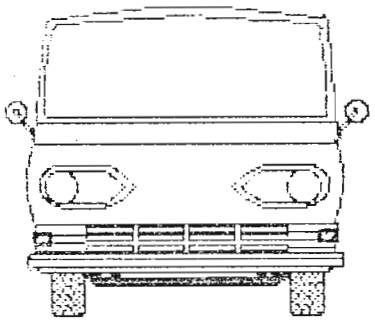

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EconOline Organization Newsletter

December 1989/January 1990

Here we are again. Everything has been put into the computer, except this stuff, so I should get busy, and keep it relatively short.

For starters, Econ0 (ie, Jay and I) decided (over a beer), that the next format of Econ0 will continue more or less as at present, except that we will remove the self imposed time crunch from us by producing issues when we get enough useful information together and get through the production process. We will still work membership into groups of six newsletters so you still get some bang for your buck, except the six issues will probably not be put out in one year. It may take two or three years to get out enough good information. We'll set some upper bound, so you guys will have some idea as to what to expect, but this was one way we think we can keep the quality of our articles up, get some work done on our vehicles (which'll lead to more article ideas), and retain our sanity. Newsletters will adopt an issue number system, starting at number 19 for next "year" and the old two-month-year referencing confusion dropped. We will still start all "current" members at the same newsletter (ie. #19) and end all subscriptions at the same issue (#24). Yes, we do lose some ability to respond to announcing piles of tailgates and Deluxe pickup side trim, and that is something we may have to address via another format or process. This is still a tentative plan that we will have to work the bugs out of, and barring a response that is much greater than the usual grumbling, we will try to work with it for the next "year". Constructive comments and suggestions are desired between now and the next issue (soon).

As promised last issue, arrangements are in the works for a couple more get-togethers for this coming spring and fall. Econ0-West #2 will be held in southern California, and is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, June 18. This is being hosted by Donald Bowen of San Diego, who is a curator for the antique gas and steam engine museum in Vista. We plan to tag along to their "Bee" (in Vista) that includes gas and steam tractors, stationary steam engines, cars, a crafts show, food, farming demonstrations, and the like. They are used to having "newer" autos around as the F100 people have shown up before and the Willys folks are usually there too. Overnight camping is available on site, as is a display area for cars. Sounds like lots of fun. Details, like a map, and all that will be in the next newsletter.

Econ0-East #2 could be sub-titled Econ0-Midwest #1 this year. Don Renner is near Burlington, Wisconsin, and has graciously made his acreage available for a meet. We are thinking somewhere around mid-September would a good time, and details can be addressed in a future issue. Don lives near a lake (or a park, I forget which) and says he has room for at least 20 trucks. Hopefully we can get at least that many there. Burlington is mid-way between Chicago and Milwaukee, about 10 miles off I-94. We are getting this stuff out early so you can plan vacations or progress on your Econoline and get to one of these.

That's about all for newsy stuff. This issue's Tips column has a couple of suspension modifications to change ride height. Please be careful when doing this kind of stuff, and make sure you understand what you are doing to the handling and driving characteristics of your Econoline, and do the changes for the right reason. The last continues in a safety vein, but might make your Econoline more enjoyable to ride in as well, since leaky gas tank vent hoses can make for unpleasant odors while cruising. The news and notes is exactly that. Since I did my editorializing last issue, Jay wanted in on the act and an article on junkyard parts hunting turned into an article on having fun. Lastly, the article you missed out on last time (due to space constraints) is here. Discussions of carburetors are never complete without equal treatment of the fuel delivery system. Jay has had many experiences, both good and bad, with electric fuel pumps, and passes some of the hard knocks on.

Next issue is another "Econoline Surprise". I'm sure we'll come up with something, we always do. It'll have the year-end roster, an application/renewal for next "year", and more info on upcoming events,format, color pictures, etc. Enjoy.

