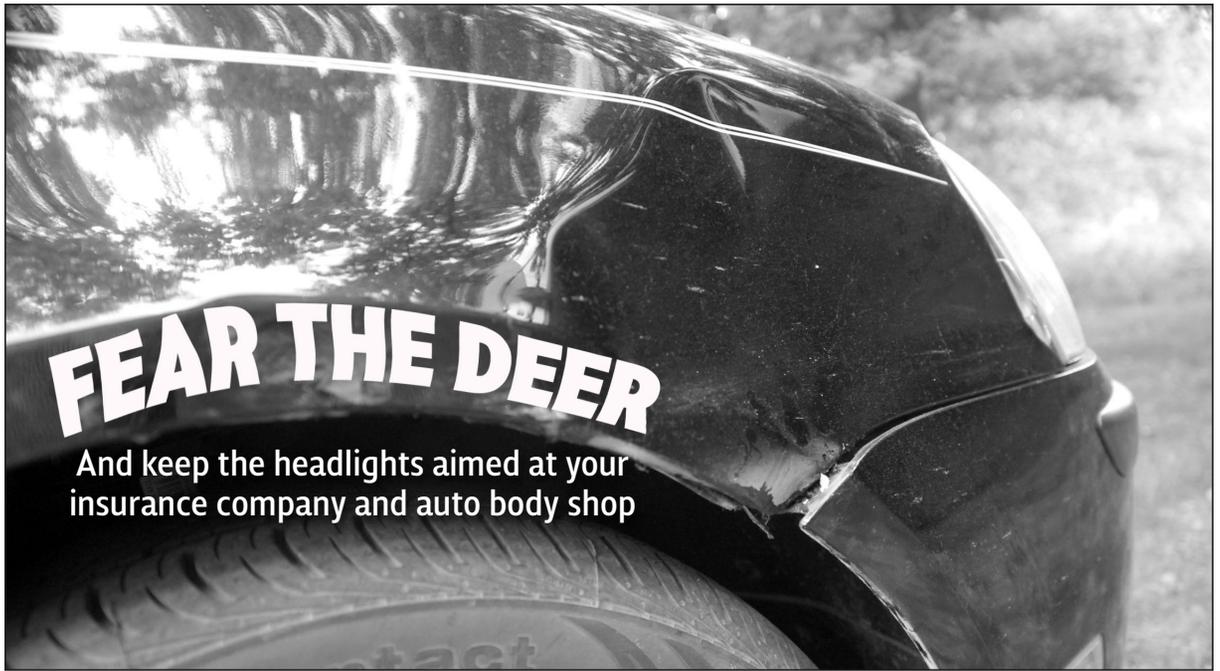
### Dim views for a Ghia

Next, I moved to the Ghia. It had an assortment of lighting anomalies. One headlight was out and a tail light, too. When I checked the voltage on the trunk-side of the fuse box, some but not all lights started working. I proceeded to investigate the headlights. The rubber gaskets for the trim rings were missing. And one headlight's fit to the body was problematic — you couldn't mount it straight with the trim-ring screw at the bottom.

Why? Someone welded on new headlight buckets. And one of them was attached incorrectly — a major goof. Another telltale sign — Ghias should have a smooth transition from fender to headlamp ring. If there's material above the trim ring, someone did the equivalent of eyelid surgery.

What was electrically askew? Happy you asked. It slowly dawned on me that touching the fuse box's backside, which caused erratic lighting, might indicate a bad fuse. Well, let's say at least six bad fuses. Scores of them were covered in white chalky corrosion, making their electrical connections iffy. New fuses fixed that problem. Cut wires or incorrectly attached fixtures were responsible for other nonworking lights. Now you know why you should check all electrics before buying a car.

While my neighbor's cars have warts. They might be perfectly fine hobby cars. It's difficult in Wisconsin to find rust-free unmolested VWs. So his vehicles represent the Midwestern VW scene. If you're new to the VWs and want an old one, do yourself a favor. Find an expert. Carefully inspect your potential automotive companion. You want someone who isn't deflected by fancy paint and chromium doodads. **VWCA**



Just west of Fargo, North Dakota, on I-94, I struck a deer with my 2009 VW Rabbit. This was an expensive encounter. Compared with some animal/vehicle collisions, however, I got lucky; neither the driver nor my vehicle's structure were dinged. The impact

crushed the right front fender, broke the right headlamp, kinked the hood and bunged up the bumper.

In a sense, my trip to North Dakota was just the start of a journey. That's because Rabbit repairing proved frustrating from filing an insurance claim to mending the car. I'm sharing this car-curing odyssey because you might find it helpful in

..... navigating your own encounters with insurance companies and auto body shops.

..... Let's start with the insurance claim. Decades ago, you either went to your insurance company's drive-thru center — provided you had comprehensive coverage — or found a

shop, got an estimate and presented it to your agent.

American Family, my insurance company, changed the process. Its adjuster told me to go to Gerber Collision & Glass, a chain of auto body shops. Am Fam says it works off Gerber's estimate, permits Gerber to amend that estimate and then offers a lifetime >>



Cliff's Rabbit on a better day.

By Cliff Leppke ✉ [leppke.cliff@gmail.com](mailto:leppke.cliff@gmail.com)

warranty. Simple, right?

Gerber's Milwaukee shop, however, was backed up. I'd have to wait nearly three weeks for an estimate. And then expect to wait about another month to get my car fixed. It turns out the coronavirus economy means parts and staff shortages.

You don't have to use your insurance company's recommended body-repair outfit. So, I took that knowledge and used it to locate two shops willing to provide prompt estimates: one Schok's Auto Body near my house and Collision Center of Milwaukee North, affiliated with VW of Milwaukee North. Schok's came in just north of \$2,200, recommending used parts because insurance companies don't pay for new fenders and headlights on older cars. Schok's proved helpful. Chances are they could have done a fine job, but they didn't properly submit their estimate to Am Fam. That document must include photos showing vehicle damage plus the vehicle's overall condition.

