

Dwight:

3/5/2011

As you know I am very satisfied with your carpet kit for my '56 Patrician (Lena) #5682-2252. After the successful installation, I would like to offer some tips regarding the installation of the front carpet valance. The valance is located just over where the floor carpet ends above the front foot wells and transmission hump. In the Clippers this area has a finished shiny color matched heavy paperboard fascia, while the Seniors have a carpeted valance laid over this panel, for an extra rich interior effect.

For the valance (dash) installation (and for the main floor carpet) you will need a carpet knife and an Exacto knife with plenty of extra blades. Also, you will need a roll of double-sided carpet tape and duct tape (in case you make a boo-boo.) First, do not remove the old valance without checking its accuracy, particularly for levelness and height (not that Packard had any quality control problems at their Connor Avenue Plant.) If it's good, remove it by pulling out the plastic holder pins, and you'll probably have to cut it out over the steering column, as mine was crimped down by the brake pedal bracket. If it is not level mark the adjustments that must be made with dots of masking tape. Use the old valance as a template to locate the new plastic pinholes but do not do any other trimming. Cut the new valance at the 11:00 position where it fits over the top of the steering column. Obviously you have now two new valance pieces, 75 % from the right side of the steering column to the passenger kick panel, and 25 % from the left side of the steering column to the drivers kick panel. Using the Exacto knife cut small crosses on the backside of the new valance matching the holes in the old valance. As you have found the plastic pins have broken or split on the way out and are now useless. Since you'll have to position both new pieces of valance numerous times to get the correct fit, plastic screws rather than pins would be an excellent solution. These screws are called Body-Tite #45835 "GM "F " Body" by Dorman, Division of R & B Incorporated. In Northern New England they are only available at Pep Boys. You'll need three packages of two screws each.

Now keep positioning the right valance until it works into the correct spot, which will also overlap the floor carpet. You'll have to trim around the right side of the steering column, and along the right kick panel. The carpet fit along the kick panel will be a butt fit so be careful not to cut too much off at the beginning. After you have the correct position it's time to deal with the right fresh air grille. The original opening on the old carpet will be way too small for the new valance that is much thicker and has a more rigid backing. The clips holding the grille are on the firewall side and can't be used again. Carefully work the clips up and down with needle nose pliers in order to release the grille. (Mine fell off, hope yours does the same.) The new vent hole will have to almost

exactly match the vent pipe opening so that the grille flange will fit over the new valance and be flush. Additionally, you'll have to make a little cut to make room for the heater thermostat control just above this area. Keep working the opening bigger and bigger until the grille flange fits in flush. Install the plastic screws and observe where the valance will stay tight to the paperboard panel. Your double-sided tape will be used here. I usually "double" my double-sided tape to provide maximum bonding. Now, hook two soft springs on the screw shafts that project into the vent tunnel about three inches in and pull them out so they hook over the edges of the grille fascia. (See figures 1 & 2) Obviously you will need a fairly long needle nosed pliers to accomplish this. You will have to measure the exact distance of the screw shafts to the grille in order to buy the correct springs. Allow ½ inch short for mild tension.

Now onto the left side: Your left fresh air vent is probably fully secured by clips from behind and can't be removed. Also, it's top 1/3 is obscured by the brake pedal bracket. Using the left side of your old valance locate and cross cut a small spot for you plastic screw fastener. You have more than enough material to extend over the steering column to butt up against the right valance. Make an 11:00 slit for the parking brake shaft. You can have more fun by releasing the shaft in the bowels of the engine bay. I chose to slit the valance and draw the seam together with duck tape and it looks perfect. The same holds true with the parking brake shaft grommet. Slit the grommet to slide it around the shaft then bond it back with cyanoacrylate (super glue.) You'll have some fun trying to get the carpet to tuck into the grommet grooves. Carefully cut the correct opening for the vent grille. This time the carpet opening will slightly overlap the fascia edge. When everything is lined up, remove it once again to hand bind the opening with a needle and proper thread color. With the extra binding supplied sew a border from approximately the 11:00 position to the 5:00 position to make a nice neat finished edge. You'll be amazed on how easy it is to hand bind carpet. Since you will be using a single stitch style and doing approximately ten inches, keep the stitches reasonably short. Now you're good to go. Do one more test with your plastic screw and observe where you double-sided tape will be needed. Check the fit along the left kick panel one more time. Drive the plastic screw home, not too tight, for the last time. As Chef Ramsey says, after a culinary masterpiece has been completed " Done."

Scott Raswyck  
Litchfield, NH