BC

Tips

1) Spring Shackles. In mid 1965 the mounting points on the frame for the spring shackles were changed both front and rear and the shackles were made shorter. This was presumably due to the tendency of the early shackles to bend and buckle if you hit a curb. The difference in length was 3/4", with the later shackles being shorter. This makes for an easy way to lower the front end of the early trucks a bit. The later shackles will lower the front of the truck by half the difference in length, or 3/8", when used in an early truck. Note that we usually don't recommend changing the ride height, but for those of you that insist, this is much safer than removing spring leaves. Also note that changing the shackle length and/or ride height will affect the caster angle and therefore the handling characteristics of the truck (see suspension and handling article April/May '88). Therefore, the front end should be realigned either by having the front axle set by a truck alignment shop, or by installing tapered alignment shims between the axle and springs. The short shackles will NOT, repeat, NOT work on the rear, since there's not enough room and the spring eye will dig into the frame rail if the shorter shackles are installed. JL

2) Coil Over Shocks We have had several questions and comments about coil over type shocks, so I will try to clarify some of the problems and misconceptions with these. Shock absorbers surrounded by an integral coil spring are commonly known as "coil over" shocks.

There are two very different types of these available - booster and anti-sway. The booster type is what is usually sold as "load lifters", or "overload" shocks. These are designed to supplement the springs when carrying a heavy load, or when the springs are sagging badly. If these shocks are installed on a stock height Econoline, the ride height will be increased by 1/2-1". However, if the truck is driven empty the shocks will "top out" - that is, they will hit the end of their travel the first time you go over a speed bump or sideways out a driveway. If you're lucky, the attaching bolts to the frame and axle will just bend. More likely, the mounts on the frame will tear loose, especially after repeated abuse. You'll hear a "bang" every time you do this, and the affected wheel will lift off the ground. It took me a couple weeks to figure out what was happening, but as soon as I did, they came off the truck and went in the trash where they belong. This type of shock is only useful if you drive with a heavy load 100 percent of the time, or if your springs are so far gone that their use will bring the truck back to stock height and not further.

The second type of coil over shock is the anti-sway type, also known as a 4-way shock. These have a slip collar that is adjusted when the shock is installed to provide zero tension in the spring at normal ride height. This is exactly the same as installing stiffer springs, without changing the ride height. These work in both tension and compression, so they resist pitch and body sway, at the expense of a stiffer ride. Don English has had very good results with these. JL/DE

3) Gas Tank Vents. The 1961-67 Econoline gas tank vents have a common problem with the vent hose. The tank vent is in the center of the top of the tank, and consists of an elbow fitting on the tank that goes to a piece of rubber hose. This hose runs over to the left corner of the truck, up next to the left door or tailgate to a metal U-tube above tank level, and back down to vent to the atmosphere. The problem is that the rubber hose tends to crack where it comes off the tank, and the tank will spill gas on the ground when topping off at the gas station. The only way to fix this is to drain and remove the tank and replace the hose. The piece of hose that connects the filler to the tank tends to crack also, so now's the time to replace that as well. Be sure to get fuel hose for these, and not the water hose that the parts store will try to sell you. To drain the tank, you can remove the drain plug at the right front corner (early models), use a siphon, or run the truck dry. Be careful, since there is probably still some gas remaining. Loosen the clamps on the filler hose and work a screwdriver under the edge of the hose to drain the remaining fuel. Work the filler hose off the tank fitting and remove the hose and wire from the sending unit. Loosen the two clamps at the back edge, unhook from the body, and carefully lower the back edge of the tank. You should now be able to disconnect and replace the vent hose.