Collision Center filed the correct documentation — about \$3,660 to replace fender and headlight, straighten the hood, mend the bumper and paint fender, hood and bumper. Am Fam's rep adjusted that figure lower by about \$1,000, claiming my old car wasn't worthy of new parts — a cloudy scratched used headlamp, say, was all I would get.

My 56,000-mile old car (not driven on salty roads) looked like new before this incident, but despite my protests, the adjuster wouldn't budge. That's where I used the remnants of the VW of Milwaukee North's former friend of the VWCA as leverage. My VW parts guru, Steve Bush, offered a parts discount, which lowered the tab. So, I ordered parts ASAP.

Jacob Taubert, the Collision Center's rep, gets good marks for thoughtful communication. Pickup and dropoff times were accurate. But the BMW-certified technician's body work didn't go as smoothly as VW's original finish. Some items were hilariously askew — the inner fender sound absorber was installed upside down, the jack-mount cover twisted and the mudguard clip assembled inside out. My



Stripped bumper threads.



Late-model VWs have front-fender sound absorbers — usually foam pieces meant to cut noise. On the Rabbit, the body tech glued the foam upside down on the new fender. Thus, the pad didn't fill the gap between fender, body and splash shield, adding to wind noise after the repair.

grade-school niece, who's a Lego model building ace, could have done better.

Furthermore, despite the repair order requesting fender prep and installation per VW's technical service bulletins — neither the VW's recommended zinc washers nor rubberized undercoating were employed

— rustproofing, however, was applied.

Several other items were discouraging. For example, the fender's back (facing the engine bay) wasn't painted with the color coat. Thus, you see clear-coated glossy primer in the cutline between the fender and hood. The bumper's splash-shield mounting was stripped — not the tech's fault as the deer impact clobbered it — but the fact it wasn't fixed was. Another sore spot was the left-front headlight, which now had a cloudy blemish either due to exuberant buffing or paint overspray.

Thus, there were multiple returns to the Collision Center. Taubert politely examined the misfires and then offered cures such as a new lamp. I skipped repainting the fender, which his staff would have performed, because it might have led to other flaws.

In the end, I suspect those who aren't eagle-eyed car inspectors would have driven off into the sunset — happy to have wheels. But I think a VW owner



Jack mount cover is bent just to the right of the splash guard.

should start the process with a clear understanding of VW's service manual, parts diagrams and technical service bulletins. Plus, require a vehicle inspection before its final assembly. **VWCA**



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## FACT CHECK

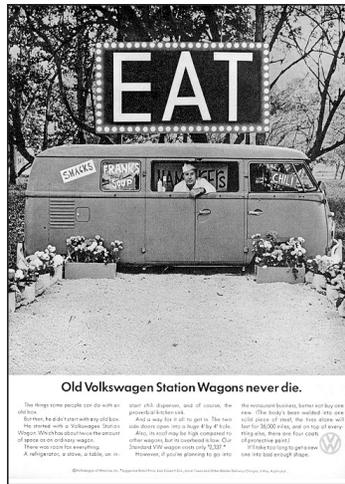


# ON SHAKY GROUND

Magazine piece describing old VW Bus veers off track

Bill Lepore's July 18, 2022, article in *The New Yorker*, "The VW Bus Took the Sixties on the Road, Now It's Getting a Twenty-first Century Makeover," takes readers on a long trip — a 5,600-word marathon back in time.

Along the way, Lepore explores the VW Bus, as a cultural icon and an automotive curiosity. Her detours into VW's Type II's origin, the unorthodox and mainstream people who drove them, chicken taxes, a Hanover factory tour and ultimately an ID.Buzz comparison is a yarn with compressed, sometimes inaccurately



rate declarative sentences. Did *The New Yorker* fact-check?

In her first paragraph Lepore says, "the Bus has no suspension." Sounds scary to me. Then she cites a person who says, "you just bounced." Being. My Webster's almost fell off the shelf. It defines suspension as a device supporting the upper part of a vehicle on the axles. Perhaps it's a matter of style. Yet, one wonders how did the Bus roll down the highway if it didn't have a means of planting axles and wheels under its breadbox body?

Sure, a Bus ad depicted an old one

By Cliff Leppke ✉ [leppke.cliff@gmail.com](mailto:leppke.cliff@gmail.com)

repurposed (sans wheels) as a roadside food vendor. I suspect Lepore wants to emphasize the forward-control driver's position nearly atop the left-front wheel. The ride sensation there is like a pogo stick. Regardless, Virginia, there is a suspension.

Lepore is on firmer ground, when she says the ID.Buzz might be the most anticipated vehicle in automotive history. "Bus nuts," she claims, "are busting out their pop-tops." VW has teased us for two decades with potential revivals of the Bus' form if not its function. And certainly VW's advertising plugs the Buzz as redemptive, necessary after its felonious fling with filthy diesels.

Other times Lepore is slippery with words. She says Kombi is what the Bus is called in Latin America. Actually it's short for its German name, which I'll truncate to Kombination Wagen, a Transporter with windows, seats and cargo space often without the full-finished interior found on the deluxe eight-seat Samba/Microbus.

The Bus, Lepore claims, sold like crazy. Yet, VW, in 1967, sold a whopping 34,274 Type IIs in the USA. And just 42,656 for the 1973 model one of her sources owned. I'll let you decide if those are hotcake numbers. The Bus likely seems as though it were meant for maple syrup, not due to massive single-year sales, but its longevity as VW's standout vehicle. It didn't blend in, did it?

VW's commercial vans and trucks get short shrift. We're told a mid-1960s chicken tax led to their sudden extinction and in turn an emphasis on the groovy station wagon version. (The 1964 chicken tax was a 25% tariff placed on light trucks in response to tariffs placed by France and West Germany on importation of U.S. chicken.)

Sure the tax undid VW's commercial vehicle plans but as late as 1971, U.S. dealers offered panel vans.

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

# THE VW BUS TOOK THE SIXTIES ON THE ROAD. NOW IT'S GETTING A TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY MAKEOVER

*Once, it sparked dreams of community and counterculture. What's gained—and lost—when flower power is electrified?*



By Jill Lepore  
July 18, 2022

So the blanket claim that the tax meant "VW couldn't sell any kind of truck in the USA" wasn't as sudden or as inclusive as the author describes it.

We're told the VW Beetle and Bus have the same engine—air-cooled likely. Lepore shares this factoid with us after discussing a woman's rickety 1973 bus. The thing is by 1964 the Bus motored with a 1500cc mill while the Beetle had a 1200cc engine. The Bus' engine code (O) is the same as the VW Type 3's. The 1964 Beetle didn't have a letter code, just the number 8. OK, the early 1500cc engine was basically an enlarged 1200cc and by 1967 the 1500cc and later 1600cc Beetle and Buses sometimes shared

engines. After 1971, however, VW's van got the beefier, larger Type 4's engine.

Some might quibble about the EuroVan. Lepore tells us it was the last VW Bus sold in the US. The last German-made Transporter-based Bus, for sure. But VW rolled out the ill-fated Routan minivan as its final fling with bus-like vehicles. Bring on the two-tone Buzz. Step on the go pedal — the electric motor is in the back. Our version with longer wheelbase and three-row seating despite its extra length might rekindle the 1960s without tailpipe emissions. **VWCA**

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# 2022

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## 2022 PORSCHE MACAN III



# AN INVIGORATING REFRESH

*Appetizing updates provide shifts in drive mode of 'budget' four-cylinder model*

**P**orsche Milwaukee North invited me and several well-heeled drivers to check out what is, perhaps, the least expensive means of putting a new Porsche in your driveway — the Macan crossover. As presented, in a classy glassy showroom, the MSRP is about \$67,000 sans the catered spread — roast beef sliders, pasta, cheese, apple wedges and infused lemonade.

I sampled the Macan with a turbocharged four-cylinder mill. The most important taste note: a stiff, sporting driving demeanor. In addition, you get revamped front and rear fascias and a fancy black-magic center console adja-

cent to a tempting power adjustable tiller. Alloy paddles let you tweak the PDK dual-clutch automated manual transmission. In Porsche fashion, there's an ignition switch on the dashboard's left side. You twist it, provided you have the fob inside the vehicle.

Then, 261 horses are ready to wield the power play you'd expect from the Porsche family's reign over VW's executive suite.

Inside the Macan, Porsche replaced some but not all of its skeletal switchgear, flanking the new but traditional style shift lever with touch panels. The tap points illuminate when the vehicle's on — a trick Westinghouse >>



By Cliff Leppke ✉ [leppke.cliff@gmail.com](mailto:leppke.cliff@gmail.com)

# PORSCHE

used for its mid-1960s Jet Set TV, where a sheer black plastic panel blanked out the CRT until you turned it on. Some Macan touch spots have haptic feedback. You'll find several knurled thumbwheels, too.

Surprisingly, for a new vehicle introduction, Porsche's MKE dealer didn't present the most lavishly equipped Macan. There's an optional potent V-6 engine. But in Porsche fashion, you can customize this rig with an assortment of trim packs that dress up the entry-level vehicle very nicely. Some items, including driver assists and adjustable suspension, tuning cost extra, too. The sampler had the standard, and rather unyielding steel springs above 20-inch alloy wheels.

The Macan is a tightly packaged compact crossover. So the power front thrones must move forward to fold the rear seatback or eke out a bit more aft-knee room. Stowage is modest, as the Porsche-themed fastback styling limits cargo height. But there's an inflatable spare tire below that densely carpeted stowage floor.

While sports-car purists might quibble, the Macan delivers a Porsche driving experience with gusto. This Porsche character struck me as important; the vehicle share's the Audi Q5's architecture. Despite or because of that, the Macan tastes, smells and drives like something from Stuttgart.

## Plug and play

One recurring theme at this Macan III event wasn't the vehicle but rather Porsche's Taycan BEV docked in the showroom's delivery area. I talked to more than one current Macan owner who placed a Taycan order. In addition, I found two Taycan enthusiasts who, while waiting for their deliveries, were rebuilding garages and carriage houses for BEV charging. One person had their electrician install two BEV charging stations in their revamped vehicle shrine. He and his



Powertrain options make "four on the floor" a distant memory.

partner anticipate going electric times two.

I'd say that's the shocking difference between those who already own Porsches and your scribe. I'm a blue-collar type with upwardly mobile sports car tastes (but must admit I'd end up with a used manual-transmission VW GTI or Toyota 86/Subaru BRZ). These other folks have the resources to drive the good life of plug-in, charge and blast off motoring. In contrast, I plug in and mow the lawn. Maybe I should paste a Porsche crest on it — it turns on a dime. **VWCA**

# WHEN STUCK, MAP-PRO IT

*Water-pump disassembly can be tricky*

Invariably, VW wrenchers encounter fasteners that won't unfasten. It's part of the territory, as hardened ferrous metal machine screws or bolts, studs and nuts attach non-ferrous alloy engine housings. One such item is the water pump assembly. As the Parts Place says the "bolts tend to snap off."

This article explains how you can use hand-tool heat to prevent the water-pump "snap off." This technique is useful for lots of vehicle-related repairs, too. First a history lesson: VW's Golf-Jetta-Rabbit-Scirocco four-cylinder water-cooled engines used the same water pump housing from roughly 1975 to 1999. The pump itself varied. It's a cartridge attached to the housing with an early 40mm hub version (1975-1981) and a 30mm hub type from 1981 on.