A few words on gas caps here. Since the tank is vented, the gas cap should be the non vented type. Since the Econoline has a very low filler location a vented cap will tend to leak when you go around a right turn. The cap will also leak if the filler tube is bent or worn and the cap does not have a good sealing surface. Locking caps are a problem also, since most are a "universal" fit (fit all applications equally badly, to quote Brian, sage and seer through of all things new and improved). My solution was to go down to the parts store and look at new caps. The one listed for the 1961-67 E100 was a horrible abomination, a huge chrome thing complete with lightning bolt handle that must have been designed for a late-fifties Rambler. After retreating to the parking lot to let my stomach settle, I attacked the shelf box by box until I came upon the plain old chrome cap from a second generation van, which was both non-vented and normal looking. Once again, through perseverance and a bit of luck, problem solved. JL

News Items

Sure Plus Manufacturing makes a wide angle 6 inch round mirror head that can be directly attached to the early mirror arms with a stainless 1-1/2x1/4"-20 phillips oval head bolt. These heads have a less convex shape than the stock units, and thus look a little different when viewed from close up. Mounting these heads on the later year arms (both round and rectangular base) can be done by either using a 1/4"-20 stud, or by drilling a 1/4" hole completely through the arm and attaching with a bolt. They are available in chrome/white/black finishes (models 550/551/552 respectively) and cost about $11.00 each. DE

Blue Oval Engineering is now offering an entire engine swap kit to put the 250 six in a 1965-67 E100. As we mentioned previously, the 250 swap is not the simple bolt in proposition it would appear to be. However, Blue Oval has done the hard part by making a special crossmember, engine mounts, molded bottom radiator hose,

alternator mounting bracket, alternator tension arm, and a parts list available in kit form. The price is $150.00 with your unmodified 170/200 crossmember in exchange, or $200.00 outright ($50.00 core charge refundable within ten days). Please specify the year of the engine when ordering. Contact Blue Oval Engineering, 193 Poplar Lane, Pasadena, CA 91103. 231-684-6639.

Blue Oval is also offering a set of light weight clutch and brake pedals and a magnesium gas pedal for the E100. The clutch and brake pedals are lightened, heat treated, bead blasted, and finished in black enamel. The gas pedal is diamond patterned magnesium. All are bolt in parts for the E100. Prices are: Each pedal $25.00. auto trans set $47.50, standard trans set $70.00. All prices exchange, add $5.00 each core charge on clutch and brake arms without exchange. Light weight aluminum front license plate bracket available, $15.00. Contact Blue Oval Engineering (See above). JL

NORS dash knobs are available for the wiper, heater, emergency flasher switches from both Dennis Carpenter (part number C1TZ-17513-A) and Carolina Classics (part number C1TZ-9700-CC). These have a set screw and will work on all years 1961-67. The original 1965-67 knobs were held on the shaft with a spring clip that locked onto a slot on the shaft. These will not work on the earlier trucks since the slot is not present. The earlier set screw knobs will work on all years since the shaft size is the same. The knobs for the choke, and the 1965-67 heater air and temp controls were molded to the shafts. The set screw knobs will work on these if you carve the original knobs off and file the shaft somewhat. Note that the choke knob changed shape in 1965 and is different than the other E100 knobs, but all the other knobs were the same shape from 1961 to 1967. JL

The Econoline pickup (side view) and window van (front view) enamel hat pins mentioned previously in the June/July 89 issue are manufactured and sold in minimum lots of 100 by: Images, 26067 East 6th Street, Catoosa, OK 74015. (answering machine 918-266-5843). Current prices are $94.00-$144.00 per hundred (depends on quantity), per color, per design. The available colors are red, white, green, black, and blue. DE

The Fun Of It.
A Parts and General Commentary

Time and time again, hunting for the elusive Econoline part turns out to be an adventure. The first stop is the parts store. The guys at the parts counter that go by the book may be able to come up with the part, if the book is right, and he knows how to use it. More often than not, you are the victim. With every year that passes, fewer and fewer Econoline items are listed in the books. Where there was once a year by year listing of Ford trucks, we are now lumped in the "1957-74 all" category. This is especially true in the discount houses, which, despite their supposed reputation, don't sell parts significantly cheaper than the "mom and pop" stores. Instead, they just increase their profit margin by hiring high school kids and carrying only "fast moving" items, which for Econolines would be oil and possibly a radiator cap. Anyway, after the fifth or sixth place tells me they don't have a listing, I begin to get the message that they don't want my money.

Next stop is the junkyard. Actually, it's now often the first stop, since I'd usually rather buy a good used part than a crummy new one. Used to be my local self serve yard had five or six Econolines at any given time, with as many as ten on occasion. Now, it's down to two or three on the average, and at times none at all. It only follows that after crushing five or six a month for five years the supply would

eventually dry up. We have to drive farther and farther to get the goods, although there's less and less needed as my parts stock grows and my trucks slowly get worked on. I guess the self serve yards are a mixed blessing, at best. I have a few adventure stories about finding this or that at the real yards, but the real find is rare, and the guy behind the counter was smiling more than I was after the deal was done. Eventually the junkyard supply will be almost nonexistent. After that, we'll be at the mercy of whoever has a pile of parts. The NOS guys will be on one side of the fence, the junkyard resalers ("vultures", in local talk) will be on the other, and us crazy Econoline owners will be caught in the middle. That's where a club full of "good guys" comes in. As long as we are willing to exchange parts and ideas without dollar signs getting in the way we will be able to effectively ignore the vultures. The NOS guys are admittedly in the business to make a few bucks, and this is OK since they have show quality stuff that you won't find in the junkyard. Most of us, however, just want a decent truck to drive. If we wanted a twenty thousand dollar vehicle from the early sixties we'd be driving an early Mustang, not an Econoline.

The third source, and last on MY list, is to deal with the people that advertise in Hemmings, and so on. It's not that I've had bad experience with these guys, and in fact I've found some good stuff at reasonable prices this way. It's just not as much fun as doing it myself. When I go to the junkyard or swap meets, more often than not I'm going to see what I can find rather than looking for any specific item. I'm more likely to buy the Econoline mirror from the guy at the swap meet than I am from the guy in Hemmings even though they may be the same price. Why? I'm an impulse buyer in this case, I can see what I'm getting, and I get to go look at a bunch of neat stuff and have the reward of finding something rather than sitting at home reading page after page of ads from parts dealers trying to sell me their parts in a magazine I have to pay to read in the first place. Note that Brian and I have both boycotted the pay-to-enter swaps for the past couple years. On the other hand, there are certain people that we see selling at the swap meets that I also see at the junkyards. These guys are just in it for the money, period. For example, one of the local self serve yards sells mirrors for $3.95, whether from a T-bird or a Datsun 210. One of the local vultures sells the mirrors he buys for $3.95 at the yard for $35-45 each at the swaps. That is, he tries to. Anyone with any self respect wouldn't bend over in public and pay him this kind of money. I don't mind a person making a few bucks for their efforts, but let's be realistic here. As much as I might want the admittedly rare right side mirror for my '64 Mercury, it's not worth $45 to me, knowing that the guy paid $3.95 for it. Sooner or later, I'll find one myself for the price I want to pay. This may be $45.00, or more, if I feel it's a fair price and I'm not getting burned. I just paid $40.00 for a very rough taillight for my '61 Comet wagon, knowing it was not in prime condition. However, it was found through a junkyard hotline search, shipped about a hundred miles, and delivered to me in person by the guy that went to the trouble to get it for me. He apologized up and down for the condition of it, and even offered to eat the cost if it wasn't good enough. I was happy to get it, and gladly paid him the forty bucks, gave him a big kiss (yuk), and put it on the car until a better one shows up.