The chief reason water pump bolts break is corrosion, a common trouble when attaching dissimilar metals. Add salt, moisture (it's a water pump) and you've got the tour de force of reluctant separators. The force required to unthread a corroded fastener often exceeds its shear strength. Thus the head breaks, leaving the rest of the screw in the pump housing and you in a jam.

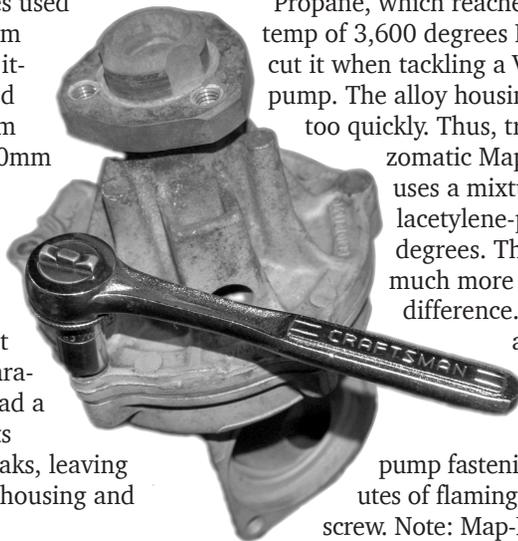
Don't go there. Properly applied heat liberates fasteners, as it breaks the rust or corrosion bond. Most of us handy Dub people have some kind of hand torch — likely a blue-bottle Benzomatic propane kit. It's a helpful plumbing soldering tool. You can even cook food with it. Sometimes it's all you need to loosen stuck fasteners. For example, I employed one to heat a bicycle's front derailleur's alloy body and

then turn a broken cable-clamp screw out — even after breaking the head off the screw. The trick: I cut a slot in the protruding stub of a screw and then heated it and turned it out with a flat-blade screwdriver.

Propane, which reaches a flame temp of 3,600 degrees F just doesn't cut it when tackling a VW water pump. The alloy housing and pump wick away heat too quickly. Thus, try a yellow-bottle Benzomatic Map-Pro hand-torch gas kit. It uses a mixture of propane and methylacetylene-propadiene; it burns at 3,730 degrees. This might not sound like much more heat, but it really makes a difference. And you must use a torch attachment suitable for Map — some propane torches aren't.

Map-Pro heat each water-pump fastening area. After several minutes of flaming fun, untread the heated screw. Note: Map-Pro will melt the pump seal — crackling fun. I use a quarter-inch drive ratchet wrench with a 10mm socket as my prime mover. This wimpy-size wrench has a purpose. Because it cannot apply lots of torque, I can feel whether the machine screw is turning versus breaking.

A Benzomatic Map-Pro trigger start torch kit costs less than \$50. It's money well spent. And you won't fume over busted water pump bolts. **VWCA**



By Cliff Leppke ✉ leppke.cliff@gmail.com

# The Frontdriver

BY RICHARD G. VANTREUREN ✉ [rgvant@juno.com](mailto:rgvant@juno.com)

## A trip through the '90s

Remembering the classic VW TV spot where the game show contestant could not spot the many improvements made in that model year's Beetle, proclaiming "Volkswagens never change," the 1995 B4 Passat's new aggressive appearance was meant to be obvious.

Less obvious was the deletion of the motorized seat belts in favor of government-mandated airbags, Big Brother not allowing the consumer to opt out of this safety-device-with-a-kill-ratio. The '96 and '97 were offered with the 90-hp four-cylinder turbodiesel, the sedans and wagons otherwise available with the 115 hp gas four and 172 hp VR6.

Before we devote more space to B4, fact is we never owned one; we skipped right to the B5 Passats. This all-new "PL45" platform, shared with Audi and other European nameplates, led the revolution toward the jellybean appearance so popular for years. (This also started the trend of not being able to tell a Passat from a Jetta at a distance. We still have trouble today.)

The B5 generation was only offered here as a sedan and wagon, as before (and B3!) but what a collec-

tion of engines: 134-hp turbodiesel four, 150-170-hp 1.8-liter turbo four, 190-200-hp 2.8-liter V6, and the rather incredible 4.0-liter, 270-hp W8 (more on this later).

Noted for its upscale interior appointments, we both enjoyed the tan leather interiors – because before long we added the wagon, a white '99, to our B5 collection. We should have been suspicious when the test drive was dominated by an overpowering odor that the salesman claimed was the previous owner's dog. After many cleanings, we discovered the sun

roof was leaking, promoting mold growth in some hard to reach areas.

Other than the aft body, our '99 and '00 cars were virtually identical, us needing only one paint touch-up stick. This allowed various parts swaps when necessary to keep the matriarch's sedan in the best possible condition.

These were our first cars with the Tiptronic transmission, a feature thought useless until we discovered a neat trick. Slowing to turn

for a highway on-ramp, we could seamlessly downshift and enjoy the extra torque need to accelerate for merging speed. (The automatic would not kickdown by itself unless



The 1995 model saw a comprehensive face lift but would only run through 1997. Here, the late Jack Lyman, longtime VWCA chairman of the board and member of our Central Florida VW Club, prepares for wife Barbara (in passenger seat) to navigate as their '97 Passat wagon is checked in for a VWCA Convention rally.

▶ **FOURTH OF FIVE PARTS:** Richard VanTreuren continues his historical review Passat ownership – including its early alternate identities Dasher and Quantum.

## FRONTDRIVER

you put your foot in it.)

All in all a very reliable people and stuff hauler for many years, albeit it being our turn to drive the unlucky night when hail dimpled the flat surfaces. (That was when the space shuttle's external tank foam was noticeably damaged as well, both hail damage later repaired.)

On the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge commute to work, we'd thought the worst of the animal kamikazes only went for red wagons, our having traded "deerslayer" '93 for this seemingly color-neutral '99. Carpoolers enjoyed the wagon's nice sound system for many happy miles. Then one fateful night, a medium-size hog torpedoed our bow with a modest thud, doing only repairable damage to the front plastic and sheet metal and not even tensioning our seat belts. Misread as a major accident by the airbag sensors, the car's two occupants were hit with a deafening explosion and the cockpit filled with smoke while we were still moving.

Fearing another animal bent on suicide would seek us out as soon as we replaced the wildly expensive airbags, the panels were simply glued back into place soon after forearms healed from their bag rash. Once back in service, the accident evidently took its toil on the car's more delicate electricals, however, with increasingly bizarre, unpredictable behavior. One side of the doors would not unlock; then the other side refused. Sometimes no start click, but nothing wrong with battery or starter. Transmission shifting became random; later driving it to the trade-in (for a Touareg) stuck in second gear. A sad ending for such a beautiful, comfortable ride.

We kept the '99's bolt-on roof rail accessories, only to find they would not fit Mr. T, nor any other VW we were able to make contact with. While B5 was the end of the Passat road for us, having become Eos and Touareg owners, the model would go on to B6 — and we'll cover our involvement therein next issue. **VWCA**



Our B5 Passat first was this '00 white sedan. We piled on the miles, and with no more than regular maintenance, the car never misbehaved.



Photobombed a rare daylight space shuttle rollback with the '99 wagon. (Something had gone wrong with the shuttle, forcing a dreaded trip back to the Vehicle Assembly Building.)



# Local Volks

## Activities of VWCA affiliates

### Fall festivities in the works

We've always said that participation in local chapter activities is a huge part of "enjoying your VW to the fullest." It is the purpose of this column, therefore, to highlight these events and activities, give the planners and organizers a little recognition for their efforts and perhaps inspire other chapters to try some of the unique and fun ways we enjoy our VWs.

If there is no local chapter in your area and you'd like to start one, contact our vice president, Tom Janiszewski at [Volkstom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Volkstom@sbcglobal.net), or the club office at [VWClub@aol.com](mailto:VWClub@aol.com).

Here's what some of the locals are up to of late: **BADGER BEETLES AUTOFUN CLUB, MILWAUKEE:** The Badger group is planning its "Lawn Chair Olympics," a new event organized by the "crazy women" of the club. "See what they have up their sleeves. It's gonna be fun." A "Salad Supper Sunday" is also in the works.

**NORTHEAST ILLINOIS VW ASSN., LISLE:** NIVA's annual Bug-Fest Car Show is back on track, this year at a new location, Fox Valley Volkswagen in St. Charles. This dealer provided ample room for show cars, swappers and even spectator parking, as well as a special trailer with Driver Gear merchandise. Culver's

next door set up an ice cream stand on the show grid and provided discount food coupons to all participants. And the club had several cars in the annual Independence Day Parade in Bartlett.

**STATELINE VOLKS FOLKS, ROCKFORD, ILL.:** The Stateline folks are gearing up for the return of their annual Vintage Picnic, postponed due to the pandemic and now moved up to September. It is also expected that some will join NIVA members at the BiState VW Club show in Hampton, Illinois, on the Mississippi River near the Quad Cities.

Check our website, [VWClub.org](http://VWClub.org), for listings of these and future events. You'll always find the latest updates there — and even some events that were announced too late to make the *AUTOIST* publication schedule. Occasionally, photos and videos of these events appear live as they happen on our Facebook page, [facebook.com/vwclubofamerica](https://facebook.com/vwclubofamerica).

And if your local chapter is planning an event, contact us at [VWClub.org](mailto:VWClub.org) and we'll post it on our site.

Finally, this column is in need of a member to compile the activities of our local chapters and send them bimonthly to the *AUTOIST* editor. If you're the one, contact VWCA at [VWClub@aol.com](mailto:VWClub@aol.com) or directly to the *AUTOIST* editor at [VWAUTOIST@icloud.com](mailto:VWAUTOIST@icloud.com). **VWCA**



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## DRIVER'S SEAT

### ► FROM PAGE 3

You'd expect VW, the car company that made thinking small a selling proposition, would have skin in the game. But one look at its 2022 USA deliveries tells a different story — its best selling nameplate is Atlas, a large crossover. I'm sure VW's dealers are thrilled that they've got a vehicle that sells, although one insider says VW cannot build them with motorized tail-gates due to parts shortages. Thus, those who cannot wrangle with the Atlas' rear lid go elsewhere.

Experts tell me today's large vehicles get much better fuel economy than their progenitors — remember when 10-13 mpg was the norm for the typical American full-size sedan? So one can up-size and not feel the fueling cost pain as intensely as, say, 1974. And others point to federal regulations, which let manufacturers meet corporate average fuel economy targets by plumping up their machines into the next size class with lower fuel-economy targets.

You might think this son of a professional electrical engineer, who was a motor control expert, might have an itch to get a BEV, but a hybrid, EV or full BEV I'm only modestly interested; none of them has three-pedal driving — some boast one-pedal operation.



Cliff Leppke, a regular *AUTOIST* contributor since 1993, has upgraded his wheels since getting his first car in the early '60s.

VW's Golf still speaks my language, although it keeps inching longer, lower and wider. And in the States, only the GTI and R versions survive.

Where, oh where, has hy VW CEO gone?

In Germany, VW's CEO shuffle continues as Herbert Diess moves to the discard pile. He was stepping down on Sept. 1,



The March 2021 teaser sketch of VW's Trinity Project, an electric sedan aimed at setting new standards in terms of range, charging speed and software. **BELOW:** An Audi Grandsphere Project concept.