What it comes down to is how resourceful we are, and how much time and effort (notice I didn't say money) we are willing to put into our trucks. To me, this is the fun of it. Why else would I drive thousands of miles a year to buy a couple hundred dollars worth of 25 year old parts. The local guys can't believe that I get the parts at the same places they do. It's just a matter of being persistent and being at the right place when the stuff is there. I'm not particularly greedy, selfish, or willing to fight others for stuff. But, I've learned by working in the surplus business that you have to buy stuff when it's there. Ten years from now, an Econoline in the junkyard will be pretty rare, and what's left on it won't be worth saving, I suspect.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that there are both good and bad experiences to be had in the car hobby, as in anything else. And, like in anything else, you get what you give. I've found that if I can help someone with parts and information, I'll almost always be repaid by a return favor of some sort. If I go to a bit more trouble to make sure the person gets the right part or information, I'll at least know I saved them the agony of having something not fit, not work,or not be what they wanted. If there's something I need or want, eventually I'll find it by asking around, hitting the yards and swaps, or finding it by dumb luck or sheer persistence. That's the best part of the whole thing -- being able to do things my way, by myself, for the price I want to pay, ignoring those who think I should be doing it otherwise. Am I being difficult? You bet. Do my trucks turn heads? No way. Stomachs maybe. Can I get in my truck and drive it 3000 hard miles without so much as checking the oil? Right again. Sure it breaks sometimes. So what. I know what the yellow wire does, and what the U-joints came off of, and how to drive without the clutch when the linkage breaks. That's the way I approach things, and something wouldn't be right if it didn't break in my trial and error process. There's nothing inherently wrong with the do-it-right-the-first-time approach. There are people with a bunch of patience that will approach things rationally, take their time, work carefully, check things twice, give a bit, take a bit, check it a third time, and arrive with the desired end result the first time through. I, on the other hand, will rush headfirst into things on all four barrels and eight cylinders, get mad, smash the thing to bits, start over, grind too much, weld it up, burn a hole in it, smash it again, glue the pieces back together, slap it full of bondo, spray paint it, get mad when the paint runs, smash it again, and finally get more or less the result I wanted somehow. Not the prettiest picture or product, but functional and built like a brick s---- , oops, outhouse. My motto, for those who do it at either extreme, or somewhere in between, is to DO IT YOURSELF. Then you can appreciate the time and effort that goes into making a show quality truck. I just don't want all the worry and bother of that. The guy who takes his truck from one shop to another and trailers it to a show may end up with more judges' points but, is he ever really satisfied? Only if he's convinced that a mantle full of trophies is better than a truck he built himself and can DRIVE. What if he's out on the road and the thing breaks? If he'd been the there putting it together, he'd know what the yellow wire went to, or if that bolt was really supposed to be that loose. What if he has to buy a part five years later. The shop won't remember what the U-joint came off of. I bet the guy who crawled through forty yards of mud in the junkyard and wrestled the part off a rusty '57 Plymouth will remember, and can tell you which yard, and how much he paid for the part. Who has the better story to base endless exaggerated claims on? I'm having FUN working on and driving my trucks, hunting parts, and making things work the way they shouldn't. Are you?

Electric Fuel Pumps

While we were writing the carburetor article for the last issue, the associated subject of electric fuel pumps came up. The most obvious benefit of an electric pump is being able to have fuel pumped to the carburetor before the engine is cranked over. This makes the engine much easier to start, especially if it hasn't been run in some time. A secondary benefit is to be able to put in a hidden fuel shutoff switch to make the truck harder to steal. Nothing is more discouraging to a car thief to get to the end of the block and have the truck stall, after the float bowl has run dry. Hopefully they will give up at this point, and you'll find your truck a block from home.

The electric pump can be used either in conjunction with the stock mechanical pump or in place of it.