2022. His replacement is Oliver Blume, currently head of the Porsche brand. Based on *Automotive News*' coverage of VW's executive board, the potent Porsche/Piech clan likely pulled the rug out from under Diess' feet. Diess supposedly proved too disruptive. He advanced a Tesla-like makeover, which would have cut VW's workforce. Although he had an electrification plan, VW's inhouse Cariad software hasn't gelled. Important milestones such as a generation of software (1.2) missed its 2021 deadline. Cariad was supposed to streamline software development.

VW Group's technologically advanced Artemis program lags. It was supposed to adopt and introduce hands-free Level 4 automated driving by 2024. This means Audi must delay launching its flagship EV called the Grandsphere. Expect a "Landyacht" interim vehicle instead. Porsche's new electric Macan and sibling Q6 e-tron are scheduled to debut next year. However, the hardware is "great," says one source, but the "software is missing." Volkswagen's »

## DRIVER'S SEAT

Trinity electric flagship sedan might arrive in 2026.

Because I'm not privy to VW's executive negotiations, I'm short on info. Nonetheless, VW's executive board signaled its doubts about Diess when it reduced his role in managing VW and the larger VW Group. But the way, VW axed him rather abruptly. He just finished a Chattanooga tour witnessing the commencement of the ID. 4's production there, and arrived home jetlagged and then heard his tenure would end before his contract expired in 2025.

### EV tax credit mayhem

Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act, and it might cut inflation. Pages of legislation, however, are meant to speed the transition to EVs. The \$7,500 federal tax credit for EVs now extends to all United States and NAFTA-assembled cars and trucks regardless of how many a brand has sold, starting Jan. 1, 2023. It formerly was 200,000 "rebates" per manufacturer.

This means Hyundai/Kia, currently No. 2 in BEV sales, doesn't qualify; its vehicles come from Korea. In contrast, some Tesla models might. Those who buy used BEVs get a \$4,000 tax-cut break, too. And you get the tax credit at your car dealer providing you meet income caps. This lets you drop the amount financed or used to purchase the vehicle.

But retail prices for tax-credit eligible EV cars and trucks have limits. It's \$55,000 MSRP for cars and \$80,000 for trucks and SUVs. That means the current top-selling BEV car, the Tesla Model 3, now selling for more than \$55,000, is out. But why extend the credit to much more expensive trucks, when car-like BEVs are usually more efficient? Perhaps you couldn't get the bill passed unless you appeased those building profitable pickups and SUVs.

And there's language about

batteries. This limits the use of tax credits to vehicles with "domestically" sourced batteries made with raw material obtained from nations the USA considers friendly.

News of the legislation added more angst for 2022 model ID.4 customers seeking clarification from VW and on social media on whether they would be eligible for some, if not all, of the \$7,500 tax credit.

On the day the legislation was passed and four days before it was signed by President Biden, VW sent a 639-word email to reservation holders offering tentative but time-sensitive advice on the tax credit's status.

VW expects "but cannot guarantee" that each of MY22 and MY23 cars meets the requirements.

It advised: "So, based on the Act's transition rule (transitioning from the current EV Credit to the new and different EV credits), the best chance for a customer to be eligible for the current EV Tax Credit is to enter into a 'written binding contract to purchase.'"

While there are no guarantees, "the 'written binding contract to purchase' requirement means that it is highly likely that those with only reservations (and without a purchase contract) will lose or risk their ability to claim the EV Tax Credit under Existing Law. The law suggests, though, that you can take steps to try to reduce that risk."

Though many customers may not be eligible to

 r/VWID4Owners · Posted by u/thelivingna

### Puyallup VW in WA made me out lose out on a tax credit, I'm done with VW

Well, goodbye ID.4 I've been waiting since Nov for our car. It was built, in the US and on a rail car to WA state, and because the laws are changing and Puyallup VW has their heads up their behinds, I won't qualify for the tax credit and thus can't afford the car. I'd never considered a VW before and after my experience with this VW dealership I never will again. It was so frustrating talking with my salesperson, they kept saying their EV specialist would get back to me and they never did. I kept asking if they would do a binding purchase order, since they had the monroney label already, and they kept telling me I would qualify, and trying to push me to lease the car for some reason, which I was not interested in. back and forth like that until I ran out of time yesterday. I think they'll be selling my car at a markup in the coming weeks, so lookout for that. Stay away from Puyallup VW. Never considered a VW before, after my experience with the waiting 9 months, then terrible dealership experience, I'm soured on VW for life.

An angry post from Reddit's VWID4Owners group.

claim the full allowance, some dealers were said to be offering the entire \$7,500 in lease deals.

But VW's email noted, "Additionally, EV Tax Credits are only available on vehicle purchases (not leases)."

On social media, some reservation holders reported no problem getting a signed agreement, while others said dealers had balked because of the lack of a VIN.

Some of the disgruntled, who have waited months for their car and counted on the tax credit, are walking away from VW and looking elsewhere. Others planned to cancel a '22 order and reserve a '23.

Shortly after the bill became law, the IRS dropped the bad news: The binding agreement required a substantial *nonrefundable* deposit for tax credit eligibility. The \$500 reservation is deemed to be too small, plus it's refundable.

So in a bizarre scenario, some cus-

tomers are likely to be waiting delivery of their German-built '22s while the Tennessee-built '23s are on the road.

One forum poster who locked a MY22 reservation in April, whose projected delivery range was November-December, wrote: "I plan on asking my dealer for \$7,500 off the MSRP once the car comes in, since they also won't write me up some kind of buyer's order. If not, I'll pass on the car and wait on my 2023 [ordered in mid-August]. They can have fun trying to sell it with no credit while people are already driving 2023 models with the credit."

## Scott and Scout

VW's new American division has a familiar CEO: Scott Keogh. Great Scott, he's been VWoA's CEO since 2018. Now, he's Scout's first employee. Scout is VW's latest scheme to win back its lost share of the

American market. Instead of a Thing-like Kübelwagen (Type 181), a bona fide dune buggy or Iltis, VW will resurrect a defunct but loved American brand.