When used instead of the mechanical pump, the electric pump must run all the time when the engine is running. The power can come off the ignition switch, from a separate (hidden) switch, or from a sensor that will shut the pump off if the engine is not running. If you wire the pump so it's on whenever the key is on, you run the risk of a fire in the case of an accident or fuel leak. The pump will keep running as long as it has power and will pump the tank dry in a matter of minutes if there is a leak in the system. A better way is to hook it up with an automatic shutoff. You can use an oil pressure switch connected with a tee fitting to the oil pressure port on the engine block to provide a switched ground. This can be connected directly to the pump if the pump has a separate negative lead. See Figure 1. If the housing of the pump is grounded, you will need a relay to control it. See Figure 2. The relays sold for fog lights through auto parts stores or (sigh) Radio Shack work well for this. If you don't want to use an oil pressure switch for whatever reason, you can tap off of the "S" lead on a Ford alternator. This lead is at 6 volts whenever the alternator is charging, so you will need a relay with a 6 volt coil to do this. See Figure 3. With an automatic shutoff, you lose the ability to prime the carburetor unless you install a separate switch to manually override the shutoff.

When used in addition to a mechanical pump, the electric pump is usually connected in series before the mechanical pump. It is usually used only when the vehicle has been sitting. The pump in this case is usually connected to a switch on the dash and grounded to the chassis. Most electric and all mechanical pumps have one way check valves on both the inlet and outlet. This means that an electric pump will pump fuel right through a mechanical pump that is not running. It also means that a mechanical pump will suck fuel through an electric pump that is not running. If both pumps are running, only the one with the higher pressure will actually be doing anything. This is usually the electric one. This also means that if you have two or more gas tanks and want to run a separate pump and switch for each one, you can simply tee the outlets together and run one pump at a time. The one way valves prevent the fuel from going back through the pump that's not being used.

For the choice of which type of electric pump to use, I can only speak from personal experience. The aftermarket plunger type pumps such as AC, Carter, Autopulse, etc, work well for at least a couple years. These are fairly quiet, and are easy to take apart and repair. Eventually the contacts or diaphragm will wear out, at which time you gotta buy a new one. The aftermarket centrifugal pumps such as the Holley are too noisy for me to tolerate. I sold mine after a month of aggravation. Worked great, but I could hear it going down the freeway over the barely muffled 289 that I share the cab with. I finally ended up with the pump from a Honda Civic. This is a plunger type pump and is mounted under the rear seat in the Honda. I made a mount for it and put it in front of the gas tank on the crossmember. It's worked fine for a couple of years now, after who-knows-how-many in the Honda. The best part is the junkyard price and availability. Keeps up with the 289 just fine, so no problem on a six. Also has the advantage of having a lower pressure than most of the aftermarket ones and is readily available if you want to carry a spare or if you get stuck on the road.

While we're covering the fuel system, I'll mention a safety tip I heard a while back from a mechanic buddy and former Econoline owner. Seems that the Ford small six (and most V8's) have a bunch of recessed areas on the head and intake manifold. Also seems that there is usually a piece of rubber hose supplying fuel to the carb. Also seems like the Econoline engine compartment is like an oven. You know what I'm about to say, right? The fuel line gets baked and cracks, the head gets puddled with gas, and a spark or exhaust heat lights it off., No fun at all, even with a fire extinguisher, and how many of us carry one at all. The solution, simple. Run a solid steel line from the carb around or over the valve cover to a point where the fuel will run on the ground rather than the engine if the rubber connecting hose gives up.

Be sure to securely clamp the steel line to the engine so it doesn't vibrate loose or crack. Check the rubber hose often for cracks and carry a fire extinguisher, just in case. JL

Figure 1. Electric fuel pump with oil pressure switch control. Pump must have an isolated negative lead.