Good luck. The International Scout II, had a pleasing profile — sort of like a rectangular soap bar. Some had tops with side-window kinks. >>



New Scout CEO Scott Keogh (in passenger seat) was among the 17,000 attendees at the Harvester Homecoming event in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in August. As The Drive reported, local VW dealer Vorderman Volkswagen even had its own booth at the show, complete with a few vintage Internationals and a Golf R.






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## DRIVER'S SEAT

The latter is seen on the new BEV Scout renderings. There were Scout-like pickups, too. So far, it sounds like VW won't revive the larger Chevy Suburban-like Travelall or the related full-size International pickup.

I remember the Scout. My public school system owned them as multipurpose vehicles for tasks such as snow plowing. Ours weren't equipped with the car-like trim; instead they were tank-like spartan. Yet the shape, not far removed from the Jeepster-Commando-Bronco alternatives, was lean and clean.

This latest VWoA executive move reminds us of a salient fact — there's a revolving door at its Virginia HQ — often "global" executives rapidly arrive, enter and just as suddenly exit the States. Keogh, the first American to lead VWoA in 25 years, won over its long suffering dealers. His replacement is Pablo Di Si, who headed VW in South America.

The door spins for other managers. VWoA recruited two Tesla experts (Matt Renna and Dustin Krause) to launch its ID.4. Both dumped VW for other ops this spring. In marketing/sales, Australian Andrew Sarras replaced Duncan Movassaghi. And Kimberly Gardiner, whom Keogh hired as a marketing pro, left on July 15. She hasn't been replaced, although David Durant and Ray Mikiciuk remain. The South Africans responsible for production, Hein Schafer (product planning) and Johan de Nysschen (formerly CEO at Audi USA), continue.

For now, Keogh says he's changed VWoA's balance sheet from red to black. And dealer profits are up. He thinks he's made progress by widening VW's crossover choices, although we lost the likable Golf Alltrack.

It's difficult to determine whether VWoA's management juggles larger trends in American business: Lots of firms have trouble recruiting and retaining talent. Yet, VW's dealers are frustrated. It takes time to build relationships. Keogh, who arrived at VWoA from the Audi side, clicked.

Keogh says VW is now an engine for electrification. Perhaps, but someone must do something about the headquarters' door handles. They're worn with failed

promises.

### Bilstein strut's Swiss cheese problem

VW's first-generation water-cooled Rabbits, Scirocos, Jettas and Cabriolets are known for front strut mount failures. The part that attaches the spring/shock assembly to the unit body has metal plates bonded to rubber and a bearing.

Febi Bilstein is an OEM supplier of these mounts. Usually this brand, which sources its wares in Germany, sells reliable replacement strut mounts.

I bought six of them about three years ago. All have failed. The rubber turned into what looks like Swiss cheese. Letting the strut assembly move upward in the engine bay. They go bad while the car's in storage — so this isn't a road hazard story.

I've purchased a pair of replacements. I noticed the latest ones have a silvery finished metal instead of the usual golden hue. The rubber curdles if you spray rustproofing on the strut mounts. Earlier ones didn't do that. Whether the silver-style mounts last, I cannot say. So far, the two I installed are working.



### Now, we're getting cranky

Here's one that really floors me. First, I suspect a window crank for some people is akin to a rotary dial telephone — obsolete. There was a time when those who bought and drove VW Beetles, Squarebacks, Rabbits and Sciroccos had to turn a handle to raise

or lower the front door windows. Cabriolets had two additional rear-side windows with cranks.

For 1968, VW introduced safety-type window cranks. These were flatter than the older handles, covered in plastic with soft, less threatening knobs.

But, second, all too often I service vintage VWs where someone trashed the handle's plastic

cover in order to remove it. There's a screw under that cover. And that cover has what looks like a removable insert inside a trim ring, or the indent for such ring. Thus, service techs or perhaps VW owners, pry and then after that doesn't work, cut out the handle's



The wrong way.



The right way.

cover to access the mounting screws.

Don't do it. Instead, just pop the plastic cover off the handle's metal shaft. Slide it to the side and then remove the mounting screw. And always install the plastic spacer between the handle and the door card. This is aesthetically pleasing and protects the card from wear. **VWCA**

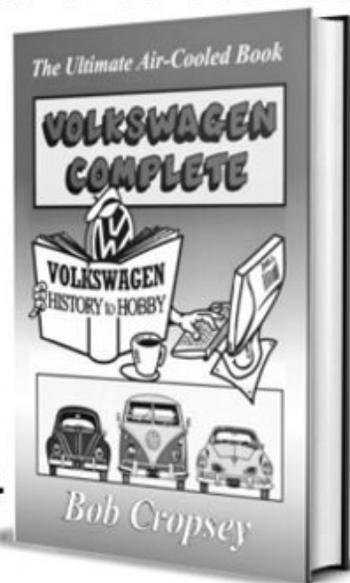
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## VOLKSWAGEN CLUB OF AMERICA

P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542  
www.vwclub.org

### In search of new club leaders

With the loss of our Membership Secretary in 2021, I have taken on yet another of this Club's functions. Moreover, I have come to realize that there are many of this Club's operations that only I know how to do; Membership management, Friends of the Club solicitations, Club Store, Recruiting, Advertising, web site and facebook interactions and more. This puts the Club in a precarious position since, if anything were to happen to me, who would be able to carry on the Club's business as usual?

It is important, therefore, that we immediately start recruiting some back-ups for the many essential positions that, currently, only I know how to do.