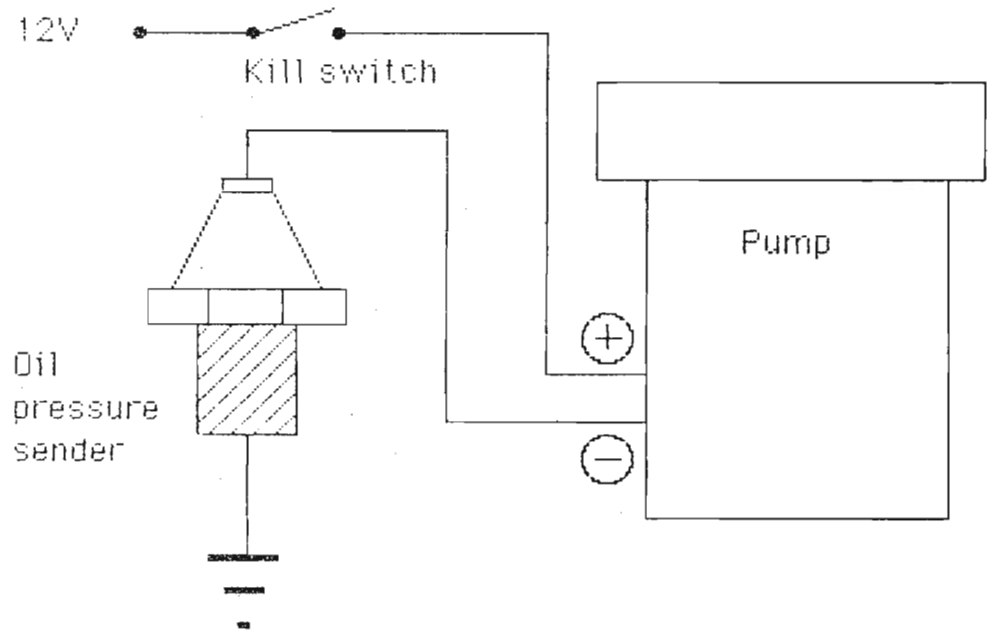


Figure 2. Electric fuel pump with oil pressure switch control. Pump must have a grounded housing.