A list of the positions that need to be filled, along with brief descriptions of responsibilities of each, can be obtained by e-mail at [vwclub@aol.com](mailto:vwclub@aol.com), or by writing to VWCA, P. O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542. The Club's Operations Manual, aka "The Black Book," has been constantly updated to reflect the latest methods and procedures as they have evolved. It outlines all the elected and appointed positions and defines the functions of each. Copies of the Manual can be made available to viable candidates for any of these positions and, of course, I will make myself available for hands-on guidance and orientation along the way.



For that reason, I feel that the candidates should be somewhat local (Chicagoland area) so that I might be available for immediate assistance should any questions or unusual situations arise. The Club has a long-established Post Office Box address, a local bank account and a good rapport with some nearby suppliers, so it might be beneficial to retain these, at least for the time being, in the interest of continuity.

Due to my advancing age, and having served as President for 40 of the past 42 years, I will retire at the end of the current term, expiring in 2024. That should give us all enough time to train a new generation of leaders to take our Club into the future. None of the tasks are difficult, if taken separately rather than handled by one person.

I wish for nothing but thriving success for the Club, and will expend every effort toward that end.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shee'.



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Don't wait any longer to freshen up your summer wardrobe with one of our Club logo T-Shirts!



Select the classic **Bug** in gold and black on an ecru shirt or the red and black **Bus** on a gray shirt. Available in child sizes 6-8 and 10-12, and adult sizes S, M, L, XL and XXL. **Specify size and Bug or Bus when ordering.**  
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<b>PRICES EFFECTIVE 11-1-2016</b> Total			

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**RATES:** Free to VWCA members (including photos). Non-member rate is \$5 for the first 35 words plus 15 cents per additional word. Photos are additional \$5 each. Includes posting on VWClub.org with color photos. Advertisers must provide VWCA ID number or pay in advance. Ads may be edited to meet space limitations. Photos to be returned must be accompanied by a S.A.S.E. of appropriate size. Send to VWCA Classified Ads, P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542. Ads requiring no payment can be emailed to VWClub@aol.com.

**FOR SALE:** 1983 VW Scirocco, Zermatt Silver exterior/black leather interior, original owner, maintained with VW parts, \$7,000. (936) 730-8577 (TX).



**FOR SALE:** '82 Rabbit 1.6 Diesel, engine No. JX910506, clean body, interior. Note: needs main rods and lower half bolts to tie down to crankshaft. I'll give instructions how to remove oil pan and get to both parts. Best offer. I'm in the San Francisco Bay area. Edgar Perry, (510) 234-1392 (CA).

**FOR SALE:** Classic VR6 2.8L engine, from 1995 Passat Wagon. Only 120K miles, excellent condition, synthetic oil only. Located in Key Largo, Florida. You'd need to arrange towing. Make offer. (305) 852-8641 (FL).

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# New Members

**CALIFORNIA:** Russell Johansen, Sacramento

**FLORIDA:** Amy Emme, Cape Coral

**ILLINOIS:** Jeff Jaster, Arlington Heights; Richard Kish, Aurora; Mark S. Baugh, Beecher; Chris Johnson, Champaign; David R. Flores, Chicago; Brett Robinson, Chicago; Peter Jarvis, Fox Lake; Steve Streitmatter, Geneva; John Lancaster, Itasca; Paul D'alessandro, Lake Forest; Jackie Strickland, Riverwoods; Bud Goforth, Schaumburg; John C. Falk, Village Of Lakewood; Steve Cates, West Chicago

**MAINE:** Adolph Galonski, Randolph

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Roger Sonia, Peabody

**NEW YORK:** James Croft, Springville



**CORRECTION:** John Hillst was incorrectly identified in this photo from the July/Aug AUTOIST.

## VWClub.org

Add value to your VWCA membership by registering at VWClub.org to take advantage of discounts on exclusive Club Store merchandise and to renew your membership, using either PayPal or your credit card.

# Parting Shot

An exercise in patience



## ID.4 Logistics Guide

The time it takes for a reservation holder's ID.4 EV to arrive at your dealership is dependent on where your store is located, and the path that their vehicle takes to get there. Please reference this guide as a way to provide your customers with estimated delivery times. Actual arrival times may vary.

**1** **3-5 Days**  
Vehicle at Zwickau Factory

**2** **7-10 Days**  
Vehicle at Port of Emden

**3** **13-35 Days**  
Vehicle in transit to U.S. Ports

Port	Days on Water
Davisville, RI	13-17
Baltimore, MD	13-17
Jacksonville, FL	15-20
Houston, TX	20-25
San Diego, CA	30-35
Benicia, CA	30-35



### Calculate a vehicle ETA

Step	Location	# of Days
1	Zwickau Factory	5
+ 2	Port of Emden	10
+ 3	Transit to U.S.	Select based on port
Select step 4 or 5 based on location		
4	Port to Dealer Direct	10
5	Rail or Truck	30
=	Arrive at Dealer	<b>Total Days</b>

**4** **7-10 Days**  
Port to Dealer Direct

**5** **24-30 Days**  
Vehicle is loaded onto Rail or Truck

Railhead	Port Processing & Rail Transit Days
Joliet, IL	24
Big Lift, CO	20
Renton, WA	30



All VWs not built in Tennessee or Mexico have a circuitous way of making it to North America, but not until the ID.4 was introduced have customers had to wait many months for their car to arrive. Thus, this VW-produced map that provided buyers with something to look forward to once the car leaves the factory. It's a guide that is no longer needed for ID.4 customers getting 2023 models now being produced at the Chattanooga factory. But many '22 reservation holders were facing the prospect of taking delivery of a car already a year old.

## Don't miss an issue

► Moving is hectic, but so is missing an issue of the AUTOIST. Bulk mailing of the publication doesn't allow for forwarding, so it's important to let us know your new address promptly. Send a snail mail to the VWCA, P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60506. Or an email to VWClub@aol.com.



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# VW Toon-ups

BY TOM JANISZEWSKI ✉ [volkstom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:volkstom@sbcglobal.net)