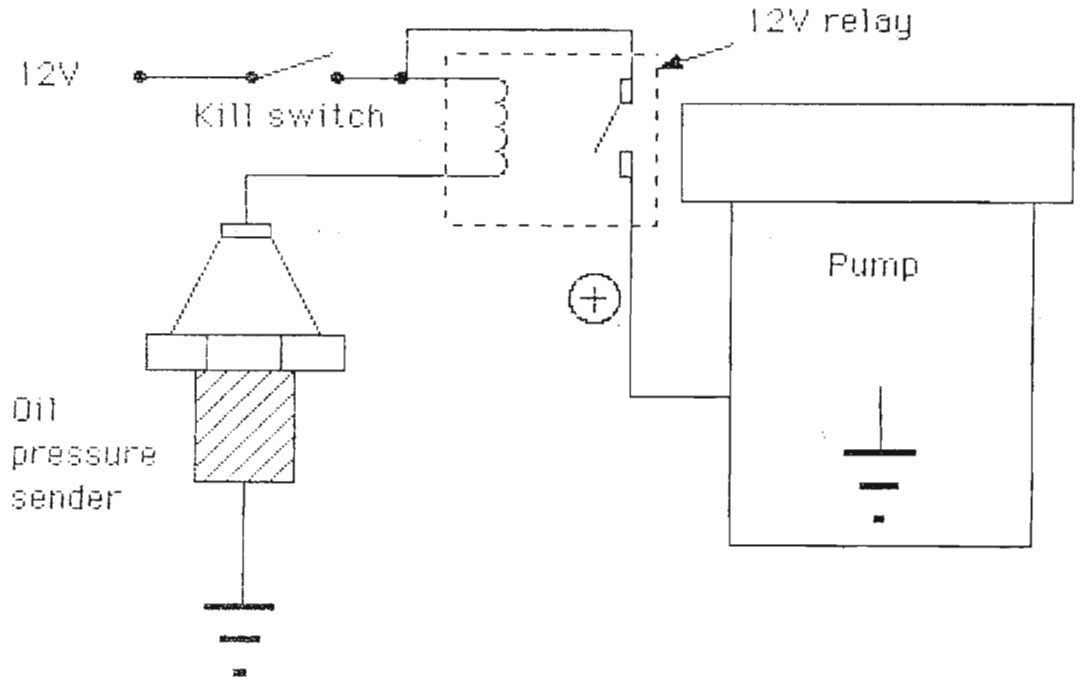
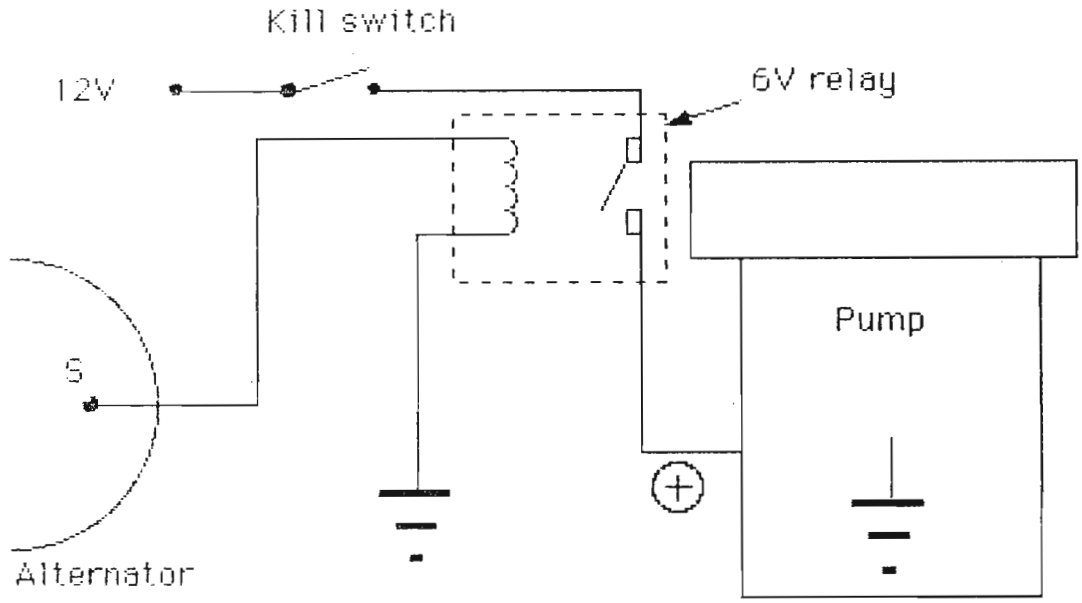


Figure 3. Electric fuel pump with alternator control.



Econoline Classifieds

Wanted:

Bill Hossfield is still looking for a minimal rust 8-door van. No windows or extendeds. Contact Bill Hossfield, 50 Oakwood Drive, Ringwood, NJ 07456.

Original air cleaner, left and right motor mounts, and a set of 13" hubcaps (any type) for a 1961 pickup with 144 cid. Randell K. Hicks, 149 Neeley St., Blountville, Tenn. 37617, (615) 323-7626

1961-'67 Falcon DCW in excellent or mint original condition or restored. Finder's fee paid for right DCW. Eric Heltzer, 22 Galloping Hill Circle, Holmdel, NJ 07733 (201) 671-6324

Promotional Econoline pickup tie tack, van rear floor mat, four (either type) rear seat retainers and "T" bolts. Reasonable transportation, for E100 free rear bench seat, from west coast to Washington D.C. area member. Can deliver to any CA, NV, AZ location. Don English, 301 Alameda Blvd, Coronado, CA 92118

For Sale:

Turn signal lenses! I still have lots of amber pairs. $4.00 per pair ($2.00 ea. for the singles), shipping included. Brian Cochrane, 18941B Almond Rd., Castro Valley, CA 94546 (415) 733-0565 before 10 PT.

Free:

Part number/interchange/vendor price listings (of specific E100 parts not yet shown on the master parts bonus pages), E100 nameplate legend sheet, information concerning E100 publications and literature vendors. Don English, 301 Alameda Blvd, Coronado, CA 92118